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Work and vocational training

General information

This information is intended to provide a brief overview of how immigrants can have qualifications from abroad recognised and work in Germany.

If you have acquired educational or vocational qualifications abroad, you should make efforts to have these [qualifications recognised](#).

If you would like to **study**, you will find suitable information and contact persons under [Studying](#).

The conditions under which you **are authorised to work** in Germany depend on your residence status. You can find basic information and the relevant contact persons for finding work under [Labour market access](#).

There are around 400 **training occupations** in Germany. If you are looking for vocational training, you can find more information and contacts under [Vocational training](#).

💡 Employees have strong rights in Germany. The most important ones are summarised for you here. These are, for example:

- If you work, you are entitled to a statutory minimum wage. This is currently €10.45 in Germany. If you are paid less, this is considered exploitative labour relations. Anything less is too little and therefore not legal.
- If you work, you are entitled to an employment contract that specifies exactly what your working hours are and how much you are paid.
- If you work, you are entitled to at least 20 days paid holiday (5-day week).
- If you work, you are covered by statutory accident insurance. This insurance, which covers accidents at work, costs you nothing as an employee. The costs are borne by your employer. The employer must insure you against accidents.
- You must not be discriminated against because of your gender, origin, religion or sexual orientation. If, for example, you were told that you would be paid less because you are a woman or because you come from a foreign country, this would not be permitted and would not be discrimination.

Recognition of diplomas and professional qualifications

General information

Certificates play an important role in school, university and careers in Germany. They are used to demonstrate what people have learnt and accomplished, and are the decisive prerequisite for getting a job or being admitted to a school or university.

So, if you have already acquired certificates at school, training or a course of study abroad, you should make an effort to have these certificates [recognised](#) in Germany. This means that your credentials will be used to check what you are qualified for in Germany. Your skills are “translated”, so to speak.

Target groups differ, and so do the recognition offices responsible for them: Young people with a refugee or migration background often need to have their school certificates evaluated in order to access vocational training or university education here. Depending on the profession you have in mind, this requires proof of a school-leaving certificate (Hauptschulabschluss), high school diploma (mittlere Reife) or university-entrance qualification (Abitur), while a higher education entrance qualification (Hochschulreife) is required for university education.

Other immigrants may be able to demonstrate specialist skills and qualification in 'regulated' and 'non-regulated' professions. While recognition for the former is generally simple and automatic upon application, depending on circumstances, the equivalence assessment for the latter is a lengthy and complex approval procedure, especially in the case of qualifications obtained outside the EU/EEA.

It's also possible that you [no longer have](#) your certificates. In this case, you can try to have your professional experience and professional abilities recognised by passing some tests.

Official authentication confirms that a document is genuine. This is necessary to enrol at a university, for example. All photocopies of your certificates must be officially authenticated. The city's [citizens' advice bureaus](#) are responsible for authentications. Please bring your identity document or passport along with the original copy of the document to be authenticated and copies of it. Copies can be made at the citizens' advice bureaus for a small fee.

Recognition of foreign educational qualifications

Advice at the Förderprogramm IQ

Over 70 permanent advice positions and 100 more mobile advice positions at the Förderprogramm IQ help with the process of having foreign professional qualifications recognised as well as with opportunities to find work in Germany. Advice is provided in person, by email or by telephone and is free of charge.

The Förderprogramm IQ provides two kinds of advice:

Recognition advice

Recognition advice helps with every step of the recognition process. Advisors can help find out more about

- the recognition process and what it can be used for.
- checking whether the requirements for a process have been fulfilled.
- finding an equivalent profession in Germany.
- finding the body responsible for your profession.
- putting documents together and filling out forms.
- estimating costs and sounding out options for financial support.

A recognition process may not make sense for everyone seeking advice. Sometimes it will become clear during the consultation that another path provides better chances of finding a job appropriate to your qualifications.

Alternatives include professional qualifications, self-employment, obtaining a German degree or taking an 'external examination' (Externenprüfung). In this case you will be referred to other bodies such as the Qualification Advice Centre or [the Advice Centre for Setting Up a Company](#).

💡 If you wish to pursue [university studies](#) or work as an academic, please contact the universities in question to have your certificates recognised.

Qualification Advice Centre

Other specialist knowledge, professional experience or language skills may be necessary in order to have a degree fully recognised. The necessary qualification paths depend on the professional sector and individual needs. The IQ Qualification Advice Centre can help to find the right solution Advisors

- provide an overview of qualification paths in the context of official recognition laws.
- explain possible access requirements for qualifications.
- provide information regarding language courses if these are needed for professional licensing.
- help find financial support.

The Qualification Advice Centre can be sought out at any time, whether before or after applying for recognition or assessment of a degree certificate.

Online information portals

Various Internet portals provide information about the wide range of recognition processes for your qualifications:

[Recognition in Germany](#)

Multilingual, easy to navigate, and also provides a recognition finder.

[ANABIN](#)

This database is the most commonly used by authorities and employers to verify foreign qualifications and match these to the education system in Germany. The accreditation status of the foreign academic institution or university is very important here, among other factors.

You can find more information on the topic of recognition in Germany [here](#).

Having vocational qualifications and training professions recognised

In Germany it is possible to have foreign vocational qualifications recognised. The process is complicated and based on individual cases. In any case it is necessary to verify whether the


skills acquired are comparable with those that are provided in a training programme in Germany. Requirements for a recognition procedure:


- You want to work in Germany.
- You have obtained a state-provided or state-approved vocational qualification in your country of origin.
- You can provide evidence of your vocational qualification with a certificate.

The [Anerkennungsfinder \(recognition finder\)](#) will provide you with initial orientation on the topic of recognition.

IHK Foreign Skills Approval ([IHK FOSA](#)) carries out recognition procedures for foreign education qualifications in the fields of industry, trade, gastronomy and services. You can find detailed information [here](#).

If you're not sure and require help, you can get advice from your local [IHK](#):

 [Nordwall 39, 47798 Krefeld](#)

 [02151 635455](#)

You can find more places that provide help in the chapter on [Advice centres](#).

Qualification without certificates

If you can't provide any certificates, there are other ways you can prove your knowledge to potential employers or for a training programme:

You can assess your experience and knowledge for certain professions using pictures on the website [meine-berufe.de](#). You can take the test in multiple languages.

You can print out the result as a PDF and add it to your application documents to give future employers a better picture of you.

For high-level skills, you can then take the '[My Skills Test](#)'.

People without a vocational qualification who are looking for work can identify and demonstrate their vocational skills with MYSKILLS. Image- and video-based questions put participants at a computer into typical situations to verify what tasks they are capable of. The procedure is carried out by the Job Centre or the Employment Agency and lasts around four hours.

Fees and financial support

What does the procedure cost?

Applicants generally pay the fees for the recognition procedure themselves. The procedure costs between €100 and €600 and varies greatly depending on profession and federal state.

There are additional costs for translations, colour copies and potentially a 'qualification analysis' (Qualifikationsanalyse).

You will be told about the costs in advance. You have to pay the costs for the procedure yourself unless it is possible to apply for a 'recognition grant' (Anerkennungszuschuss), for example.

Grants and financial support

Providers of financial support generally assume the direct costs of the recognition procedure. These costs include:

- fees for the recognition procedure
- costs for translations and notarised copies
- travel expenses

Some providers also assume other costs, such as for compensation measures or adjustment qualifications and study materials. These providers can give you information about financial support in your individual situation:

[Krefeld Employment Agency](#) 📍 Philadelphiastraße 2, 47799 Krefeld ☎ [0800 4 5555 00](tel:08004555500) @
Krefeld@arbeitsagentur.de

[Krefeld Job Centre](#) 📍 Fütingsweg 34, 7805 Krefeld ☎ [02151 7048 0](tel:0215170480)

[Forschungsinstitut Betriebliche Bildung \(f-bb\) gGmbH](#) ☎ [0371 4 33 11 222](tel:037143311222) @
anerkennungszuschuss@f-bb.de

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

Catching up on school-leaving qualifications

In order to have a chance on the German labour market, a school-leaving certificate is very important. There are two places in Krefeld where you can do this:

At the four [vocational colleges](#) you can do all kinds of school-leaving qualifications.

At the [Weiterbildungskolleg](#) you can catch up on school-leaving qualifications in the morning or evening classes. After two semesters, you can obtain the Hauptschulabschluss (after grade 9), after four semesters the Realschulabschluss.

📍 Danziger Platz 1, 47809 Krefeld, Germany

✉ info@abendrealschule-krefeld.de

💡 It is best to seek advice on the various options from the respective school or from the lateral entry counselling service of the [Integration Department](#).

Training

General information

In Germany, it is important to have a vocational qualification before working. People with a vocational qualification have more advantages: they often earn more money, are less likely to be unemployed and are less likely to have fixed-term contracts than people without a vocational qualification. It is therefore worth completing a vocational qualification. There are various paths:

Dual training

In Germany, there is a type of training called "dual training". It is called "dual" because the trainees work in a company and attend a type of vocational school at the same time. At the vocational school, they learn the theoretical basics of a profession while gaining practical experience in the company. Around one third of a dual training programme takes place at a vocational [school](#) and around two thirds at a company. The dual training programme lasts between two and three and a half years. The good thing is that you earn money during your training. Apprentices usually receive a good salary. Apprenticeships can be completed full-time and, more recently, also part-time.

With a completed apprenticeship, you have very good opportunities on the labour market, as skilled workers are in high demand in Germany. Completing an apprenticeship increases your chances of finding a well-paid job. You are less likely to become unemployed.

You can find information on the subject of training here:

- Employment Agency in Krefeld @ krefeld@arbeitsagentur.de
- [Krefeld job centre](#)

💡 There are no official rules on what language level you need to have for an apprenticeship. Many experts recommend that you should have a B2 level. It is also possible with a language level of B1, but it is difficult. With a language level below B1, for example language level A0 to A2, it is very unlikely that you will be able to complete the theoretical part of the training. Try to learn the German language well first to avoid dropping out of training and frustration.

It is good to have at least a B2 level in German in order to successfully complete an apprenticeship. With a B1 level it is also possible, but difficult. With a language level below B1, it is unlikely that you will be able to complete the theoretical part of the training programme. It is therefore important to learn enough German first in order to avoid a possible cancellation of the training.

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

Chamber of Crafts (HWK) Düsseldorf

The HWK is responsible for skilled trades such as baking, bricklaying or painting.

📍 [Georg-Schulhoff-Platz 1, 40221 Düsseldorf](#) ☎ [0211/87950](#) @ info@hwk-duesseldorf.de

Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK)

The IHK is responsible for professions in industrial production, trade and services. This includes, for example, plant mechanics or wholesale and foreign trade clerks.

📍 [Nordwall 39, 47798 Krefeld](#)

☎ [02151/6350](#)

Full-time training at a vocational school

In Germany, however, there is not only dual training, but 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. Instruction takes place full-time and includes general education subjects in addition to vocational subjects. As the vocational colleges differ greatly in terms of their training programmes, admission requirements, duration of training and further education options, we recommend that you enquire at the respective school.

In Germany, there is not only dual vocational training. There is also full-time school-based training at a vocational college. Here you only learn about the profession at school, without training in a company. This type of training therefore differs from "dual training". The course usually lasts two to three and a half years and is full-time. You learn vocational and general subjects. There are many different vocational schools with different programmes and specialisations. The admission requirements, duration of training and further education options also vary greatly. It is best to enquire directly at the respective vocational school.

Services offered by vocational colleges (Berufskollegs)

Why a vocational college?

Children and adolescents in Germany are required to attend school until the age of 18. This is called compulsory education. If a child or teenager doesn't go to school for an extended period of time, the parents will eventually have to pay a fine of up to €1,000.

For adolescents and young adults over the age of 15, vocational schools offer various options if no longer attending a general education school. Here, young people can obtain a general school-leaving qualification as well as being prepared for a profession. In North Rhine-Westphalia, these vocational schools are called 'Berufskollegs'.

💡 You can receive advice on your vocational education at the schools themselves or from the [Integration Department](#).

Different kinds of education at vocational college

Specialist classes in the dual system

Specialist classes in the dual system are the traditional part of the vocational college, often known as 'Berufsschule'. Two thirds of a trainee's training time is dedicated to acquiring practical skills in-company, while the remaining third of the training time comprises the theoretical contents of the training programme in a vocational college.

Preparation for training

Preparation for training provides professional knowledge and skills as well as career guidance. Students develop their skills in order to be accepted into an initial professional training programme or employment in one of a total of seven areas of professional expertise. Courses of education to prepare for training allow student to obtain the first school-leaving certificate (general school-leaving certificate after Class 9) in one year. Skills are acquired in practice-oriented classes in school and are complemented by internships. Courses of education are offered part- and full-time. The part-time course is coordinated with vocational education bodies.

Vocational schools (one- and two-year)

Students acquire professional knowledge and skills. Vocational schools allow students to obtain a general school-leaving certificate after Class 10 (one-year specialist class) or a technical college entrance qualification (two-year specialist class), with or without the qualification to attend the upper stage of grammar school (called 'Gymnasium'). As part of vocational school, it is also possible to obtain a vocational college in education, care or nutrition as per state law alongside an intermediate school-leaving certificate.

Vocational grammar school

Students who have obtained a vocational extension certificate with a grammar school qualification (Qualifikation) may also attend the upper stage of grammar school (Gymnasium) at a vocational college, which is the path to obtaining the general university entrance qualification (Abitur). At some vocational colleges, this can also be achieved with a vocational qualification as per state law.

Fachoberschule (specialised secondary school)

Anyone who has completed vocational training and has a vocational college entrance certificate can also obtain the technical college entrance qualification (Fachhochschulreife) and, under certain conditions, the general university entrance qualification as part of specialised secondary school.

Technical schools (Fachschulen)

Technical schools are for vocational further education. In North Rhine-Westphalia they are offered for different specialisations at vocational colleges. There are technical schools for agriculture, nutrition and supply management, design, information technology, social services, technology, and economics. Vocational technical schools follow on from completion of vocational training. One year of professional experience must be proven in the training profession in question. It may also be possible to be admitted to technical school if five years' relevant professional activity can be proven.


Vocational colleges in Krefeld

Krefeld has four vocational colleges (Berufskollegs), each of which has its own main point of focus. You can obtain formal education qualifications, a vocational programme and advanced training anywhere:

[Berufskolleg Glockenspitze](#)


Main point of focus: Trade and media (e.g. optometry, construction drawing, wood preservation and building protection work, vehicle paintwork, hospitality, baking, media design)


 [Glockenspitze 348, 47803 Krefeld](#)

 [02151 5590](#)

[Berufskolleg Vera Beckers](#)

Main point of focus: Health and social issues (e.g. health and sport, social sciences, nutrition, clothing, cosmetics, medicine and administration)

 [Girmesgath 131, 47803 Krefeld](#)

 [02151 623380](#)

[Berufskolleg Kaufmannsschule](#)

Main point of focus: Economics (e.g. banking, insurance, finance, trade, logistics, industry, IT)

📍 [Neuer Weg 121, 47803 Krefeld](#)

☎ [02151 76580](#)

Berufskolleg Vera Beckers

Main point of focus: Technology and science (e.g. metal, electronics, chemistry, automobiles, care, automation, information and communication)

📍 [Alte Krefelder Str. 93, 47829 Krefeld](#)

☎ [02151 498480](#)

Support services from the Federal Employment Agency

Job opportunities and training in welding technology

You can train as a welder at the SLV training workshops for welders in Duisburg. After your training, you will take internationally recognised examinations. The training can be carried out with language tuition specifically for the profession of welder. During your training, we will put you in contact with employers. You can start work straight after your welding training. We will support you!

☎ [0800 204 0208](#) (free of charge)

@ausbildung@gsi-slv.de

You can find more information in the flyers:

Click here for [information on "Welding" in 6 languages](#)

Click here for information on "[Welding and language](#)"

Click here for the information [in Ukrainian](#)

Click here for information [on "International welder"](#)

Click here for information [on the assessment and basic training](#) programme

Further training

Even if you are already working, you can always continue your education and learn more. Many people want to continue their education for fun and interest. Others hope to become better at their job and even get a better position as a result. Others hope to earn more money through further training. Either way, further training can always help. Also to find a new, perhaps even

better job.

Educational leave

Every year you are entitled to leave according to your employment contract. In addition, you can apply for five days of educational leave each year. This means you get time off from work to participate in further education. During the educational leave, you continue to receive your regular salary. However, you have to pay for the costs of the training yourself.

The following conditions must be met for educational leave to be granted:

- Your employer has at least ten employees.
- You have been working in the company for at least six months.
- The vocational or political training and the training provider are recognised.

Important: First apply to your company and submit all information on the CET. Submit the application as early as possible (at least six weeks before the start of the course). Only when your company approves it can you register for the CET.

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

Education voucher NRW

If your income is below a certain amount and you live in NRW, you can apply for the NRW state government to pay half of the costs of further vocational training. The state of NRW will pay a maximum of € 500 per person per year. You must first get advice on this (☎ [0211/8371929](tel:02118371929) or online at www.weiterbildungsberatung.nrw) and then, if you meet all the requirements, you can receive the education cheque.

Companies with fewer than 50 employees can also apply for the education cheque for their employees.

You can find more information about the Bildungsscheck NRW [here](#).

Independence

Who can become self-employed in Germany?

Basically, you will find information on your residence permit as to whether you are authorised to be self-employed or not. If your residence permit says "Gainful employment permitted", this means that you are authorised to become self-employed.

As an EU citizen or citizen with a permanent residence permit (e.g. a settlement permit), you are allowed to work in any job of your choice and may also become self-employed and, for example, set up a company in Germany.

If you are still in the asylum recognition process, your application has been rejected or you only have a tolerated stay permit, self-employment is prohibited. This means that in such cases you are not permitted to become self-employed.

If you are unsure, ask your foreigners authority which rules apply in your case. They will be able to help you.

Setting up a business

Many people who come to Germany already have experience in self-employment or know people who have set up their own business. Before you become self-employed here, you should know that self-employment in Germany is more difficult than in many other countries. There are regulations and costs for taxes that you can expect if you become self-employed. It is very important that you get good information and advice before you become self-employed.

You can get advice from your local [employment agency](#) or [job centre](#), for example. It is also helpful to attend a business start-up seminar. This will teach you what rights and obligations self-employed people have in Germany, how to draw up a business plan and how to attract customers.

You can contact the following organisations for business start-up seminars:

[Chamber of Industry and Commerce Mittlerer Niederrhein](#)

📍 [Nordwall 39, 47798 Krefeld](#)

☎ [02151/6350](#)

[Lower Rhine District Craftsmen's Association](#)

📍 [Westwall 122, 47798](#) Krefeld

☎ [02151/97780](#)

@i info@kh-niederrhein.de

Start-up grant

Under certain conditions, your step into self-employment can be financially supported with a subsidy. This is known as a "start-up grant". However, you have no legal entitlement to this.

The most important conditions for funding are

- You are self-employed as your **main occupation** and thus end your unemployment.
- You are still **entitled** to unemployment benefit **for at least 150 days** at the start of self-employment.

- A specialised **agency** declares that your business model and your personal requirements enable you to set up your own business and achieve long-term success in self-employment. Specialised bodies are, for example, the Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK), chambers of trade or banks.

You will receive a start-up grant for **6 months**. How much subsidy you receive depends on the amount of your unemployment benefit. The following rule applies:

Start-up subsidy per month = amount of the last unemployment benefit received + €300

After six months, you can receive a further €300 for another **9 months**. To do this, you must prove that you are self-employed as your main occupation.

You must apply for the start-up grant **in person** at your local [employment agency](#) or [job centre](#). You can make an appointment online or by telephone.

Further, multilingual information

- [Online guide "GründerZeiten"](#) (German and Arabic)
- [Start-up portal](#) (German, French, Italian, Russian and Turkish)

Krefeld Business

It is not easy to work abroad or even start your own business. On the Krefeld Business website you will find various information and offers for immigrants. The following offers are particularly important for employees and the self-employed:

"Sprechstunde International" by KREFELD BUSINESS and the Department of Migration and Integration

The first "International Consultation Hour" will take place in April 2024 and is aimed at national and international employers from Krefeld as well as foreign skilled workers and start-ups. The offer provides information and advice on residence law issues, including the establishment of companies by third-country nationals, the employment of foreign nationals and the change of residence status after completing studies in Germany. Interested parties can speak to the Krefeld Business team and the experts from the Migration and Integration department in advance. The consultation hour will take place on April 16, 2024 from 1:30 to 5:30 p.m. in the Integration Department at [Hansastr. 32](#), where Yvonne Grunert and Angel Alava Pons will be available to talk to you. Prior registration with Angel Alava Pons from Krefeld Business is required in order to arrange a time slot and discuss your concerns.

Prior registration at [@ angel.alava-pons@krefeld.de](mailto:angel.alava-pons@krefeld.de) or by telephone on [☎ 02151/861084](tel:02151861084) with Angel Alava Pons from Krefeld Business is mandatory. He will arrange a time slot with you and record your request in preparation for the meeting.

Krefeld for Expats tours

At the events, you will get to know Krefeld's economy and cultural life in a relaxed atmosphere. You can also easily make new contacts outside your everyday working life.

New dates are regularly published on the Krefeld Business website. Please register in advance at @international@krefeld-business.de.

Business start-up advice

Krefeld International offers advice and information on residence requirements for third-country nationals who want to start a business in Germany. Advice is offered in German, English and Spanish. You can also find all the necessary information on residence permits in this [brochure](#).

Contact:

@angel.alava-pons@krefeld.de

[02151/861084](tel:02151/861084)

WELCOME KREFELD International Business Center (WKIBC)

In a new environment, support from business experts can be extremely helpful. At the WKIBC, foreign companies can rent offices and flexible workstations for their first steps in Germany. The WKIBC also provides support with the registration and approval process. There are also experienced companies nearby who will be happy to help you with your first steps. The WKIBC is located in the Fichtenhainer Allee business park on the Fichtenhain campus.

The "Krefeld International" podcast

The [podcast](#) discusses foreign trade topics and presents international markets of the future.

Looking for work

Access to the Job Market

Access to the job market

It is generally only possible to hire people from countries if they have a work permit.

- **People from the EU** can normally start working immediately and can also set up as self-employed. This is part of free movement for workers.
- If you come from a **non-EU country** you are normally allowed to work unless a law expressly prohibits it.
- The situation for **refugees** is a little more complicated. Whether you are allowed to work on the length of your stay in Germany and on your residence permit. Your local [Immigration Office](#) will decide whether you can work or become self-employed.

Your residence permit and potentially the supplementary sheet will include the information on whether you can work. This may be:

- **Erwerbstätigkeit gestattet:** You can work anywhere in Germany and can also become self-employed.
- **Beschäftigung gestattet:** You can work anywhere in Germany but cannot become self-employed.
- **Beschäftigung nur nach Erlaubnis der Ausländerbehörde:** You are not allowed to sign an employment contract without approval from the Immigration Office. Only with this approval may you start working.
- **Erwerbstätigkeit nicht gestattet:** You cannot work or become self-employed.

You can find out more about your rights at the [City of Krefeld Immigration Office](#). You can also find different contacts who specialise in refugees for advice and referrals on the employment market:

Flüchtlingsrat Krefeld

📍 [Bleichpfad 15a, 47799 Krefeld](#)

☎ [02151 4123857](tel:021514123857)

@ info@fluechtlingsrat-Krefeld.de

Monday: Consultation by appointment

Tuesday: 12:00–14:00, walk-in hours

Wednesday: 14:00–17:00, and Thursday: 10:00–13:00, normal office hours

Friday: Consultation by appointment

Caritasverband at the Hansa-Haus

📍 [Am Hauptbahnhof 2 , 47798 Krefeld](#)

☎ [02151 639529](tel:02151639529)

Walk-in hours on Tuesday from 10:00 to 13:00 and by appointment (please call to make appointments)

Labour contract

When you start working somewhere, you get a contract. This is called an "employment contract".

It sets out the rules for your work. For example, when you have to work, how long you have to work, how much holiday you get and how much money you receive for your work. It also contains information about the notice period. For example, if you no longer wish to continue working, this period determines how much notice you have to give before your contract ends.

Both sides, you as the employee and your boss as the employer, must adhere to this contract. The contract is signed by you at the end and is then legally binding. This means that the contract must be legally complied with.

You should only sign the employment contract once you have fully understood its contents.

Types of contract

Open-ended employment contract

There is usually a probationary period of three or six months. During this period, both the employer and the employee can terminate the employment relationship at short notice without giving reasons. At the end of the probationary period, a permanent employment relationship begins with longer protection against dismissal. Working hours are generally up to 40 hours per week.

Fixed-term employment contract

The employment relationship ends at the agreed time without the need for a separate notice of termination.

Mini job

The maximum earnings per month are € 520 and are tax-free.

Taxes and social security contributions

Every employee in Germany pays part of their wages as social security contributions and taxes to finance federal, state and local government expenditure. Employers, in turn, are obliged to pay 50% of the social security contributions for their employees. In the German social security system, this is intended to ensure the financing of people's most essential living costs if they cannot find work or are no longer able to work.

Tax identification number

The tax ID (tax identification number) is an 11-digit number and is used for income tax purposes. The job centre requires this number. If you do not have this number in your

documents, you can ask for it in person at the registration office or in writing at the Federal Tax Office.

National insurance number

You need a national insurance number for a job. You can obtain this from your health insurance company (for example, the AOK or DAK health insurance companies).

Illegal work

In Germany, "illegal work" is work that is paid but not registered with the tax office and health insurance company and for which no taxes and social security contributions are paid. This type of work is illegal. There is a risk of fines and imprisonment! If someone receives social benefits or unemployment benefit but still works and does not tell the social welfare office, employment agency or job centre, this is also known as "undeclared work". You are wrongly receiving state benefits.

Low earners

If your income is not enough to cover your living costs or the living costs of your family, you can supplement it with [citizen's allowance](#). Ask the [job centre](#) whether you are entitled to supplementary benefits. If you have a certain monthly income, you can also attend an [integration course](#) free of charge.

Looking for work

If you would like to start a vocational training programme (Ausbildung) or get a job in Germany, you need to submit a written application. Usually, you apply to a company that has posted a job vacancy online or in a newspaper. Posting a vacancy means that the company is looking for new employees. The job advertisement states what kind of work is involved or training is required and what the company expects from the employee. It also includes information about where and how to apply.

Application documents

An application usually consists of three parts:

1. Cover letter: In your personal cover letter, you briefly introduce yourself and say why you are suitable for the vacant position. For example, describe what previous experience you have gained in your home country. Find out about the company and explain why you want to work there. Your covering letter should fit on one page. Sign your covering letter. There are many templates and guides online. It is important not simply to copy something you find. Your cover letter needs to be unique to you and suitable for the position.

2. CV: Your CV (curriculum vitae) lists your entire professional experience and is set out in the form of a table. Write the dates when you worked with each company. Include where you undertook training or a course of studies. Specify where you went to school and what type of

qualification you left with. You do not have to include a photo in your CV, but many companies prefer it if you do.

3. Credentials and references: It is very important that you include copies of your credentials and references in the application (do not send the original documents!). They include your school- leaving certificate, your university degree and any job references from the past. They should be in German or English – if they are not, you should have them translated. You should also send certificates from any internships, work-relevant professional development courses, or German courses you have taken.

Sending your application:

- **Written (hard copy) applications:** Buy a nice application folder and insert your cover letter, CV, and credentials and references. Then mail the application to the address mentioned in the job advertisement.
- **E-mail:** These days, many applications are sent by email. Bring your covering letter, your CV and your certificates and references together into a single PDF file. Add the PDF file as an attachment to the email. Write a short text in the email to the person who will receive your application.
- **Online:** Large companies have their own website through which you have to apply. You need to register with your email address before you can send your application through the website.

💡 The job advert provides information about how to apply. Please read it carefully.

The job interview

If the company is interested in you, you will normally be invited to a job interview, which gives you a chance to introduce yourself in person. Please schedule enough time for the interview and always make sure to arrive on time for your appointment. Before the interview, you should prepare thoroughly and research the company. Visit the website and read through the company's history; find out about the products or services. Arriving on time for your appointment and asking questions during the interview demonstrates your motivation for and interest in the vocational training programme or job.

There are lots of online portals with tips and typical questions that are commonly asked at job interviews. Take advantage of these to prepare yourself properly for the job interview.

Help with preparation

- You can find helpful tips for your application at [Planet Beruf \('Planet Career'\)](#).
- [Europass](#) is a multilingual (more than 20 languages) online platform that helps make your skills and expertise obvious to others. It offers a free online tool for creating a 'language passport' or a CV. You can also find important tips on writing good applications on Europass.
- You can also create a CV and cover letter for free on [Bewerbung.net](#), [StepStone](#) and [Lebenslauf2go](#). You may also be able to import your data from Xing or LinkedIn. It is also

possible to write your own text within the template or import files.

- You can find more information and templates for cover letters here: [Bewerbung2go](#), [BewerbungsWissen](#), [Karrierebibel](#)
- You can also find exercises on the topic of applications and the world of work on the [VHS study portal 'Ich will Deutsch lernen' \('I want to learn German'\)](#) and the [Goethe-Institut's website 'Deutsch für dich' \('German for you'\)](#). You can learn more about the professional world and improve your German language skills.

Costs

Sometimes there are costs involved in looking for work. These may include costs for application documents (envelopes, postage, etc.), transport costs for job interviews or fees for having your foreign qualifications recognised. In some cases, the Federal Employment Agency or the Job Centre will assume these costs.

💡 Always ask your contact person at the Federal Employment Agency or the Job Centre **in advance** whether it is possible for your costs to be taken care of.

Sometimes employers will also assume the cost of getting to a job interview. You will generally be told about this before or at the interview.

Internships

An internship is an excellent way of getting initial experience and entering the world of work. Internships involve spending a limited amount of time working for a business or company,

and offer the possibility of getting to know a particular profession, picking up new knowledge or getting a practical insight into a specific industry. This makes them especially useful for career starters after school or university, or for people looking to make a career switch.

Interns are sometimes paid in their internship. This is not always the case, however, and depends on the type of internship, the duration and the sector, for example.

Just as with a normal job, interns are always entitled to an employment reference and should request this promptly if you need it.

You can find out about different options near you on the [Praktikumsbörse Krefeld](#).

Finding work - counselling and help

There are various contact points and help centres to find a job. There are various offers of help so that you can find out about different fields of work and find a suitable job.

Contact points in Krefeld

Krefeld Employment Agency

Are you currently working or have you worked in the past? The Employment Agency offers you advice on all questions relating to your career:

- if you would like to change careers
- if you would like to return to your profession
- if you would like to know more about the labour market in Germany
- if you would like to continue your education and are looking for funding for it

Without appointment: Thursdays from 14:00 to 18:00.

For counselling appointments, it is necessary to make an appointment by telephone. For urgent matters, you can also drop by without an appointment from Monday to Friday from 8:00 to 12:00.

📍 [Philadelphiastrasse 2, 47799 Krefeld](#)

✉️ @Krefeld.BBiE@arbeitsagentur.de

☎️ [02151/922812](tel:02151/922812)

Ecumenical Unemployment Centre Krefeld - Meerbusch e.V.

The [Unemployment Centre](#) provides advice on all matters relating to employment and social law, helps with job searches and offers orientation, support and guidance in difficult situations. The staff will also accompany you if you have to go to the job centre to support you there.

📍 [Westwall 40 - 42, 47798 Krefeld](#)

☎️ [02151/775744](tel:02151/775744)

✉️ @info@alz-krefeld.de

Municipal Centre for Employment Promotion (Kom. ZfB)

The Kom. ZfB offers counselling on the topic of career orientation together with various stakeholders:

Counselling centre for youth vocational assistance

Contact point for disadvantaged young people and young adults up to the age of 27. They receive support in finding training, work or suitable offers.

Com. ZfB Case Management

The Municipal Centre for Employment Promotion (Kom. ZfB), together with Sozialwerk Krefelder Christen, the International Federation and IN VIA, offers intensive case management counselling for young people and young adults up to the age of 25 if they receive SGB II benefits (Social Code). The aim is to introduce young people to the labour and training market as well as to employment-promoting offers.

"Education, business, work in the neighbourhood" project (BIWAQ)

Do you live in Krefeld (South) and are over 27 years old? Do you need help finding a job, solving financial problems or dealing with difficulties with and within your family? Then the "BIWAQ" team is at your side and offers you individual support and counselling on all issues relating to these topics:

- Job applications and job search
- Applications and authorities
- Living in Krefeld

Counselling is voluntary and free of charge. Your data will be treated confidentially. Our address is [Virchowstraße 128 C, 47805 Krefeld](#) (Fabrik Heeder)

Please make an appointment by telephone or e-mail.

Contact person:

Mrs Franke

☎ [02151-863471](tel:02151-863471)

@biwaq5@krefeld.de

Labour advice centre - help with exploitative work

Unfortunately, there are also employers in Germany who exploit other people. This happens very rarely, as such behaviour makes employers liable to prosecution. But there are always exceptions - even in Krefeld. If you are concerned that you are in an exploitative employment relationship, you should definitely seek help and advice. You can get help quickly and free of charge from the [Employment Advice Centre](#), which is run jointly by the Ecumenical Unemployment Centre and the City of Krefeld. If you are unemployed or threatened with unemployment, you will also receive counselling on career orientation. This service is particularly aimed at people from Eastern Europe.

Contact:

Ecumenical Unemployment Centre Krefeld-Meerbusch e.V.

📍 [Westwall 32, 47998 Krefeld](#)

☎ [02151/775744](tel:02151/775744)

@sokoll@alz-krefeld.de

Consultation hours Monday - Thursday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Friday, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

City of Krefeld

📍 [Von-der Leyen-Platz 1, 47792 Krefeld](#)

☎ [02151/863465](tel:02151/863465)

@dorothee.munsch@krefeld.de

Consultation hours Monday - Thursday, 9 am - 1 pm

Further contact points for personal counselling can also be found in the [Authorities and Counselling](#) section.

Online help

Career guidance

Various online portals offer support in deciding which profession or occupational field you would actually like to work in, for example:

[Check - U - The exploration tool for training and studies](#): This tool can be used to identify personal strengths and interests. In this way, you can find out which training programme or field of study suits you best.

[Planet Beruf](#): This platform is primarily for school students who are about to graduate and can use the platform to explore their own strengths and suitable jobs.

Job exchanges

You can find current job advertisements, vacant apprenticeships and vacancies for dual study programmes at the following addresses, for example:

[Ausbildung.de](#): The platform offers information on various training occupations and vacancies.

[azubiyo.de](#): The platform offers information on apprenticeships and [dual study](#) programmes.

General information

You are unemployed if you do not have a job and earn money to live on. This is also known as unemployment. As Germany is a welfare state, it helps people who cannot or can only partially support themselves.

In principle, however, everyone should provide for their own livelihood through work.

Asylum seekers receive their own financial support from the state. You can find more information [here](#).

If you apply for state support, you will have to fill out forms, which are often not easy to understand in German. [Here you will](#) find tips on how to fill in the forms, brief information, explanations and examples of individual topics and forms in various languages.

Unemployment benefit

You will receive unemployment benefit if you lose your job. You must have worked in Germany for at least twelve months in the last 30 months. Under certain circumstances there are other requirements.

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 three months before the end of your employment relationship. If you only find out later, register as a jobseeker no later than three days later.

You can do this in various ways:

- 📍 at your [employment agency](#)
- ☎ [0800/4555500](tel:08004555500) (free of charge)
- 🌐 www.arbeitsagentur.de

2. register as unemployed in person.

You must register as unemployed in person at your local employment [agency](#) on your first day without work at the latest. This is the prerequisite 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](#).

Citizen's income

Citizen's income instead of Hartz IV

From 1 January 2023, the Citizen's Income will replace the previous Unemployment Benefit II or "Hartz IV".

You will receive the Citizen's Income if you:

- are fit for work, i.e. are able to work and are of working age
- your monthly income is less than the minimum subsistence level
- other, prioritised benefits (unemployment benefit I, housing benefit, child supplement, etc.) are not sufficient

💡 Anyone who was previously entitled to unemployment benefit II or social benefit will in future be entitled to citizen's allowance.

You will receive:

- a standard requirement (money for daily needs for food, clothing, hygiene, etc.)
- Accommodation costs (costs for rent or accommodation fees)
- Costs of health insurance and nursing care insurance
- Initial equipment for housing and newborns

- Support in finding a job or training for the labour market

Further information can be found [here](#). You can also find an article on this topic in [TüNews](#).

Are you allowed to earn extra money?

If you receive citizen's allowance, you are generally allowed to have a part-time job. You can also apply for Citizen's Allowance if you do not earn enough money from your job to survive. Certain rules apply here:

- Up to 100 euros of income is not offset against the Citizen's Allowance. You can therefore keep it in full.
- What you earn over this amount is generally taken into account. However, there are allowances and special regulations for school pupils, students or trainees, for example. Please contact your job centre in individual cases.

Application

To apply for the citizen's allowance, please contact your job [centre](#).