

## Employment Contract



Anyone who starts a job is given an employment contract. This regulates the most important conditions of an employment relationship, such as working hours, vacation entitlement, salary level and notice periods. Both sides - employee and employer - must abide by these agreements. Since the contract becomes legally binding with your signature, do not sign it until you have fully understood its contents. The same rules apply to women and men.

### Contract Types:

#### Permanent Employment Contract:

There is usually a probationary period of three or six months. During this period, an employment relationship may be terminated by either party at short notice within two weeks. After the end of the probationary period, a permanent employment relationship begins with longer protection against dismissal. Working hours are usually up to 40 hours per week.

#### Fixed Term Employment Contract:

The employment relationship ends on the agreed date without notice being given.

#### Minijob:

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

#### Temporary Work / Loan Work:

In temporary employment, you conclude an employment contract with a temporary employment agency. However, you do not go to work there, but the company subcontracts your work to another company. That is why this form of work is also called temporary work. You will then work in the company for a certain period of time. Sometimes you are with the same company for a long time, sometimes you change again quickly. As a rule, you will receive your salary from the

temporary employment agency with which you have also concluded the employment contract. Even with temporary employment you have certain rights regarding working hours, vacation regulations, etc. Make sure that these are also adhered to. You can find more information about this [here](#).

## Labour Law:

There are many laws in Germany that regulate and ensure the rights of employees. These include, for example:

- Regulation of working time
- Minimum wage
- Vacation entitlement
- Protection against dismissal
- Representation of interests in the company (works council)
- Regulation on the work of trade unions
- etc.

Sometimes it happens that your rights are not respected at work. If you need help or advice, you can contact the following:

**Works Council / Staff Council / Employee Representation:** Many companies have a works council (in the public sector it is called the staff council, in the church sector it is called the employee representation). The works council represents the interests of the employees and is elected by them. The works council is your first point of contact if you have problems with other employees or your superiors. It is best to ask colleagues whom you need to address. By the way: A works council may always be established in companies with at least 5 employees.

**Union:** Trade unions represent the interests of employees in certain occupational fields. A trade union represents people not only from one company, but from many companies in the same line of business (for example, in industry). Ask your colleagues which union you can join. As a rule, membership in the union costs a monthly fee. In exchange, you can seek advice from the union on questions and problems, get training, etc.

**"Fair Integration for Refugees" counseling centers:** These counseling centers help refugees and third-country nationals with labour law issues, for example, regarding employment contracts, working conditions, or pay. Locations are in Kassel, Wiesbaden and Frankfurt. If required, mobile consulting is also available. Consulting languages are German, English, Arabic, Tigrinya, Amharic, Turkish, Dari, Farsi. You can find more information [here](#).

**"Fair Mobility" Advisory Service:** The European Migrant Workers' Association advises EU citizens on labour and social law issues. Locations are Frankfurt and Kassel. Consulting languages are German, English, Polish, Romanian, Bulgarian, Bosnian, Serbian, Croatian, Montenegrin. You can find more information [here](#).

## Taxes and Social Security Contributions:

Every employee in Germany pays a portion of his or her wages as taxes to finance federal, state and local government spending. Employers, in turn, are obliged to pay social security contributions for their employees. In the German social system, this is intended to ensure the financing of the

most necessary living costs of people who cannot find work or can no longer work.

💡 When working in a mini-job, employees are generally not subject to social insurance contributions. However, employers must pay a lump-sum pension and social security contribution to the Minijob-Zentrale of the Bundesknappschaft.

### **Tax Identification Number ("Steueridentifikationsnummer"):**

The tax ID is an 11-digit number and is used for income tax purposes. The workplace requires this number. If you do not have this number in your records, you can get it in person at the registration office (Bürgerbüro of your town / municipality) or in writing at the Federal Tax Office.

### **Social Security Number:**

You need a social security number to get a job. You can get these from your health insurance company (for example, AOK, DAK).

### **Undeclared Work:**

Work that is paid but not registered with the tax office and health insurance fund, and for which therefore no taxes and social security contributions are paid, is illegal and is referred to in Germany as "Schwarzarbeit". Fines and imprisonment are imminent! If someone receives social benefits or unemployment benefits but still works and conceals this from the social welfare office, the employment agency or the job center, this is also referred to as such. One is wrongly receiving government benefits even though one is engaged in paid work.

### **Manners at Work:**

In principle, you should make sure that you deal with your colleagues and superiors in a friendly, respectful, open and honest manner. It is also particularly important that you let us know immediately if you are ill and discuss your vacation times with colleagues and superiors.