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Welcome to the District of Potsdam Mittelmark!

General information

The District of Potsdam-Mittelmark is located in the federal state of Brandenburg, southwest of the federal capital Berlin. It consists of 19 districts and municipalities and is located in the immediate vicinity of the independent cities of Brandenburg (Havel) and Potsdam.

More information on history, politics and population can be found on Wikipedia:

 https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Landkreis_Potsdam-M...

The district offices and municipalities

The district consists of 19 offices and municipalities, which are linked here. If you have a request concerning the Register Office (Standesamt) or the Registry Office (Einwohnermeldeamt), the government office of your place of residence is responsible.

[Beetzsee Office](#)

[Brück Office](#)

[Niemegk Office](#)

[Wusterwitz Office](#)

[Ziesar Office](#)

[Municipality of Groß Kreutz \(Havel\)](#)

[Municipality of Kleinmachnow](#)

[Municipality of Kloster Lehnin](#)

[Municipality of Michendorf](#)

[Municipality of Nuthetal](#)

[Municipality of Schwielowsee](#)

[Municipality of Seddiner See](#)

[Municipality of Stahnsdorf](#)

[Municipality of Wiesenburg/Mark](#)

[City of Bad Belzig](#)

[City of Beelitz](#)

[City of Teltow](#)

[City of Treuenbrietzen](#)

[City of Werder \(Havel\)](#)

About Integreat

Integreat is a guide intended to help you with everyday life in Germany. Here you will find important addresses, contact persons, as well as tips and tricks to help you better orient yourself.

This guide has several chapters. Each section deals with a different subject. For example, you will find information on doctors, schools, German courses or other institutions. There is also a chapter with ideas on what you can do in your spare time. The information and leisure facilities often change and your community will update them regularly. That's why it is a good idea to take a regular look at your mobile app and get information about current activities and events. You can trust that the information in Integreat is reliable.

You can also use this app offline if you do not have Internet access. The app will update automatically when you are back online again.

We hope this app makes your life in Germany a little bit easier.

Integreat in sign language (video)



[Sign language \(video\)](#)

The 4 Planregionen

The district of Potsdam-Mittelmark is very large. It has therefore been divided into four planning regions.



Plan region 1 (green) : Teltow, Stahnsdorf, Kleinmachnow and Nuthetal.

Plan region 2 (yellow) : Werder (Havel), Beelitz, Seddiner See, Michendorf and Schwielowsee.

Plan region 3 (red) : Kloster Lehnin, Groß Kreutz (Havel), Beetzsee, Wusterwitz and Ziesar.

Plan region 4 (gray) : Bad Belzig, Treuenbrietzen, Niemegk, Brück and Wiesenburg/Mark.

Advice and Assistance


Migration Counseling Service


There are advice centers for people who come from abroad.

You can find the addresses of the advice centers on this page.

The Migration Counseling Service of the International Federation (IB)

 [Migration Counseling Service Bad Belzig](#)

 Lübnitzer Straße 2, 14806 Bad Belzig

 [033841/450485](tel:033841450485)

 migration-pm-bad-belzig@ib.de

 [Migration Counseling Service Teltow](#)

 Potsdamer Straße 57, 14513 Teltow

☎ [03328/3526765](tel:033283526765)

@ migration-pm-teltow@ib.de

📍 [Migration Counseling Service Brandenburg an der Havel](#)

📍 Große Gartenstraße 4, 14776 Brandenburg an der Havel

☎ [03381/7946994](tel:033817946994)

@ migration-brandenburg@ib.de

📍 [Migration Counseling Service Werder](#)

📍 Kesselgrundstraße 1-5, 14542 Werder (Havel)

☎ [03327/7419431](tel:033277419431)

@ migration-pm-werder@ib.de

The German Red Cross (DRK)

also offers advice at two locations and online:

📍 Potsdamer Straße 7 in 14513 Teltow

☎ 0170-7246074

@ mbe@drk-fh-bb.de

🌐 www.drk-fh-bb.de

Available by phone: Monday-Friday 9:00-16:30. Appointments can be arranged.

Migration Counselling Centres for Adult Immigrants (27 Years and Older)

The **Migration Counselling Service (Migrationsberatung)** supports all individuals with an immigration background who are older than 27 and have a permanent residence permit (dauerhafter Aufenthaltstitel) for Germany, the freedom of movement or a right of residence (keyword: recognised asylum seekers). The consultation is free of charge. There is help, support, information and education available on the following topics:

- Government offices, for example, explanation of decisions/procedures
- Topics specific to foreigners such as right to residence and work permit
- Financial support, help with applications
- Integration courses/language courses (German)

- Recognition of school/university degrees from outside Germany (guidance/initial counselling)
- Educational and social insurance systems (information and education)
- Living and working in Germany
- Child reunification, partner reunification, family reunification

👥 For youth and young adults between the ages of 12 and 27 there is a separate counselling service: [Youth Migration Service \(Jugendmigrationsdienst\)](#).

👥 There is also the [Asylum Counselling Services](#), which primarily offers you its support in the local community accommodation centres.

Migration counselling for adults:

The [Mobile Team of Soziale Arbeit Mittelmark e.V.](#) especially supports people who have recently moved from a shared accommodation to their own flat and comes to your home.

Contact:

📍 [Kuhlowitzer Dorfstr. 9, 14806 Bad Belzig](#)

☎ [033841/450370](tel:033841450370)

✉ mobiles-team@samev.de

The Migration Advisory Service of the **Internationaler Bund** is available at four locations:

🌐 [Migration Advisory Service Bad Belzig](#)

📍 [Lübnitzer Straße 2, 14806 Bad Belzig](#)

☎ [033841/450485](tel:033841450485)

✉ migration-pm-bad-belzig@ib.de

🌐 [Migration Advisory Service Teltow](#)

📍 [Potsdamer Straße 57, 14513 Teltow](#)

☎ [03328/3526765](tel:033283526765)

✉ migration-pm-teltow@ib.de

🌐 [Specialist Migration Advisory Service Brandenburg an der Havel](#)

📍 [Große Gartenstraße 4, 14776 Brandenburg an der Havel](#)

☎ [03381/7946994](tel:033817946994)

✉ migration-brandenburg@ib.de

🌐 [Migration Advisory Service Werder](#)

📍 [Kesselgrundstraße 1-5, 14542 Werder \(Havel\)](#)

☎ [03327/7419431](tel:033277419431)

✉ migration-pm-werder@ib.de

Click on the respective link to find out opening hours and contact persons. Psychological counselling is also available here.

The Potsdam District Association of the Arbeiterwohlfahrt (National Society of Labour Welfare) **AWO** also offers migration counselling at four locations:

🌐 [AWO Migration Counselling Centre for Adult Immigrants in Bad Belzig](#)
 📍 [Brücker Landstrasse 1a \(AWO House Bad Belzig\), 14806 Bad Belzig](#)
 ☎ [033841/387858](#)
 ✉ migration@awo-potsdam.de

🌐 [AWO Migration Counselling Centre in Teltow](#)
 📍 [Potsdamer Strasse 7-9, 14513 Teltow](#)
 ☎ [03328/3321362](#)
 ✉ migration@awo-potsdam.de

🌐 [AWO Migration Counselling Centre for Adult Immigrants in Brandenburg an der Havel](#)
 📍 [Rosa-Luxemburg-Allee 2, 14772 Brandenburg an der Havel](#)
 ☎ [03381/7978463](#)
 ✉ migration@awo-potsdam.de

🌐 [AWO Migration Counselling Centre for Adult Immigrants in Werder Havel](#)
 📍 [Eisenbahnstrasse 1, 14542 Werder \(Havel\)](#)
 ☎ [03327/5737283](#)
 ✉ migration@awo-potsdam.de

Click on the respective link to find out opening hours and contact persons.

Regional advice centres

The regional advice centres offer various advice services for all situations in life. These include help for the socially disadvantaged, people with mental health problems, immigrants and people with illnesses.

A consultation hour for general social counselling takes place in the four regions of the district. This is open to all citizens. The local specialists provide support with official matters and help with completing applications.

In crises such as separation, housing search, illness or debt, they offer individual counselling.

- if you have problems coping with everyday life due to age, illness, need for care or disability,
- if you are threatened with homelessness,
- for women and girls in need,

- for people with dementia and their relatives,
- for people with mental disabilities
- for people with mental illnesses,
- in matters of civic engagement and volunteering,
- in questions of integration and
- problems with addiction and drugs.

The advice centres are distributed regionally. You can find them in Bad Belzig, Teltow, Werder (Havel) and in the city of Brandenburg an der Havel. Consultation hours are also held in Kloster Lehnin and Beelitz.

Bad Belzig advice centre

Am Bahnhof 11, 14806 Bad Belzig (in the Fläming railway station)

Telephone: 033841 449510

Tuesday, Thursday: 09:00 to 17:00

Teltow advice centre with integrated care support point PM - Teltow branch office

Teltow Health Centre

Potsdamer Straße 7-9, 14513 Teltow

Telephone: 03328 3397395

Tuesday: 09:00 to 17:00

Advice centre **Werder (Havel) with integrated care support point PM**

Am Gutshof 1-7, 14542 Werder (Havel)

Telephone: 03327 739-340

Tuesday: 09:00 to 17:00

Thursday: 09:00 to 13:00

Brandenburg advice centre

Deutsches Dorf 45-47, 14776 Brandenburg an der Havel

Telephone: 03381 796156 / 0172 2538114 / 01577 2161889

Tuesday: 09:00 to 17:00

Thursday: 09:00 to 13:00

Advice centre - external consultation hours in **Beelitz with integrated care support point PM - Beelitz branch office**

Clara-Zetkin-Straße 196, 14547 Beelitz

Telephone: 033204 617625

Wednesday: 13:00 to 16:30

Counselling centre - external consultation hours in **Kloster Lehnin**

Klosterkirchplatz 1-19, 14797 Kloster Lehnin OT Lehnin

Telephone: 03382 768480 / 0172 2538114 / 01577 2161889

Wednesday: 13:00 to 16:30

Youth Immigration Services (Jugendmigrationsdienste)

Youth Migration Services (Jugendmigrationsdienst; JMD) support young immigrants from 12 to 27 years old. It helps them settle into life in Germany as quickly as possible and provides support for the following issues:

- Questions about general orientation
- School, education, career
- Personal questions
- Financial and legal matters

The **Youth Migration Service (Jugendmigrationsdienst) of the Internationaler Bund** is available in Bad Belzig (Marktplatz 5). Contact persons and contact details can be found [here](#).

Central Repatriation Advice Centre

You want to return to your home country before the BAMF has decided on your asylum application? Are you uncertain how to get your passport back or do you need financial help for the journey? The Central Return Counselling Service (ZRB) can advise you on your options on voluntarily returning to your previous country. The counselling is open-ended. This means that after the counselling, you decide yourself whether you want to leave voluntarily or not.

You can get in touch with the [Bureau for Foreigners \(Ausländerbehörde\)](#).

Online advice

mbeon - Multilingual advice via chat

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

Finding information online and getting advice via chat is easy with mbeon.

mbeon allows for counselling via chat. All counsellors are qualified professionals of the Migration Counselling for Adult Immigrants (MBE; Migrationsberatung für erwachsene Zuwanderer). They guarantee a response within 48 hours and can help with any questions or problems that may arise when living in a new environment. The counselling is anonymous, secure and free of charge.

The app also contains extensive information on topics ranging from work and career to health, learning German, housing, family and residency. In addition, mbeon can help you get in touch with migration counselling centres and other important contact points.

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

The app has many benefits:

- The app is flexible. You can use it anywhere and anytime.
- Counselling is provided in your mother tongue.
- The app is secure. Documents can be sent quickly and securely.
- The app and counselling are free of charge.
- The counselling is anonymous.

You can download the app for free from the Google Play Store and the AppStore.

 [mbeon in the Google Play Store](#)

 [mbeon in the AppStore](#)

More information is available on its [multilingual website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

Psychosocial counseling

There are three providers of psychosocial counseling in the Potsdam-Mittelmark district.

The international team at **Albatros gGmbH** offers online counseling in many languages:

Arabic
Farsi/Dari
Tigrinya
Russian
Armenian
Belarusian
Somali

“We are a small team. Nevertheless, our aim is to be accessible to as many refugees/migrants as possible whose native language is covered by our advisory team. That's why we have created Albatros-Direkt.de, a video-based online platform that allows people seeking advice to contact us quickly and easily via the internet. All the languages mentioned above are also available online. Simply log in, book an appointment and have a conversation with our advisors.”

The project “Native language and culturally sensitive psychosocial counseling for refugees” is funded by the Brandenburg Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Integration and Consumer Protection of the State of Brandenburg (MSGIV).

 <https://albatros.social/angebote/psychische-gesun...>

KommMit e.V. / PSZ Brandenburg

Psychosocial counseling in the district of Potsdam-Mittelmark

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

Contact person:

Vera Schweigert
Social worker
Russian, English and German
0155 604 072 63

Sinja Tsai
Psychologist
English and German

0155 604 972 30

Schirin Treder
Psychologist
English and German
155 604 263 18

Inter Homines e.V. also offers psychosocial counseling in various languages.

 <https://www.inter-homines.org/projekte.html>

Further consultation opportunities

Anti-discrimination counselling

The "Opferperspektive" offers professional counselling for victims of right-wing violence and racist discrimination in the State of Brandenburg. Counselling is free of charge, confidential, impartial and independent of state authorities. Additional information at:

 www.opferperspektive.de

Psychosocial counselling Ipso Care

Offer for refugees to receive psychosocial counselling by telephone/online (13 languages, protected setting). At the Berlin Counselling Centre, it also works in person. They are mainly relief talks, self-efficacy talks for those affected - not therapy! Ipso offers a preliminary stage before a referral to therapy is made, and refers to psychotherapists if necessary. It is about counselling at: Traumatic experiences, personal difficulties, family conflicts, stress, sleep problems and difficult phases of life. More under:

 www.ipso-care.com

Integration advisory board

Potsdam Mittelmark integration advisory board

The integration advisory board of the District of Potsdam-Mittelmark represents the interests of those people who do not have German citizenship or have not had it since birth and who have their permanent residence in the district.

 integration@potsdam-mittelmark.de

Emails for the advisory board are then forwarded to the members of the advisory board.

The advisory board meets approximately every 2 months, the meetings are open to the public.

Become active yourself

Here you will find resources to become active yourself:

[House of Resources Brandenburg](#)

supports migrant organisations from all countries of origin, other integrative organisations and volunteers as well as initiatives of refugees in particular by providing various resources tailored to your needs.


Locations are in Brandenburg (Havel) and Werder (Havel).

[Service Centre for Migrant Organisations \(MO\) throughout Brandenburg](#)

supports with advice, networking and information. Motto: Be strong together! Don't hesitate to contact us:


Geflüchteten Netzwerk Cottbus

 Güterzufuhrstraße 8, 03046 Cottbus

 0176/ 41 95 87 49


 [@info@mo-brandenburg.de](mailto:info@mo-brandenburg.de)


[Financial Support](#)

Since January 1, 2023, migrant organizations can apply for funding from the Ministry. Up to 3.000€ per year and organization is possible. The following can be funded: rent, office supplies, travel expenses, minor purchases. Funds for food, beverages and the like are not possible. Application documents and advice are available at  integrationsbeauftragte@msgiv.brandenburg.de

[Flüchtlingsrat Brandenburg](#)

is a non-governmental organisation that is active throughout Brandenburg. Since 1994, people with and without a refugee background, employees of welfare organisations and counselling centres, churches, self-organisations of refugees and political initiatives have organised themselves in this association.

 Office hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays: 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM


 [0331/716499](tel:0331716499)


 info@fluechtlingsrat-brandenburg.de

[Refugees Emancipation Project](#)

is a project initiated by asylum seekers. The aim is to improve the quality of life of refugees in Germany. Linux courses and computer courses are offered here and internet cafés are run.

 [Dortusstraße 47, 14467 Potsdam](#)

 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM daily


 [0331/2016927](tel:03312016927) or [0331/2015759](tel:03312015759) or [0176/36266043](tel:017636266043) (please call in advance)

[Muslima Network Brandenburg](#)

Together we are strong! Committed women of the Muslim faith - whether they wear headscarves or not - want to help shape society. They deal with questions of integration, Muslim life in Brandenburg, the role of women in the communities, the education of children and exchange experiences with discrimination. In this way, they want to express and represent their interests together and contribute to the acceptance of Muslims in Brandenburg. The goals are mutual support, civic education and empowerment.


If interested, please contact:

Razan Alsash

 0176/ 456 294 91

[@r.alsash@raa-brandenburg.de](mailto:r.alsash@raa-brandenburg.de)

Ebtesam Alfaraj

 0176/ 214 987 96

[@e.alfaraj@raa-brandenburg.de](mailto:e.alfaraj@raa-brandenburg.de)

other migrant organisations in the District of Potsdam-Mittelmark:

[Echo Kamerun e.V.](#)

[Cagintua e.V.](#)

[Loewenherz e.V.](#)

Important offices

Jobcenter MAIA

The Jobcenter is where you go if you are unemployed and need support: it gives you financial support and can also help you to find a job or get qualifications, depending on what you need. It makes it possible, for example, to take part in a language course, to be placed in career counselling or to have certificates recognised. For more information job advice, support and placements, look here: [Access to the Job Market](#).

The application for unemployment benefit II can now also be submitted online, for more information [click here](#), to access the application form [click here](#).

💡 Jobcenter staff are not allowed to pass on information about Jobcenter customers. As a voluntary accompanying person, a power of attorney is required, which must be completed in full and signed by both parties.

👤 If you have a temporary residence permit (Aufenthaltsgestattung) – meaning that your asylum procedure is still ongoing or your application for asylum has been rejected and you have a certificate granting an exceptional leave to remain (Duldung) – then the [Employment Agency \(Agentur für Arbeit\)](#) is where you go for career support.

👤 Steps to take after a positive decision

You have received a positive decision from the BAMF, so the asylum procedure has come to a positive end – in other words, you have been recognised as a refugee or received asylum protection. Here are the next steps you need to take:

1st Personal appointment

- You must go to the Jobcenter during opening hours
- There you will be registered as a customer
- Your background will be registered
- A counselling appointment is made with the benefits department and an appointment is made with the employment service
- You will be registered as a jobseeker

2. Benefits department

Important: There is no consultation without an appointment.

- Benefits are applied for with an appointment with the responsible benefits officer

3. Employment agency

- **Important:** There is no counselling without an appointment
- If you have certificates or letters saying that you are required to attend an integration course or confirming that you have taken part in an integration course, bring them with you
- If you have documents about school attendance, training, references, recognition of qualifications obtained abroad etc., please bring them with you
- Report on special skills (craftsmanship, language skills, etc.)
- Think about what kind of work you would like to do in advance

📧 [Employment office: Jobcenter MAIA](#)

📧 jobcenter-MAIA@potsdam-mittelmark.de (Central e-mail address)

Locations:

- [14776 Brandenburg \(Havel\): Potsdamer Str. 18](#), responsible for Beetzsee, Groß Kreutz (Havel), Kloster Lehnin, Wusterwitz, Ziesar; maia-team613@potsdam-mittelmark.de
- [14806 Bad Belzig: Brücker Landstraße 22b \(TGZ\)](#), responsible for Bad Belzig, Brück, Niemegk, Treuenbrietzen and Wiesenburg/Mark; maia-team614@potsdam-mittelmark.de
- [14542 Werder \(Havel\): Am Gutshof 1-7](#), responsible for Beelitz, Michendorf, Schwielowsee, Seddiner See, Werder; maia-team612@potsdam-mittelmark.de
- [14513 Teltow: Lankeweg 4](#), responsible for Kleinmachnow, Nuthetal, Stahnsdorf, Teltow. maia-team611@potsdam-mittelmark.de

Important: **An appointment must be made before a personal visit.** Either by email or by telephone: [033841/91800](tel:03384191800).

The Service Centre is available for you by telephone 40 hours a week:

Monday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Tuesday: 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Wednesday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Thursday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Employment Agency (Agentur für Arbeit)

The Employment Agency (Agentur für Arbeit) is your most important point of contact regarding employment. If you are looking for a job or for help choosing a career in Germany, or need your qualifications recognised, etc., you should contact the Employment Agency (Agentur für Arbeit).

👤 If your asylum procedure is still ongoing (temporary residence permit (Aufenthaltsgestattung)) or if you have an exceptional leave to remain (Duldung), the Employment Agency (Agentur für Arbeit) is your point of contact for questions concerning the transition from school to work (career guidance), job placement, advice on continuing vocational training, and employer advice (employer service).

👤 You are approved? Then the [Jobcenter](#) is your point of contact for counselling and job placements.

You can find more information via:

🌐 www.arbeitsagentur.de

The application for unemployment benefit II can now also be submitted online, for more information [click here](#), to access the application form [click here](#).

Social Welfare Office (Sozialamt)

The tasks of the Social Welfare Office (Sozialamt) include the **provision of social assistance**. This includes the following services:

- Guaranteed minimum pension for the elderly or those with reduced earning capacity
- Help with care
- Help with living costs

- Integration assistance for disabled people
- Help in overcoming particular social difficulties
- Health support
- Help in other life situations

The services of the Social Welfare Office (Sozialamt) also include relevant **advice** and **support**.

At the Social Welfare Office (Sozialamt), you will be asked about your financial situation (for example, whether you have valuables such as jewellery or money). You will sign some documents and statements. Please bring all your papers and all the persons named on your temporary residence permit (Aufenthaltsgestattung) to this appointment.

You will also receive a cheque for your living costs here. You can exchange the cheque for cash (euros) at a bank. Please note that you will need to make this money last until your next appointment at the Social Welfare Office (around one month). You will not get any more money until the next appointment at the Social Welfare Office.

The Social Welfare Office is also your point of contact for the following topics:

- Vouchers for Baby Starter Kits and for your child's school supplies
- Money for train tickets to interview appointments
- Medical treatment certificates, approval for operations and other medical procedures
- [Bildungs- und Teilhabepaket / BUT \(Benefits for education and participation\)](#)
- Refugee integration activities
- Activities and employment programming
- Applications for relocation, waiving of the residence requirement

[🌐 Potsdam-Mittelmark Social Welfare Office \(Sozialamt\)](#)

Address for visitors:

📍 [Papendorfer Weg 1, 14806 Bad Belzig](#)

✉️ sozialamt@potsdam-mittelmark.de

Bureau for Foreigners (Registration Office/Registry Office)

In order to be able to live as a non-German national in Germany, you need a [residence permit \(Aufenthaltstitel\)](#) (visa, residence permit, EU Blue Card, or permanent residence – of which there are two slightly different forms, "Niederlassungserlaubnis" and "Erlaubnis zum Daueraufenthalt"). In order to apply for a residence permit (Aufenthaltstitel), you need to go to the Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde).

Other things you can do at the Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde):

- Renew an arrival certificate
- Get or renew a temporary residence permit (Aufenthaltsgestattung)

- Apply for a work permit
- Registration certificate, registering and de-registering from a place of residence
- Residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis) and special permits for travel

✿Steps following a positive decision from the BAMF

Apply for an electronic residence permit (eAT)

(1) Application for asylum

- You can use the “Online Application” or fill out the form “Application for Residence Permit” (Antrag Aufenthaltstitel) and send it to the Residents’ Office (Einwohneramt). You can download the form online or pick it up at the information desk at the Einwohneramt. When you come to the appointment to make your application, please bring an interpreter who can translate for you.

(2) Appointment


- As soon as the form has been received and processed by the Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde), you will be sent a letter with date for an appointment as well as a list of all required documents
- Important: Ask for a probationary permit (Fiktionsbescheinigung) to be issued as a temporary replacement document (required for the [Jobcenter](#)).

(3) Collection

- You will receive a letter informing you that you can pick up your new permit

[Bureau for Foreigners \(Ausländerbehörde\) Potsdam-Mittelmark](#)

Address for visitors:

 [Am Gutshof 1-4, 14542 Werder \(Havel\)](#)

Visiting the Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde) is currently only possible by prior appointment via electronic means. Please write down your request briefly and send it to e-mail addresses: abh@potsdam-mittelmark.de or termin-ABH@potsdam-mittelmark.de

Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt) (Specialist Service Children/Youth/Families)

[Children's rights](#) ([best interests of the child](#)) must be observed when raising children and youth. The Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt) supports parents in raising children and youth. Everyone can contact the Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt) free of charge, including children and youths, if they have problems.

Responsibilities of the Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt):

- The support of young people in their individual development and social development
- The counselling and support of parents with questions regarding the raising of children
- The protection of children and youth
- The task, to contribute to positive living conditions for young people and families

- The elimination and reduction of disadvantages

When your child is born, the Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt) will contact you after a few weeks in order to make a home visit and introduce themselves. Then you will receive a whole folder with information and offers for your child and your family.

Unaccompanied minor refugees are also subject to the Youth Welfare Act and are therefore in principle the responsibility of the Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt).

[Specialist Service Children/Youth/Families](#)

Address for visitors:

 [Papendorfer Weg 1, 14806 Bad Belzig](#)

 jugendamt@potsdam-mittelmark.de


Counselling and crisis shelter with emergency overnight stay


Outside the office hours of the Children/Youth/Family Service, families, children and adolescents in need can contact the Potsdam-Mittelmark district's shelter directly:

SHBB Gemeinnützige Gesellschaft für Soziale Hilfen

Berlin/Brandenburg mbH

Inpatient unit/crisis intervention

 [Friedrich-Ebert-Straße 31, 14548 Schwielowsee / OT Caputh](#)

 [033209/20369](tel:033209/20369)

Admission and crisis hotline daily around the clock!

Admission to the crisis facility is based on § 42 of the Child and Youth Welfare Act (Kinder- und Jugendhilfegesetz). The aim of the help is to find out the causes of the crisis situation, to relieve and advise the children, young people and parents and to arrange suitable support options in close cooperation with the youth welfare office.

Professionals of the district

Professionals for intercultural projects

Promoting encounters, information in after-school centres and school groups, education about flight and asylum, integrative neighbourhood projects, informing refugees about offers in the areas of counselling, education and leisure.

For Teltow, Stahnsdorf, Kleinmachnow, Nuthetal, Michendorf, Werder, Beelitz, Schwielowsee (plan regions 1&2):

Susanne Weisheit (EJF e.V.)

 interkulturelle.arbeit.clab@ejf.de

For Ziesar, Bad Belzig, Wiesenburg, Treuenbrietzen, Niemegk, Brück, Beetzsee, Groß Kreutz, Kloster Lehnin (plan regions 3&4):

Annie-May Rex (Belziger Forum e.V.)

 projektarbeit@derwinkel.de

Integration officer

Coordination and management of the integration network, counselling and promotion of integrative projects, referral to counselling centres, counselling of municipalities and municipal councils.

Steffi Randig

 steffi.randig@potsdam-mittelmark.de

Asylum and refugees

Residence status (Aufenthaltsstatus)

Every person who seeks asylum in Germany needs to have an identification card (Ausweis). Your identification card provides details on your status and whether restrictions apply for any potential employment.

There are 5 types of documents:

1st Proof of arrival

Status: Asylum seekers

Background: A proof of arrival (certificate of registration as an asylum seeker) is issued to a foreigner if they have requested asylum and have been processed by the registration authorities but have not yet filed an asylum application. Valid for the period between registration as an asylum requester and official application for asylum at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF).

2. Temporary residence permit (Aufenthaltsgestattung)

Status: Asylum seekers

Background: Issued to foreigners who have officially applied for asylum until their application has been decided. The Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge – BAMF (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees) makes the decision to accept or reject your application. If the application for asylum is rejected for being unfounded, it is possible to appeal the decision before an administrative court. You are allowed to remain in Germany until the administrative court has reached its decision. [SG1]

The ID card for asylum seekers includes conditions of employment, residence and possibly territorial limitations.

- If you require a special permit to take on employment, apply for this permit at the [Bureau for Foreigners \(Ausländerbehörde\)](#) (employer or employee)
- Responsible for work placements: [Agentur für Arbeit \(Federal Employment Agency\)](#)
- Responsible for social services: [Social Welfare Office \(Sozialamt\)](#)



3. Probationary permit

Status: Recognised refugees

Background: Certificate confirming the existence of a temporary right of residence, which frequently accompanies the application for the granting or extension of a residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis) submitted to the Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde).



4. Residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis)

Status: Recognised refugees

Background: Positive decision on the application for asylum

The residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis) is a temporary residence permit (befristeter Aufenthaltstitel). It is issued in accordance with the Residence Act. For refugees, there are various types of residence permits (Aufenthaltserlaubnis) for humanitarian reasons.

- This opens up the option for a future indefinite right of residence (settlement permit, "Niederlassungserlaubnis")
- Unrestricted access to the labour market
- Responsibility for work placements and social benefits: [Jobcenter](#)



5. Exceptional leave to remain (Duldung)

Status: Person with exceptional leave to remain (Geduldete)

Background: Negative decision on the application for asylum

A “Duldung” is a temporary postponement of deportation. This document is only granted if deportation is impossible for legal, practical, humanitarian or personal reasons.

- General regulation for temporary legal suspension of deportation for certain groups by order of the highest state authority for a maximum duration of 3 months (“suspension of deportation”)
- A work permit is always necessary and can be requested from the [Bureau for Foreigners \(Ausländerbehörde\)](#) (employer or employee)
- Responsible for work placements: [Agentur für Arbeit \(Federal Employment Agency\)](#)
- Responsible for social services: [Social Welfare Office \(Sozialamt\)](#)



Application for asylum

If you are registered in Germany and live in shared accommodation, here are the next steps you need to take.

1st Personal application for asylum

- You apply for asylum at the **Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (BAMF; Federal Office for Migration and Refugees)**.
- Asylum counselling can provide important information on the asylum process. Refugee and Integration Counselling is responsible for this
- **Important:** You can only submit your application in person. In other words, 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 received an appointment, ask your accommodation facility management team

2. First interview appointment (asylum application)

After your first appointment, you must present yourself at the [Bureau for Foreigners \(Ausländerbehörde\)](#).

3. Personal hearing

The second interview appointment is the actual hearing. The BAMF decides on your asylum application and will send you their decision. This letter will contain a detailed description of the reasons for their decision.

a) The decision is negative

- If the decision is negative and you wish to challenge it (i.e. you disagree), go immediately to your [Asylum Counselling Service](#). There they will discuss with you what you can do and you can be referred to specialised lawyers. One possible action for you is taking legal action to appeal the decision
- If you decide to leave the country voluntarily, you can receive financial support for your new start in your home country

b) The decision is positive, meaning that you are recognised as an asylum seeker. The next steps are:

Probationary permit or electronic residence title (eAT): If a positive BAMF decision has been given, it is necessary to arrange an identity document or equivalent immediately. You will receive this from the [Residents' Registration Office \(Bureau for Foreigners\) \(Einwohneramt, Ausländerbehörde\)](#).

Jobcenter: You will no longer receive your money from the Social Welfare Office (Sozialamt); instead, you have to apply at the [Jobcenter](#).

Family asylum and international protection for family members

Family members of those with subsidiary protection also receive asylum (by application) and the status of "person entitled to subsidiary protection" (right to asylum/status of refugee or subsidiary protection).

When it comes to family asylum, a family member is:

- A spouse or registered civil partner or cohabitant,
- any underage, unmarried children,
- the parents with custody (custody usually includes the rights of parents with respect to their children) of underage, unmarried children,
- other adult persons, who are the registered guardians of underage, unmarried children,
- the underage, unmarried siblings of minors.

The requirement for spouses is that a valid marriage had already taken place in the country of origin, the application for asylum was submitted before or at the same time as the spouse

with subsidiary protection, at the latest immediately after their arrival in the country, and as long as the subsidiary protection is incontestable and not to be withdrawn.

Born in Germany:

If a child is born in Germany after the parents have applied for asylum, the legislator offers the possibility of a separate asylum procedure for the protection of children under certain conditions. For this, the parents (at least one must still be undergoing the asylum procedure) or the Ausländerbehörde (Immigration Office) must inform the Bundesamt (Federal Office) of the birth. In the interest of the new-born, the asylum application is automatically considered submitted. Parents can submit their own reasons for asylum for their child. If this is not done, the same reasons as those of the parents will apply. Legal action remains open in this case should an application be rejected by the Bundesamt (Federal Office).

In addition, for the protection of the child, under-age children cannot be separated from their parents if an application has been rejected.

You can find more information on this at the BAMF.

 [Bringing family members to join you \(BAMF\)](#)

Counselling and training for professionals

If you work full-time or voluntarily with refugees or immigrants, there are various offers for further training or counselling:

ISA Centre of Expertise for Social Work in the Field of Migration and Integration

offers an overarching range of services to provide professional support and assistance to agencies, authorities and municipal integration actors in order to network them and promote their cooperation - both professionally and methodologically.

 <https://www.isa-brb.de/fmi/>


RAA Brandenburg

Education and integration, democratic and intercultural school development, coordination of networks, moderation, further training in the field of intercultural competences

 www.raa-brandenburg.de

Mobile counselling team demos e.V.

Counselling, accompaniment, participation for the critical confrontation with right-wing extremism, to strengthen a democratic community against right-wing extremism. The Brandenburgische Institut für Gemeinwesenberatung - demos is supported by "Demokratie und Integration Brandenburg e.V."

 www.gemeinwesenberatung-demos.de

Ukraine

Unaccompanied minors

The Potsdam-Mittelmark Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt) is the **point of contact for unaccompanied minor children and adolescents**

The commitment of many people in Potsdam-Mittelmark to unaccompanied minors from Ukraine is great and the Potsdam-Mittelmark Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt) would like to thank them for their support and willingness to help.

Anyone who **has already taken in unaccompanied refugee children and adolescents from Ukraine should please inform the Potsdam-Mittelmark Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt) immediately**. This is where assistance is to be bundled and it is to be clarified which counselling and assistance services can be taken advantage of. The Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt) requests compliance with the obligation to register with the:

- Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde)
- the local Registry Office (Einwohnermeldeamt) and
- the Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt) (provide your contact details, the name and age of the Ukrainian child or young person)

as quickly as possible. For this, please contact us at:

 jugendamt-uma@potsdam-mittelmark.de

In the last few days, numerous families have already contacted us who would like to take in children and young people. How high the demand will be will become clear in the coming days and weeks.

If families or individuals can see the possibility of and, above all, time resources to take in a child or young person, some preconditions must be met to ensure child protection and to give the children and young people good chances to arrive in peace.

These framework conditions can be obtained from the Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt). Please contact jugendamt-uma@potsdam-mittelmark.de with your contact details and the age at which you are willing to take in children and young people.

Opening an Account

[Відкрити рахунок](#)

Information from the [Brandenburg Consumer Advice Centre](#) on the subject of opening an account. also in Ukrainian!

School and children's day-care centres

Current information from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports can be found here:
<https://mbjs.brandenburg.de/ukraine-aktuell.html> (also in Ukrainian!).

The site contains information on the topics of crèche/kindergarten/after-school care for school children, but also teachers and refugee teachers from Ukraine who are interested in working in the German school sector!

Digital learning for Ukrainian pupils in grades

5-11: https://lms.e-school.net.ua/fbclid=IwAR1_DHYO6vpx...

The All-Ukrainian Online School is a platform for #distance teaching and blended learning of students in grades 5-11 and methodological support for teachers.

The goal of All-Ukrainian School Online is to provide every Ukrainian student and teacher with equal, free and open access to quality educational content.

The #onlinePlatform contains video tutorials, tests and materials for independent work in 18 main subjects: Ukrainian literature, Ukrainian language, biology, biology and ecology, geography, world history, history of Ukraine, mathematics, algebra, algebra and the beginnings of calculus, geometry, art, fundamentals of law, natural sciences, physics, chemistry, English language and foreign literature.

Children can use the platform both to learn during quarantine and to learn a subject that was missed at school due to illness or other reasons. For teachers, recommendations for blended and #DistanceLearning were developed using the platform's teaching materials.

All educational content complies with the current state educational programmes and its quality is checked by the Ukrainian Institute for Educational Development. The list and topics of the courses are proposed by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.

The platform was created by the public association "Osvitoria" on behalf of the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and the state institution "Ukrainian Institute for Educational Development", supported by Switzerland in the framework of the Swiss-Ukrainian project DECIDE, implemented by the consortium DOCCU and PH Zurich."

Recognition of school qualifications

Flyer on the recognition of vocational qualifications in Ukrainian:

[2022-flyer-erkennung-in-deutschland-uk](#)

Counselling centres on the subject Flyer in Ukrainian IQ

[Anerkennungsberatung ClubDialog UKR Flyer](#)

Flyer on the recognition of vocational qualifications in

German [2021-flyer-erkennung-in-deutschland](#)

Flyer on the recognition of vocational qualifications in English

[2021-flyer-recognition-in-germany-my-qualificatio...](#)

Health

Psychological help in Brandenburg (Havel) UKRAINIAN VERSION BELOW

Care of acute mental health problems at the Asklepios Fachklinikum Brandenburg by Ukrainian and Russian-speaking staff possible

In the course of the Russian attack on Ukraine, refugees from Ukraine have also arrived in the care region of our clinic.

If people who have had to flee Ukraine have acute mental health problems or are in urgent need of treatment, they can call back to make an appointment at our psychiatric outpatient clinic.

To make an appointment at the outpatient clinic, please have a German-speaking person call our psychiatric outpatient clinic Mon-Fri 08-15:00 on [03381/782218](tel:03381782218) and give the mobile phone number of the person in need of treatment or a contact person. We will then arrange for a Ukrainian or Russian-speaking member of our staff to call you back as soon as possible to discuss the time and place of the appointment with the person concerned.

In addition, in an emergency, a full inpatient admission to our hospital is of course possible at any time.

If possible, the DAK health insurance chip card or the DAK provisional certificate of health insurance cover should be brought to the treatment.

We will endeavour to answer your request as soon as possible.

Yours, employees at the Asklepios Fachklinikum Brandenburg

This is how you can reach our hospital:

Asklepios Fachklinikum Brandenburg

 [Anton-Saefkow-Allee 2, 14772 Brandenburg an der Havel](#)

Psychiatric outpatient clinic: House 1

Central psychiatry admission: House 14

Tram line 1, stop "Brandenburg, Asklepios Klinik"

 <https://www.asklepios.com/brandenburg/>

Лікування психічних розладів лікарями що володіють українською та російською мовами у спеціалізованій психіатричній клініці Asklepios у місті Бранденбург

Біженці з України які страждають на гострі або хронічні психічні розлади і потребують негайної допомоги, можуть записатися на прийом до нашої психіатричної амбулаторії.

Запис на амбулаторний прийом можливий з понеділка по п'ятницю з 8:00 до 15:00 години за номером [03381/782218](tel:03381782218). Якщо Ви не володієте німецькою мовою, попросіть німецькомовного зателефонувати до нашої психіатричної амбулаторії та замовити зворотний дзвінок. Для цього потрібно повідомити номер мобільного телефону людини, яка потребує лікування, або мобільний телефон контактної особи. Після цього україномовний(вна) або російськомовний(вна) працівник(ця) нашої клініки зв'яжеться з Вами для обговорення деталей щодо часу та місця прийому.

Крім того, в екстрених випадках можливий прийом до нашої клініки на стаціонарне лікування у будь-який час.

Прохання мати при собі (за наявності) картку медичного страхування від DAK або попередню довідку DAK про медичне страхування.

Ми відповімо на Ваш запит якомога швидше.

Персонал спеціалізованої клініки Asklepios у місті Бранденбург.

Як дістатися до нашої клініки:

Адреса:

Asklepios Fachklinikum Brandenburg

📍 [Anton-Saefkow-Allee 2, 14772 Brandenburg an der Havel](#)

Psychiatric outpatient clinic: House 1

Central psychiatry admission: House 14

Tram line 1, stop "Brandenburg, Asklepios Klinik"

🌐 <https://www.asklepios.com/brandenburg/>

Psychological help in Berlin

Open consultation hours for war refugees from Ukraine

The Centre for Transcultural Psychiatry and Psychotherapy at the Waldstraße Outpatient Clinic (Berlin) offers an open consultation hour for war refugees from Ukraine from Berlin and Brandenburg every day from 8 am - 4 pm. The team consists of Ukrainian (specialist) doctors and psychological psychotherapists. Treatment is free of charge for those seeking help.

Advance booking by telephone:

☎ [0151/68939573](tel:015168939573)

✉ transkulturelle-psychiatrie@vivantes.de

Safety information

Notes on the topic of safety from human trafficking while on the run:

in German: [Ukraine Flyer DE](#)

in English: [Ukraine Flyer EN](#)

in Ukrainian: [Ukraine Flyer UA](#)

Pregnant women and parents with children up to 3 years old

The Nationale Zentrum Frühe Hilfen (National Centre for Early Help; NZFH) has compiled an overview of **counselling services** and **important information** available in Ukrainian for

this target group. The list also includes services in Russian and English. You can access the information here

 <https://www.elternsein.info/alltag-mit-kind/hilfe...>

Midwifery support for refugees from Ukraine:

 [List of midwives for Ukrainian refugees \(BB\)](#)

 [Information sheet for refugees Ukrainian](#)

 [Information sheet for refugees German](#)

The "**Bundesstiftung Mutter und Kind - Schutz des ungeborenen Lebens (Federal Foundation Mother and Child - Protection of Unborn Life)**" helps pregnant women in emergency situations. It receives supplementary financial assistance in an unbureaucratic way, which is intended to make it easier for them to decide in favour of the life of the child and the continuation of the pregnancy. The homepage contains information in many languages. www.bundesstiftung-mutter-und-kind.de

Vaccinations

A **handout** from the Robert Koch Institute with recommendations can be downloaded here:

 www.bundesregierung.de/breg-de/suche/impfung-ukr-...

Among other things, the handout provides information on how to **deal with missing vaccination documents**. The RKI also clarifies that vaccinations against Covid-19 only lead to the status of a vaccinated person if the vaccine administered is also licensed in the EU. Consequently, if vaccinations have been carried out with vaccines such as Sputnik V or the Sinovac or Sinopharm vaccines, a new vaccination series should be carried out with a vaccine approved in the EU.

Vaccination calendars and **educational material** in several languages (including Ukrainian) can be found here:

 www.rki.de/DE/Content/Infekt/Impfen/Materialien/m...

 [7 хороших причин д ля того](#)

 [Наш найкращий захиствід коронавірусу](#)

 [Твоє щеплення захищає](#)

 [ІНФОРМАЦІЙНИЙ ЛИСТ вакцинами mRNA](#)

 [ІНФОРМАЦІЙНИЙ ЛИСТ з вакциною на білковій основі](#)

 [ІНФОРМАЦІЙНИЙ ЛИСТ з векторною вакциною](#)

Language

Information

Learning German is important for finding work in Germany and for finding your way around in general. Here you will find options and people you can contact to help you find a German language course. There are different ways to learn German. Your residence status (Aufenthaltsstatus) determines which option you can choose. If you don't speak German very well yet, then you will need support. You can find contact details for the support you need here too.

Level of language ability and certificates

You can attend a German language class. There are six levels of language ability: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2. You start at level A1. You speak your mother tongue at level C2. The six steps in detail are:

A1: Beginner

You can understand and use simple words and sentences.

You can introduce yourself and others.

You can ask personal questions.

You can answer questions.

Someone is speaking slowly and clearly. You can have a conversation with them.

A2: Basic knowledge

You can understand full sentences and frequently used words.

You can express yourself in simple, everyday situations. You can describe where you come from, what kind of education you have and your surroundings.

B1: Advanced language skills

You can understand a lot. You can speak about topics you are familiar with and your personal interests. You can talk about experiences and events, dreams, hopes and goals. You can provide brief reasons or explanations for your plans and opinions.

B2: Independent language skills

You can understand the most important parts of complex texts on both specific and abstract topics. You can even understand expert discussions in topics you know well.

You can express yourself orally in a spontaneous and fluent manner. You can justify a position on a current issue by giving the pros and cons.

C1: Expert language skills

You can understand much of longer, complex texts. You can also grasp implicit meaning in the text.

You can articulate your opinion on complex topics clearly, extensively and in a well-structured way.

C2: (Approaching) native speaker proficiency

You can understand practically everything you read or hear without effort.

You can summarise information from a variety of written and oral sources. You can reproduce reasoning and explanations in a cohesive way. You can express yourself in a spontaneous, very fluid, precise and nuanced manner.

Language Courses

Language course providers

Urania Schulhaus GmbH

📍 [Am Moosfenn 1, 14478 Potsdam](#)

✉ info@urania-schulhaus.de

🌐 www.urania-schulhaus.de

☎ [0331/888580](tel:0331/888580)

Locations:

📍 [14806 Bad Belzig, Magdeburger Straße 12](#) and [Niemegker Straße 10 and Lübnitzer Straße 1](#)

✉ badbelzig@urania-schulhaus.de

☎ [033841/531424](tel:033841/531424)

📍 [14513 Teltow, Neißestraße 1](#)

✉ teltow@urania-schulhaus.de

☎ [03328/3565938](tel:03328/3565938) (currently only answering machine)

☎ [0331/888580](tel:0331/888580)

Language course offerings:

§ German for refugees

§ Integration course, also with literacy or for second language learners

§ Vocational language courses

§ IQ sub-project: Specialised language courses for educators

Ausbildungsverbund Teltow e. V.

Educational Centre of the Potsdam Chamber of Industry and Commerce

📍 [Oderstraße 57, 14513 Teltow](#)

☎ [03328/475120](tel:03328/475120)

✉ info@avt-ev.de

🌐 www.avt-ev.de

Euro Schools Berlin-Brandenburg

📍 [Am Kanal 12, 14467 Potsdam](#)

☎ [0331/70444593](tel:0331/70444593)

✉ potsdam@eso.de

🌐 www.eso.de/potsdam

Akademie Seehof GmbH

📍 [Neustädtischer Markt 7/8, 14776 Brandenburg an der Havel](#)

☎ [03381/669911](tel:03381/669911)

✉ info@akademie-seehof.de

🌐 www.akademie-seehof.de

BBAG e.V.

Intercultural Centre for Education and Encounters

📍 [Schulstraße 8b, 14482 Potsdam](#)

☎ [0331/2700240](tel:03312700240)

✉ info@bbag-ev.de

🌐 <https://bbag-ev.de/>

Location Brandenburg an der Havel

"Gertrud von Saldern" Intercultural Centre

📍 [Gotthardtkirchplatz 10, 14770 Brandenburg](#)

☎ [03381/8917873](tel:033818917873)

✉ spengler@bbag-ev.de

VHS "Albert Einstein" Potsdam

📍 [Am Kanal 47, 14467 Potsdam](#)

☎ [0331/2894566](tel:03312894566) or [0331/2894569](tel:03312894569)

✉ Vhsinfo@Rathaus.Potsdam.de

🌐 <https://vhs.potsdam.de/>

damago® GmbH Potsdam

📍 [Yorckstraße 22, 14467 Potsdam](#)

☎ [0331/58565280](tel:033158565280)

🌐 www.damago.de

bbw Akademie für Betriebswirtschaftliche Weiterbildung GmbH

📍 [Schlaatzweg 1, 14473 Potsdam](#)

☎ [0331/2001824](tel:03312001824)

✉ potsdam@bbw-akademie.de

🌐 www.bbw-gruppe.de

WBS TRAINING AG

📍 [Friedrich-Engels-Straße 103 Am Wasserturm/Bahnhofspassagen, 14473 Potsdam](#)

☎ [0331/8671910](tel:03318671910)

✉ potsdam@wbstraining.de

🌐 www.wbstraining.de

Initial Orientation Courses

The **German courses for initial language orientation** (also known as initial orientation courses) provide both elementary knowledge of German as well as information about life in Germany. The content constitutes a practical first experience for participants in a new social environment and helps with their orientation in everyday life. A course consists of 300 teaching units of 45 minutes each. The modules of the course cover topics such as "health/medical care", "work", "kindergarten/school", "housing", "local information/transport/mobility". Spoken communication is the main focus: Participants should

learn as quickly as possible how to find their way around in everyday life. In the case of initial orientation courses, it is also a question of teaching values.

Initial orientation courses are primarily intended for asylum seekers with an unclear prospect of permanent residence in Germany. Provided that there are free places on the course, recognised asylum seekers with good prospects of permanent residence may also participate. However, the initial orientation courses are not intended for persons who are subject to compulsory schooling or compulsory vocational training. If you gain access to an [integration course](#) while participating in the initial orientation course, you can switch to it. The people in the courses have very different backgrounds. Illiterate people can attend the courses as well as graduates. Initial orientation courses are free of charge.

💡 The course language is German – interpreters are not present on the course.

💡 Contact an Migration Counselling Centre or your Asylum Counselling Services. They will help you to find a suitable course.

Integration Courses

In the general **integration course** you will learn German in 600 classroom hours until you reach language level B1. During an additional 100 class hours, you will gain insights into the culture, politics and social customs of Germany. There are also special forms of the integration course, such as the 900 classroom hour youth integration course, which in some instances include more or fewer classroom lessons. The integration courses are free of charge for refugees as well as for other target groups receiving social benefits.

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

You may be required to participate in an integration course by the [Jobcenter](#), [Social Welfare Office \(Sozialamt\)](#) or the [Bureau for Foreigners \(Ausländerbehörde\)](#). If you are not obliged to participate in an integration course but want to do so, you can apply for an integration course through the BAMF. If you need assistance with the application, please contact your [Asylum Counselling Services](#) or [Migration Counselling Service \(Migrationsberatung\)](#). They will also support you in choosing an integration course provider.

Vocational Language Courses (DeuFöV)

Vocational German language ("DeuFöV") courses help to improve your own German language skills, for example after you have completed an integration course. You can take the so-called DeuFöV courses during your career, training or a vocational qualification measure or as preparation for starting a career in Germany

The basic modules of the DeuFöV courses are aimed at guiding you to speaking level C1 in two courses of 400 classroom lessons. Each of these courses concludes with a certificate examination. In addition to the basic courses, there are also various special courses with different emphases.

In order to participate in a vocational German course, you need either a certificate of admission or a certificate of obligation. You can receive these from either the Jobcenter or the Employment Agency (Agentur für Arbeit) or by applying to the BAMF.

💡 Prerequisite for participation is a language fluency level of at least B1.

Online Language Courses and Online Studies

SPEAK

SPEAK connects both locals and recent immigrants through language and cultural exchanges and through cultural events organised by the community; these activities are generally held in person. SPEAK will be organising its language learning groups online using video conferencing. The groups consist of 4 to 6 people and meet for 90 minutes every day of the week for 2 weeks.

Anyone who wants to learn a language and interact with others can register for free with SPEAK. You can learn German, English or any other language you need. More information can also be found on the SPEAK website.

🌐 www.speak.social

Online language courses

You can learn German on your smartphone or on your computer (also free of charge). Take advantage of some great offers to learn German quickly and make the best use of the time you have to wait before your language course begins. These offers can also be helpful while you are taking your language course. More information on the language levels (A1-C2) can be found [here](#).

🌐 [Ankommen \(Arrival\) app](#): In addition to information on life in Germany and on asylum, vocational training and work, the “Ankommen” app also includes a self-study course (starting at level A1) for your first few weeks in Germany.

🌐 [Serlo ABC](#): A free app for learning to read, either as self-study or as a supplement to a language course. This app has been approved for use in integration courses.

🌐 [Mein Deutschbuch](#) (My German Book): An extensive resource for learning the German language. This website is designed for learners and teachers, levels A1-B2.

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

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

🌐 [AsylPlus Deutsch lernen \(Learning German\)](#): An overview of various German-language learning options.

🌐 [“Die Stadt der Wörter” \(“City of Words”\)](#): An app and website for fun vocabulary learning for those without previous knowledge – in German, English, French and other languages.

🌐 [VHS-Lernportal](#) (VHS Learning Portal): Free German language courses. You can also learn to read, write and do arithmetic. There are also resources to help you prepare for the school-leaving exams in German, maths and English.

🌐 [Einstufungstest Sprache \(Language Assessment Test\)](#): onSET-online language assessment test for refugees and for officials and volunteers to assess language ability.

Online studies

Refugees and asylum seekers often face difficulties when trying to gain access to higher level education. Kiron Higher Education offers the possibility to study without tuition fees and without the other legal documents usually required to study. The problem of limited course places is also solved. The first two years of study are completed on the internet with online courses. All courses are offered in English. However, it is possible to add subtitles in any language. The third year of study takes place on campus at one of Kiron's partner universities. There is also the possibility to learn German during the course of study. Additional forms of support and advice are also on offer.

🌐 [Kiron Website](#)

Interpreters

Finding an Interpreter

If you go to a government office or authority such as the [Bureau for Foreigners \(Ausländerbehörde\)](#), you need an **interpreter**. But interpreters are also very helpful for visits to the doctor, at parents' evenings at school or in kindergarten.

💡 Some authorities and institutions have interpreters themselves and you can use them when you go to advice sessions. When you make an appointment, please always ask if an interpreter is provided free of charge.

💡 In Germany, official documents, such as credentials and marriage or birth certificates, may only be translated by certified translators. These translations can be very expensive. Please check beforehand whether you really need a certified translation and compare the translation prices.

Intermediation Centre "Gemeindedolmetschdienst"

☎ [0331/9676257](tel:03319676257)

✉ vermittlungszentrale@fazit-brb.de

🌐 www.fazit-brb.de/ueber-uns/einsatzvermittlungszentren...


Telefonjoker


Interpreting hotline for Arabic & Persian Mondays to Fridays 1-4 p.m

☎ [01806/565370](tel:01806565370) (-1 Arabic, -2 Persian) for 0.20 €/call from a landline or 0.60€/call from a mobile network

ACTA - Interpreting Services Translations


 [Mötzower Landstraße 72, 14776 Brandenburg an der Havel](#)

 [03381/201229](#)


 [0171/4529404](#)


 eva@acta-weging.de

Berlin-Brandenburg Interpreting Service

 [Schulstraße 6, 12529 Schönefeld](#)

 [030/89379735](#)

 [0173/6105326](#)

 dolmetscherdienst-bb@web.de

Translation apps (selection)

- [Microsoft Translator](#)
- [PROMT Online Translator](#)
- [Multi-language translator](#)
- [Conversational translator](#)
- [Language translator](#)
- [Instant translator](#)

Telephone and video interpreting (selection)

 www.videodolmetschen.com

 www.lingatel.de/weitere-services/videodolmetschen

 www.telefondolmetschen-sofort.com

 www.lingatel.de/telefondolmetschen/

Education, Work und University Studies

Information

The conditions with which you may work in Germany depend on your residence status. For basic information and the relevant contact persons when looking for work, see [access to the job market](#).

If you have already obtained school or vocational training qualifications abroad , you should see to having these qualifications recognised. For more information, see the section on [recognition of foreign qualifications](#).

In Germany, there are around 400 skilled professions. If you are looking for vocational training, please find further information and contact details in this section: [Vocational training \(dual and full-time school-based\)](#).

Children and youths must go to school from the age of six years old. General schooling is attended before starting training or university studies.

If you would like to study, you can find suitable information and contact persons in this section: [University studies](#).

Looking for work

Access to the Job Market

Regulations on access to the job market

👤 If you are looking for work and have moved from the EU, you have full access to the job market, because of freedom of movement for workers.

👤 Refugees' rights to work vary according to their residence status. This is explained below. You will also find information on related counselling centres below.

👤 Asylum seeker with proof of arrival or temporary residence permit (Aufenthaltsgestattung): As long as you are living in an AnKER facility or Initial Reception Facility (EAE) (maximum 18 months, extension up to 24 months possible, families with children maximum 6 months), you are not allowed to work at all for 9 months. After 9 months you usually have the right to an employment permit. It is always the Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde) that decides whether you are allowed to work or not. You must therefore submit an application for an employment permit to the Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde). There are certain rules you must follow.

The following conditions are important for deciding whether you are allowed to work:

👤 Asylum seeker with proof of arrival (Ankunftsnachweis) or temporary residence permit (Aufenthaltsgestattung) in AnKER /EAE:

- 9-month ban on working
- After 9 months, claim to work permit if not from safe countries of origin or asylum application rejected by the BAMF without good reason.
- The priority check is not applicable. However, the working conditions will be examined by the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit).

👤 Asylum seeker with proof of arrival (Ankunftsnachweis) or temporary residence permit (Aufenthaltsgestattung) outside of AnKER/EAE:

- 3-month ban on working
- After 3 months, work permit at the discretion of the Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde) if not from safe countries of origin with asylum application after August 31, 2015
- After 9 months, claim to work permit if not from safe countries of origin with asylum application after August 31, 2015, or asylum application rejected without good reason.

- The priority check is not applicable. However, the working conditions will be examined by the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit).

👤 Persons with exceptional leaves to remain (Geduldete):

It is always the [Bureau for Foreigners \(Ausländerbehörde\)](#) that decides whether you are allowed to work or not. You must therefore submit an application for an employment permit to the Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde). The Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde) can impose a general work ban on you. There are certain rules you must follow.

Persons with exceptional leaves to remain (Geduldete) in AnKER:

- After 6 months of an exceptional leave to remain period, work permit at the discretion of the Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde), if not from safe countries of origin with asylum application after August 31, 2015
- Persons with an exceptional leave to remain (Duldung) because of unclear identity (§ 60b AufenthG) are always prohibited from working.
- The priority check is not applicable. However, the working conditions will be examined by the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit)

Persons with exceptional leaves to remain (Geduldete) outside of AnKER:

- 3-month ban on working
- After 3 months, work permit at the discretion of the Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde), if not from safe countries of origin with asylum application after August 31, 2015
- Persons with an exceptional leave to remain (Duldung) because of unclear identity (§ 60b AufenthG) are always prohibited from working
- The priority check is not applicable. However, the working conditions will be examined by the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit).

👤 Refugees with residence permits (Aufenthaltserlaubnis):

If you have been recognised by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) as a person entitled to asylum, refugee or subsidiary protection, the [Bureau for Foreigners \(Ausländerbehörde\)](#) gives you a residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis). This entitles you to do any kind of job and therefore also gives you full access to the job market.

💡 There are different rules for [self-employment](#)! The prerequisite for the aforementioned applications is ALWAYS a specific job offer.

Counselling centres

The following people are there specifically for providing refugees with advice and referrals within the job market. Here there are also differences depending on whether your asylum procedure is still ongoing, you have been recognised as a refugee, or you have a certificate granting temporary postponement of deportation (Duldung).

- **Fläming deine Chance:** brings together the professional potential of migrants with the needs of regional companies in Fläming. Further information and contact at <https://flaeming-deine-chance.de> (or [here](#) directly to job coaching).

- **Brandenburg deine Chance:** modular system for counselling and training designed to adapt your competences and skills to the needs of the Brandenburg labour market through initial practical offers. www.avt-bildung.de/bdc

Employment contract

Anyone who starts a job gets an employment contract. This regulates the most important conditions of an employment relationship, such as working hours, holiday entitlement, salary and notice periods. Both sides – workers and employers – must abide by these agreements. Because a contract is legally binding once you have signed it, you should only sign it when you understand its content completely.

Types of contracts:

Permanent job contract (Unbefristeter Arbeitsvertrag)

As a general rule, there is a probationary period of three to six months. During this time, the employment relationship can be terminated at short notice within two weeks, both by the employer and by the employee. At the end of the probationary period, a permanent employment relationship begins with longer protection against dismissal. Working hours are usually up to 40 hours a week.

Fixed-term job contract (Befristeter Arbeitsvertrag)

The employment ends at the agreed time, without the need for notice of resignation.

Minijob

The maximum monthly salary is €520 and is not taxed.

Labour law:

There are numerous laws that regulate and ensure the rights of employees in Germany. That includes, for example:

- Regulation of working time
- Minimum wage
- Leave claim
- Dismissal Protection
- Employee representation (works council)
- Trade union labour regulations
- and a few more

Taxes and social security payments:

Every employee in Germany pays part of their wages as taxes to finance federal, state and local government spending. Employers, in turn, are required to pay social security contributions for their employees. The German social system thus aims to make sure that, if people can't find work, or are no longer able to work, their key living costs will still be covered.

Tax ID number:

The tax ID is a 11-digit number and is used for income tax. The employer needs this number. If you do not have this number in your documents, you can ask for it personally at the registration office (Meldebehörde) or in writing from the Federal Tax Office (Bundesamt für Steuern).

Social security number:

For a job, you need a social security number. This can be obtained from your health insurer (for example AOK, DAK).

Undeclared work (Schwarzarbeit):

A job that is paid but not registered with the tax office and a health insurer, and for which thus no taxes and social security payments are paid, is illegal and is referred to in Germany as "Schwarzarbeit". It can be punished with fines and prison! If someone gets social benefits or unemployment benefits, but still works and keeps their job secret from the Social Welfare Office (Sozialamt), the Employment Agency and the Jobcenter, this is also called "Schwarzarbeit". A person is thus wrongly receiving state benefits, even though they are in paid employment.

Job applications and interviews

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 posted a job vacancy online or in a newspaper. Posting a vacancy means that the company is looking for new employees. The job advertisement describes what type of work or vocational training it involves and what the company expects of the employee. It is also stated there where and how you have to apply.

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 plan 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 into 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.

An application usually consists of three parts:

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.

CV: The CV (curriculum vitae) lists your entire professional experience and is set out in the form of a table. Write the dates during which 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.

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.

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

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.

💡 You can find some more helpful tips for your application at [Planet Beruf \("Planet Career"\)](#).

💡 [Europass](#) is a multilingual (more than 20 languages) online platform that helps immigrants make their skills and expertise obvious to others. It offers a free online tool for creating a "language passport" or CV. You can also find important tips on writing good applications on Europass.

💡 You can have a free CV and cover letter generated here: [Bewerbung.net](#), [StepStone](#) or [Lebenslauf2go](#). Another option is [joblog](#). 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 and CVs here: [Bewerbung2go](#), [BewerbungsWissen](#), [Karrierebibel](#)

Language practice

💡 You can find exercises for practicing job applications and general aspects of starting a career on the [VHS learning portal "I want to learn German"](#) and on the [Goethe-Institut's website "German for you"](#). You can learn more about the professional world and improve your German language skills.

Looking for Work - Advice and Help

The following organisations offer support for job-seekers:

Fläming deine Chance: brings together the professional potential of migrants with the needs of regional companies in Fläming. Further information and contact at: <https://flaeming-deine-chance.de> (or [here](#) directly to job coaching).

Brandenburg deine Chance: modular system for counselling and training designed to adapt your competences and skills to the needs of the Brandenburg labour market through initial practical offers.

Immigration of Skilled Workers

The Skilled Workers Immigration Act (Fachkräfteeinwanderungsgesetz)

The Skilled Workers Immigration Act makes it easier for skilled workers with vocational, non-academic training to immigrate to Germany for work purposes. Existing regulations for skilled workers with university degrees will be maintained and in some cases made even easier.

1. For companies:

- **Accelerated skilled worker procedure:** With the power of attorney of the skilled worker, employers can file an accelerated skilled worker procedure with the competent Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde) in Germany. An agreement must be concluded between the company and the Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde). Among other things, the agreement must contain the powers of attorney and responsibilities of the employer, the skilled worker and the authorities involved (Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde), Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit), recognition offices, diplomatic representation abroad) as well as a description of the procedures including the parties involved and deadlines.
- The **fees** for the accelerated skilled worker procedure at the Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde) come to 411 euros. In addition, there is a visa fee of 75 euros as well as any other applicable fees (certified copies, translations).
- **The Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde) advises the employer** and supports them in carrying out the procedure for the recognition of the foreign qualification of the skilled worker. The Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde) shall obtain the approval of the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) and check the conditions for granting the permit under aliens law. The recognition offices and the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) must decide within the specified deadlines.
- If all **requirements** are met, the Bureau for Foreigners (Ausländerbehörde) will issue a so-called advance approval, which it will then send to the employer for forwarding to the skilled worker. The skilled worker then books an appointment with the diplomatic representation abroad to apply for the visa, which will take place within three weeks. At this appointment, the original advance approval must be presented together with other documents required for the visa application.
- Once the completed **visa application** has been submitted by the skilled worker, a decision will normally be made on it within an additional three weeks.
- The **accelerated procedure** for skilled workers also includes the skilled worker's spouse and underage, unmarried children if they meet the legal requirements for family reunification.

2. For skilled workers

- **Definition of skilled worker:** Skilled workers are defined as persons with a university degree or qualified vocational training of at least two years. A prerequisite for both groups is that their foreign qualifications have been recognised by the competent authority in Germany.

- **Labour market entry:** Entry into the labour market will be made easier: The qualified skilled worker must have an employment contract and a concrete job offer and a qualification recognised in Germany. The so-called priority review by the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit; BA) no longer applies. This means that it is no longer necessary to check whether an applicant from Germany or the EU is available for the specific job. The examination of working conditions by the BA remains in place.
- **Employment opportunities:** A skilled worker may be employed in an occupation that their qualification allows them to do. This means that it is possible to work in related professions. Additionally, skilled workers with an academic education are allowed to work outside of jobs that require a university degree. They may also be employed in other qualified occupations which fall within the professional context of the qualification and for which, in principle, vocational, non-academic training is required. Assistant professions and training professions are excluded, it must be qualified employment in all cases. The EU Blue Card always requires employment appropriate to the professional qualification, which usually requires an academic degree.
- **Skilled workers with vocational training:** The employment of skilled workers with vocational, that is, non-academic training is no longer limited to occupations with shortages. With a vocational training that has been recognised in Germany, residence permits (Aufenthaltstitel) for qualified employment will also allow these skilled workers access to all professions in which their qualifications allow them to work.
- **Entering the country to find a job:** Skilled workers with qualified vocational training are also able to enter the country to look for a job. You will receive a residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis) for up to six months. Prerequisites are that the foreign qualification has been recognised by the competent authority in Germany, that your livelihood is secured for the duration of your stay and that you have the appropriate knowledge of German for the job you are seeking. As a rule, a minimum knowledge of German at level B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages is required. During your stay while looking for a job, trial employment of up to ten hours a week is possible. This allows employers and foreign skilled workers to test whether they are suitable for each other. Trial employment is also possible for skilled workers with recognised academic qualifications, who are also allowed to enter the country for up to six months in order to look for work, as before.
- **Residence for qualification purposes:** The possibilities of staying in Germany for qualification purposes are being expanded. The prerequisite for this is generally that a recognition procedure from abroad has been carried out at the competent authority in Germany, in which deficits have been identified in the acquired foreign qualification in comparison to the German training (notice of recognition). An additional requirement for the issue of a visa for the purpose of undergoing qualification programmes is above all a knowledge of German corresponding to the qualification programme. These are usually at least sufficient German language skills (corresponding to language level A2). For example, the 18-month residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis) can now be extended by six months to a maximum period of two years for this purpose. After expiry of the maximum period of the residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis), a residence permit may be issued for the purpose of training, study or employment.
- **Settlement permit (Niederlassungserlaubnis) for skilled workers** from abroad: Foreign skilled workers can obtain a settlement permit (Niederlassungserlaubnis) in Germany after only four years (previously five years).

3. For training and studies

- **Entering the country to find a training placement:** It is already possible for prospective students to enter the country in search of a university placement. Under the new regulation, people interested in training can also enter the country to look for a training placement. Requirements are a level B2 knowledge of German, a degree from a German school abroad or a graduation certificate that entitles the holder to enter university, a maximum age of 25 years and independent livelihood provisions.
- **German language course** in preparation for training: With a residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis) for a qualified vocational training course, a German language course or a job-related German language course may be attended in preparation.
- **Expanded changeover possibilities for international students** in Germany: International students already have the opportunity to change to other residence permits (Aufenthaltstitel) even before they have completed their studies. For example, instead of continuing their studies, they can start vocational training and receive a residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis) for vocational training. The Skilled Workers Immigration Act has expanded the possibilities for such changes: Under special conditions and after examination by the BA, a job offer as a skilled worker can be accepted even during a study visit or a stay for vocational training or further education. This is accompanied by a change to a residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis) for qualified employment.
- **Settlement permit (Niederlassungserlaubnis) for graduates** of an apprenticeship in Germany: Under the new law, foreign graduates of vocational training in Germany can, just like university graduates, obtain a settlement permit (Niederlassungserlaubnis) after only two years.

🌐 This and more information can also be found on the page [Make it in Germany](#)

🌐 Here you can also perform a [quick test](#) to see your possibilities!

Self-employment

Who can start their own business in Germany?

If you are still in the asylum determination process, your application has been turned down or you have an exceptional leave to remain (Duldung), self-employed work is prohibited. In principle, anyone else has the option to set up their own business in Germany.

More information

🌐 [“GründerZeiten” online guide](#) (German and Arabic)

🌐 [Business start-up portal](#) (German, French, Italian, Russian and Turkish)

🌐 [Homepage of the IQ Competence Centre for Migrant Entrepreneurship](#) (english).

Berufsschule

Vocational schools offer teenagers and young adults over the age of 15 a variety of opportunities after they stop attending a general-education school. Vocational schools train students for a specific profession, and there is also the option of completing general-education school degrees. Children and adolescents in Germany are required to attend school until

the age of 18 (compulsory education)!

The following types of schooling exist at vocational schools:

career-entry (Berufseinstiegsjahr - BEJ) year or career-preparatory year (Berufsvorbereitungsjahr - BVJ)

These are programmes for students with or without a certain type of secondary-school diploma (Hauptschulabschluss) who are not yet sure what kind of career they are interested in and do not yet have a vocational training placement (apprenticeship) . They are introduced to various professions and can build on either a secondary school degree (Hauptschulabschluss) or acquire a "Hauptschulabschluss".

Vocational school (Berufsschule):

At these schools, training is through a dual-track system. This means that part of the vocational training focuses on theory, which is learned at the school, while the other part involves getting practical experience at a company that provides vocational training.

Vocational schools for specific professions (Berufsfachschule):

This type of vocational school offers 1 to 3 years of basic vocational education, preparation for a specific profession or professional qualification. Students can obtain a degree ranging from a secondary school degree one level above the one they have to a basic secondary school degree. This type of vocational school are usually split into the following professional fields:

- commercial/business professions
- home economics/socio-educational care or nursing
- business/technical professions

Preparatory training school (Fachschule):

This type of preparatory training school offers one-year or two-year programmes for professional development. This means that students are building on their previously completed vocational training programme and corresponding employment, and further developing the qualifications they have already acquired. These schools prepare students for mid-level management or self-employment. The preparatory training schools (Fachschulen) are also divided into the following subject areas:

- Technology
- Economics
- Social work
- Agricultural economics
- Design

Vocational college (Berufskolleg):

Vocational colleges, which offer programmes from one to three years, build on a basic secondary-school degree, and students aim to achieve a more advanced professional qualification or qualification for higher education at a technical university (eligibility for university study) . There are vocational colleges for the following fields:

- Technology
- Economics and administration
- Social education
- Health and nursing
- Home economics

Upper secondary vocational school (Berufsoberschule):

To attend an upper secondary vocational school, you need to have already completed a vocational training programme (apprenticeship) and, at minimum, a basic secondary school degree (mittlerer Schulabschluss). These schools' programmes usually last two years and prepare students for a subject-specific university entrance certificate or, if they speak a second foreign language, a general university entrance certificate. This makes them eligible to study at a university. The following types of upper secondary vocational schools exist:

- Technical upper secondary school (Technische Oberschule)
- Upper secondary school for economics (Wirtschaftsoberschule)
- Upper secondary school for social work (Oberschule für Sozialwesen)

Vocational grammar school (Berufliches Gymnasium):

Students with a basic secondary-school degree and an average grade of 3.0 in the main subjects may attend a three-year vocational grammar school. The vocational grammar school ends with a general university entrance certificate (Abitur) and makes the student eligible to study at any research university or university of applied sciences. This type of school is likewise split up into corresponding subject areas:

- Technical subjects
- Economics
- Social work and healthcare
- Agricultural sciences
- Biotechnological subjects
- Nutritional science

Education (dual training and full-time school)

In Germany, it is a great advantage to have a **vocational qualification** before going to work. People with professional qualifications earn more money on average over the course of their lives, are less likely to be unemployed, and are less likely to have temporary contracts than those without professional qualifications.

Dual training

A special feature in Germany is the dual training system. About one third of the time, dual vocational training takes place at the [vocational school](#) and about two thirds of the time at a training company. You can simultaneously learn theory and practice while earning money at a company during your apprenticeship.

Depending on the type of profession you would like to learn in dual training, you should contact the right place:

Chamber of Crafts (HWK; Handwerkskammer)

The Chamber of Crafts (HWK) is responsible for craft trades. In this case, professions like baker, brick mason or painter.

 www.hwk-potsdam.de

Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK Industrie- und Handelskammer)

The Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK) is responsible for professions in industrial manufacturing, trade and services. Here, for example, it concerns plant mechanics or traders in wholesale and foreign trade.

 www.ihk.de

Preschool education at the vocational school

In Germany, however, not only is there the option for dual training, but there is also full-time school-based training at a vocational school (Berufsfachschule). The Berufsfachschule provides full vocational training in theory and practice, outside of the dual apprenticeship system (without an apprenticeship at a company). It usually lasts two to three and a half years. The course is full-time and includes general subjects in addition to the professional subjects. Since the vocational schools differ greatly in terms of their faculties, admission requirements, training duration and further education possibilities, it is advisable to make enquiries at the school in question.


Oberstufenzentrum Technik Teltow

 [Potsdamer Str. 4, 14513 Teltow](#)

 www.osz-teltow.de

 info@osz-teltow.de

Oberstufenzentrum Werder

 [Altenkirch-Weg 6-7, 14542 Werder \(Havel\)](#)

 www.osz-werder.de

 info@osz-werder.de

Studies

University-level study

General information


In Germany, there are many different courses of study. There are also different types of universities:


- Universitäten = universities (more academically focused)
- (Fach)Hochschulen = universities of applied sciences; polytechnics (more practically focused)
- Duale Hochschulen = “dual universities” (very practically focused)
- Kunst, Film und Musikhochschulen = universities for art, film and music (for the arts and performing arts)


There are public and private universities. Private universities are not necessarily better than public ones – however, students usually have to pay high tuition fees at private universities.

Helpful websites:

 [Hochschulkompass \(Higher Education Compass\)](#) (list of all courses of study and universities in Germany)

 [Study in Germany](#) (information for refugees)

 [Agentur für Arbeit Studienorientierung \(study programme orientation from the Federal Employment Agency\)](#)

 [Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst \(German Academic Exchange Service\)](#) (DAAD - All study programmes in Germany)

Prerequisites

If you want to study in Germany, you need a university entrance qualification. If you do not have an Abitur degree from a German school, you need to check whether the secondary school degree you obtained in your home country is sufficient for you to enter a German university.

You can find more detailed information on the [Anabin](#) website, through the “Recognition in Germany” information portal and on the website of the [German Academic Exchange Service \(DAAD\)](#).

You also need to bring proof of your good German language skills (level C1), such as a certificate from the TestDaF, DSH or telc Deutsch C1 Hochschule.

It is also possible to get support from the educational counselling organisation Garantiefonds Hochschule.

Some universities also offer preparatory semesters during which you can learn German. You should get information directly from the university at which you would like to study. Most universities have counselling services available. Also make note of the deadlines by which you need to apply for a course of study!

Without a university entrance qualification

If you are eligible to study at university in your home country, but not in Germany, you may be able to get access to higher education through a preparatory college (Studienkolleg). There, foreign university applicants are given targeted preparation for future studies at a German research university or university of applied sciences.

Financing and Scholarships

As a student in Germany, it is possible to receive financial support through the Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz, a federal act for promoting higher education referred to as "BAföG" for short. The payments are made monthly and, in the best case, continue for the duration of your course of study. The monthly sum provided by the BAföG can be somewhere between €399 and €735. Half of the BAföG total must be paid back after course of study has been completed. The exact information on the BAföG changes regularly and can therefore be found under the following link:

[!\[\]\(c3d993ca47bfe2a953c700506ce31fa0_img.jpg\) Website about BAföG for refugees and migrants](#)

As an alternative to the BAföG, it is also possible to get a scholarship. In contrast to the BAföG, a scholarship usually does not need to be paid back. Therefore, one must perform well and take on some voluntary commitments in order to be awarded a scholarship. The amount is often calculated in line with the BAföG. There is also an additional €300 paid monthly, this is known as "Büchergeld".

Organisations that award scholarships are often described as foundations that offer scholarships. The following foundations offer programmes, among other things, especially for refugees. Please refer to the respective websites for application guidelines and requirements.

[!\[\]\(003082e50e3009141f59bd5df831749f_img.jpg\) Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung \(FES\) - Scholarships for Refugees](#)

[!\[\]\(17413706fd4997a1a4bdf85c6864eee1_img.jpg\) Böckler-Aktion Bildung by the Hans-Böckler-Stiftung](#)

[!\[\]\(faf942dc3e59ce8eb64b4ac481eca7e0_img.jpg\) Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung \(KAS\) - Scholarships for Refugees](#)

[!\[\]\(cf531ed27e91483460120fcc057b3901_img.jpg\) Villigst - Our Scholarships for refugees](#)

[!\[\]\(d3102649f02e825ddb76dc3de0190154_img.jpg\) Brot für die Welt - Flüchtlingsstipendienprogramm \(Refugee Scholarship Program\)](#)

One exception is, for example, the guarantee fund by Otto Benecke Stiftung. The programme is aimed at migrants who are new in the country and who would like to get the higher education entrance qualification, prepare to go to university, and start their academic career. There is also the Deutschland-Stipendium that provides €300 monthly as financial support. The Deutschland-Stipendium is awarded through the respective universities.

[!\[\]\(95b425611cbd2b8716a140cf67c81822_img.jpg\) University guarantee fund from Otto Benecke Stiftung in Bonn](#)

[!\[\]\(b4eeff342f60cc7bcd67d869b4fedca2_img.jpg\) Deutschlandstipendium: Become a scholarship holder](#)

You will find further information on this website.

<https://www.study-in-germany.de/de/studium-planen...>


Recognition of credentials


Recognition of foreign educational qualifications

In Germany, **certificates** play an important role for schools, studies or careers. Certificates are used to demonstrate what you have learned and accomplished. Certificates are the decisive prerequisite for getting a job or being admitted to a school or university. So if you have already acquired certificates abroad at school, in training or in a course of study, you should make every effort to ensure that these certificates are **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. It may be that you no longer have your certificates with you. In this case, you can try to have your professional experience and professional abilities recognised by passing some tests.

Advisory Board for Recognition

The Federal Government's information portal on the recognition of foreign professional qualifications provides further information at:

 www.anererkennung-in-deutschland.de.

 If you want to study or work as a researcher, please contact a university to get your diploma recognised.

Official authentication of certificates/credentials

An official certification is a confirmation of the authenticity of a document. This is necessary, for example, for enrolment at a university. All photocopies of your credentials must be officially authenticated.

Official certification, as required for certificates and official documents, may only be carried out in Germany by a seal-bearing authority. Specialist translators usually work with the authorities and take care of the translation of the documents, as well as their certification procedures. Online, you can quickly find translators who can have their translations officially certified via all search engines. When looking for a translator, it is important that they explicitly offer **official certification**, because public certification is not sufficient here. The [counselling centres for the recognition of foreign vocational qualifications](#) are happy to help.

Children, young people and family

Information

Children, young people and families are particularly well protected in Germany. This protection begins during pregnancy and continues until the child is 18 years old (of full age). In Germany, for example, it is forbidden to beat children. Children must be brought up in Germany without using violence. All children must attend school. Special authorities also make sure that children are not harmed by their environment (or even by their family).

Pregnancy and Childbirth

Pregnancy and birth

Pregnant women in Germany enjoy special protection and are entitled to advice, medical care and support with obtaining baby products. If you are pregnant, the first step is to visit a gynaecologist (women's doctor). The doctor will carry out a medical check-up. You will then receive a Mutterpass (maternity record book). The maternity card is a document with important information about your pregnancy, your health, and your child's health. Always take your maternity card with you in case of emergencies.

Midwife

Midwives are there to support women and their families from the beginning of pregnancy up until the end of breastfeeding. Midwives provide advice during pregnancy, can help during childbirth, can introduce women on how to breastfeed after giving birth and also ensure the physical and mental recovery of the woman. Every woman is able to get the help of a midwife. Most services are paid for by your health insurance company.


 [Midwives Association Website](#)


Childbirth and aftercare

Your gynaecologist will refer you to a maternity hospital. After delivery, ask for a midwife for aftercare at your accommodation. You will receive a birth confirmation letter from the clinic.

Registration at the Register Office (Standesamt)


New-borns must be reported to the Register Office (Standesamt) of their place of residence and possibly also to the accommodation management. The maternity clinic reports the birth to the Registry Office. If you show the Registry Office your ID, the birth confirmation letter you got from the clinic, and your marriage certificate (if you have one), they will give you a (possibly provisional) birth certificate.

 Please only provide original documents. For documents in a foreign language, an officially certified German translation is required.

 If you live in shared accommodation, please provide a copy of the birth certificate to your accommodation facility management so that your child can be registered.

Paediatrician

There are ten screening tests (U1-U9 and J1). Until the age of 6, children are regularly examined and supported in their 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 children's doctor (paediatrician).

 A proof of complete early detection examinations may be required when applying to the [day-care centre](#).

Childcare

Day-care (Kita)

A day-care centre (Kita) is a term for children's day-care. Before your child starts school and between the ages of 1 and 12 years old, they can attend a day-care centre. From the child's 1st birthday, you even have a legal right to a day-care place! Unfortunately, there are not always enough places close to your home or accommodation. To find a space for your child, ask the Child Welfare Services or your accommodation support centre. You can get more information [here](#).

In the day-care, your child will be supervised by nursery school teachers and will learn a lot of important things. Some schools also accept children under the age of one.

The fees for the nursery school or day-care centre are paid for by the city or district in many cases. To avail of this financial support, you must submit an application to the Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt).

There are different types of day-care centres for different age groups (called a "Krippe", "Kindergarten" or "Hort").

💡 Day-care (Kita) is a place for your child to learn German and discover new things. There, your child also makes contact with other children while learning to make friends and discovering German culture. Take advantage of this opportunity; it is important for your child's future. Attending a children's daycare centre is also good preparation for school.

"Krippe"

A "Krippe" is a day-care centre for children between the ages of 1 and 3. There, specially trained staff will encourage the children's development in small groups. It is particularly important for these employees to be attentive and caring.

Kindergarten

A kindergarten is a day-care centre for children over the age of 3 before they reach school age. It is a place for kids to play with others, paint, do crafts and learn. During the final year of kindergarten, children regularly attend pre-school lessons preparing them for their transition to primary school. There are both private and public kindergartens. Whether or not you need to pay for kindergarten depends on the specific kindergarten your child attends and your place of residence.

(Primary) school children up to 12 years

There are also after-school supervision options for school students between the ages of 6 and 12. There are many different types of supervision programmes: "Hort" (after-school programme), lunchtime supervision or full-day schooling. All of these formats provide homework support for children. And there's plenty of time for fun and games, too. Your child's primary school or the Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt) will tell you which supervision format your city offers for (primary) school students.

School for children aged 6 to 18

In Germany, attending school is compulsory. This period of school attendance totals twelve years; nine of those are “full-time compulsory education” (general compulsory education) and three are “part-time compulsory education” (compulsory vocational education). “Part-time compulsory education” does not apply if the person attends school full-time during that period. If not followed by [vocational training](#) or attendance at a continuing school, the period of full-time compulsory education totals ten years (including a “Berufsgrundbildungsjahr” – a year of basic vocational training). Compulsory education ends when the child reaches age 18 if they are not enrolled in vocational training. The parents or guardians have a duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly. Going to state and municipal schools is free of cost.

In Germany, there are different types of schools. The type of school your child should attend depends on many factors, including the child’s age and performance at school.

💡 The school often gives children written information to take home with them and give to their parents. It is important that you read this information.

The school system in Brandenburg:

The school career begins for all children in Brandenburg with **Grundschule**. This covers grades 1 to 6, provides a basic education and leads to further learning in Secondary Level I (grades 7 to 10). This is followed by one of the three secondary schools, depending on the child's learning success:

- **Oberschule**
comprises grades 7 to 10, provides a basic and extended general education, includes the courses of education for the acquisition of the extended Berufsbildungsreife and the Fachoberschulreife, entitles the student to attend the gymnasiale Oberstufe if in-depth general education is provided.
- **Gesamtschule** with gymnasiale Oberstufe
covers grades 7 to 13, imparts a basic, extended or in-depth general education, includes the courses of education leading to the extended Berufsbildungsreife, the Fachoberschulreife and the general Hochschulreife.
- **Gymnasium**
comprises grades 7 to 12, provides in-depth general education and includes the course of education leading to the general Hochschulreife.

An overview of all schools in the District of Potsdam-Mittelmark can be found [here](#). However, your child can also attend a school in a neighbouring district or independent city.

Family benefits

Parental allowance

Parental allowance (Elterngeld) compensates for the limitation to parents’ income that results from working less or not at all after the birth of their child. Even parents who are separated and do not live together can receive parental allowance. The amount of parental allowance depends on the respective parent’s income before accessing the allowance. You can receive parental allowance if you have a specific kind of residence permit in Germany: a “Niederlassungserlaubnis” or an “Aufenthaltserlaubnis”. You can find more detailed information in German, English, Turkish and Russian [here](#).

Child benefit

All parents with a “Niederlassungserlaubnis” or an “Aufenthaltserlaubnis” in Germany have the right to receive child benefits (Kindergeld). This benefit is paid for every child between birth and (at minimum) age 18. You need to apply directly to the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) to receive child benefits. You can find more detailed information in German, English, Turkish and Russian [here](#).

Unaccompanied minor refugees

Refugees under the age of 18 who have entered Germany **unaccompanied** are called **unbegleitete minderjährige Ausländer = umA**. These youths are reported to the Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt). The Youth Welfare Office talks to the young people and determines their age. The decision on how old the child is determines whether the Youth Welfare Office will take care of the underage person (younger than 18) and place them in special accommodation for young people (“custody”). If the Youth Welfare Office says that the person is “of age” (18 years and older), the person receives a rejection notice and is treated as an adult. The Youth Welfare Office will bring an interpreter to the appointment.

💡 If you are not yet 18 years old on your proof of arrival, but the Youth Welfare Office gives you a rejection notice, the Youth Welfare Office must enter a new date of birth on the decision. Only then can you have your documents changed by the Bureau for Foreigners and the Social Welfare Office.

Some minors (persons under the age of 18) enter the country without their parents, but **with relatives** (for example with an uncle or aunt, cousins or older siblings). Your accommodation support will report this to the Youth Welfare Office after your arrival. The Youth Welfare Office talks to the minor and the adult relatives and checks whether the minors can stay there. In addition, the Youth Welfare Office will decide whether a guardian is to be appointed. The Youth Welfare Office will bring an interpreter with it to the interview.

💡 Adult relatives can also go to the Family Court to apply to be the child's official guardian. The relative(s) with the guardianship take full responsibility for the minor(s) in place of the parents.

Health

Information

In Germany you are entitled to basic medical care for acute illnesses and pain. You are also entitled to any officially recommended vaccination and preventive medical checkup. In addition, you will receive free medical services which are essential to the safeguarding of health. Seek medical advice if:

- You are acutely ill or in pain

- You are pregnant
- you are chronically ill, for example if you have diabetes, epilepsy or mental illness. If you have any other medicines or the medicine leaflet, bring them to the doctor's appointment. If you have already been to the doctor or hospital because of the illness, please bring the results or findings with you.

👤 Once you have a residence permit, you must register with a regular health insurance scheme. From the health insurer, you will get a health insurance card. With this card, you have the right to the same health services as all residents in Germany.

Guidepost

A guide for refugees helps you to quickly find your way around the health system in Brandenburg. Download our "How to deal with the health system in Brandenburg" [here](#): in Arabic, German, English, Farsi or Russian.

www.gesundheitliche-chancengleichheit.de

Visiting a doctor

Family doctors and specialist doctors

If you are ill, see your family doctor. You can choose your own doctor. The opening hours are decided by the general practitioners themselves. So you need to make an appointment if you need to see a family doctor.

Your family doctor will give you a general check-up and is your first point of contact when you are ill. They also decide what medication you need and whether you need to see a specialist.

If necessary, your family doctor will refer you to a specialist who can carry out specific tests.

If the office is closed, the medical on-call service will help you

☎ [115116](tel:115116)

Paediatricians

Children are usually examined by paediatricians. Regular check-ups and vaccinations by the paediatrician are important for the health of every child. The required preventative check-ups are called "U check-ups" and always take place at a certain time and date; they are free of charge. Please ask a paediatrician for information for yourself and your child about the legally regulated and required U check-ups.

Dentists

If you have toothache, you should go to the dentist.

Gynaecologists

It is important for women to be regularly examined by a gynaecologist. This helps detect illnesses early enough to treat them. This is called screening. You can also discuss contraception there.

💡 If you need help finding a suitable doctor, ask your support network or your accommodation management.

👤 If you are an asylum seeker and need to see a doctor, you will receive a treatment certificate from the [Social Welfare Office \(Sozialamt\)](#). This means your visit to the doctor will be free of charge.

👤 If an operation is necessary and it is **not** an emergency, the [Social Welfare Office \(Sozialamt\)](#) must approve the hospital stay in advance. Your doctor will provide you with a medical certificate. Only medically necessary interventions can be assumed.

Medication and pharmacies/chemists

If you need medicine, you will get a prescription from your doctor. You can get your medication with this prescription at any pharmacy. Even with a prescription, not all medication is free. There are some medications (such as antibiotics) which you can only get with a prescription. Which means you cannot buy them without a prescription.

Chemist's shops are usually open from Monday to Saturday. The opening times vary according to each chemist. If you need medication urgently at night or on weekends, you will find a sign at every chemist's shop with the name and address of the chemist's shop that is available for emergency service. You can also find this information on the Internet.

Search for emergency chemist's shop services

🌐 www.aponet.de

👤 As an asylum seeker you can get lots of medication free of charge. Ask your doctor about it. 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. Only contact the emergency medical services or ambulance services if there is an emergency or acute health risk.

Emergency contacts

Police 📞 [110](tel:110)

Fire brigade, ambulance and ambulance service 📞 [112](tel:112)

Ambulance, emergency doctor 📞 [112](tel:112)

💡 Emergency numbers always work on mobile phones, even with pre-paid cards without credit/money!

Important information for an emergency call

- **Who** is calling (your name)?
- **Where** did it happen (address)?
- **What** has happened?

- **How many** injured or sick are there?
- **What kind** of illnesses or injuries are there?
- **Wait** for questions!

Stay calm. Speak slowly and clearly so that people understand you better. Do not end the conversation. The emergency call centre / the police will end the call when all important information has been transmitted.

💡 Don't forget your ID card or your proof of arrival when you go to the hospital! If you are already registered with a health insurance company, bring your insurance card with you.

👤 You can only go to the hospital without a medical treatment certificate if it is an emergency. At the hospital, you must show your arrival certificate/ID in order to prove that you are an asylum seeker and that the costs are covered by the Social Welfare Office.

Health Insurance

In Germany, it is mandatory to be insured. That means that as soon as you have a residence permit (Aufenthaltstitel), you must register with a regular health insurance company. From the health insurer, you will get a health insurance card. With this card, you have the right to the same health services as all residents in Germany.

In the case of an acute illness, you will also receive basic care in many foreign physician practices and hospitals (information on this can be obtained from your health insurance company).

You can choose a general practitioner (family doctor) of your choice. If you need treatment from a specialist, you will receive a referral from your general practitioner.

💡 Remember to take your insurance card with you if you are being treated by doctors, in hospitals or by recognised therapists.

Insurance card

A health insurance card from a insurance provider permits you to receive medical treatment throughout Germany. On the rear side of card is also the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). With this, you are well protected in all EU countries as well as many other European countries and even some non-European states.

💡 For a trip abroad outside of the EU, we recommend travel health insurance as a supplement, as you will get even more services.

This [website](#) provides information in German and English on the basic aspects of the German healthcare system.

You can find all relevant information about health insurance in 40 languages 🌐 [here](#). It will have an explanation for different target groups in which it will explain who is covered by statutory and private health insurance, what needs to be considered and more.

👤 Refugees and asylum seekers who are not yet covered by health insurance require health certificates in order to see a doctor. You can get these certificates from the [Social Welfare Office \(Sozialamt\)](#).

Counselling centres and assistance services

Helpline for women experiencing violence

 [08000116016](tel:08000116016)

 www.hilfetelefon.de

The "Gewalt gegen Frauen" (Violence against women) helpline provides counselling for affected women everywhere in Germany. It provides information and, if needed, can put you in contact with suitable support organisations in your area. The (female) counsellors on this helpline provide advice for all forms of violence against women. Online counselling is also available on the website. All conversations are confidential and can be anonymous if you wish. You will not be asked to provide any personal information, and any information you share will not be recorded. This applies to both the telephone helpline and the website. Counselling is available in many languages with the help of interpreters. If you have a hearing impairment, you can request an interpreter (free of cost) through the website. The conversation with the helpline counsellor will then be translated into German sign language or writing.

Der Familienratgeber (The Family Counsellor)

 www.familienratgeber.de

The Familienratgeber (family counsellor) website of Aktion Mensch offers information and addresses for people with disabilities and their families. People with disabilities and their families can find important information about living with disabilities in simple and easy German on the website: From school, to work, leisure, accessibility, rights, housing, counselling, health and long-term care insurance and much more.

Men

You can find help for men affected by violence by calling 0800 123 9900.

Everyday life and interaction

Information

Are you new to Germany? Moving to a foreign country involves many questions and a lot of work. Everyday life (or some German ways of life) must seem unfamiliar to many refugees and immigrants. To make it a little easier for you to navigate everyday life, here are a few practical tips.

Mobility

All places in your new city/town and the surrounding areas can be easily reached by public transport. A healthy, inexpensive and environmentally friendly alternative to get from A to B is a bicycle.

Public transport

Public transport is available to you so you can make your way around in Potsdam Mittelmark. There are various buses and the regional train from Berlin via Potsdam, Michendorf, Seddin, Beelitz, Brück, Bad Belzig and Wiesenburg to Dessau (and vice versa).

💡 Travelling without a ticket, also known as fare-dodging (“Schwarzfahren” in German), is punishable by a fine! A valid ticket is required for each trip. Otherwise you will pay a large penalty.

Here you can find information about buses: www.regiobus-pm.de

Here is the timetable of the train: www.bahn.de

Bicycles

If you know that you will be living in Potsdam-Mittelmark for a longer period, it is worth buying a bike. It is cheaper than taking public transit.

💡 Important road rules for cyclists (excerpt):

- Always ride on the right-hand side of the road
- Do not ride next to each other, but one behind the other
- If there is a cycle path, you must ride on the cycle path (always on the right side of the road in the direction of travel).
- Only children up to the age of 11 are allowed to cycle along the walkways
- Using a mobile phone on a bicycle is prohibited.

💡 Purchase and repairs: When you buy your bike, make sure that it is equipped as follows and therefore safe to drive. Otherwise, you will have to pay a fine when subject to a police check.

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

Bicycle repair

There is a **bicycle workshop for refugees in Bad Belzig**. Appointments can be made at:

0151 /597 206 81 or schrecker.t.j@posteo.de

Other cities also have bicycle repair shops, use an internet search or ask your support network!

Personal liability insurance

If you do not intentionally cause damage to a person in Germany, you must pay compensation according to the law. This applies to personal injury, material damage and property damage in the private sector. For example, if you cause a traffic accident or if your child breaks a window pane with a ball.

In Germany, you can take out a personal liability insurance policy that pays for these damages for you and your family/children. You can decide for yourself if you want to take out insurance. But we strongly recommend it.

💡Your Support Network can assist you in finding a good offer for personal liability insurance.

Broadcasting fees

Germany has independent radio, television and online services from ARD, ZDF and Deutschlandradio. They report in a way that is free from economic and political influences. For this, all people pay money together. This is called "broadcasting fees".

According to the law: In Germany, a broadcasting fee must be paid for each apartment. However, only one person per apartment has to pay the radio licence fee. It costs €17.50 per month and must be paid to the Fee Services department (Beitragsservice) of ARD, ZDF and Deutschlandradio. You can find more information in the following informational flyer (also available [here](#) in English, French, Arabic, Turkish and Russian) as well as on the [Rundfunkbeitrag website](#).

Some people can be exempted from this payment. For example, if you receive benefits under the "Asylbewerberleistungsgesetz" (Asylum Seekers Benefits Act) or other social benefits. An application must be submitted for exemption from the broadcasting fee.

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

Internet and free Wi-Fi

Public, free Wi-Fi hotspots

Free Wi-Fi is available at several locations (hotspots) near you. In these places, you can surf the Internet with your own device. Please note that restaurants and shops usually only provide Wi-Fi for customers.

Public hotspots:

- Fast food chains (for example McDonalds, Burger King, Starbucks, Subway)
- Some shops (for example Apple Store, IKEA, H&M, Real, Galeria Kaufhof, Lidl, Rewe)
- Some stations
- Deutsche Bank
- There are also apps that help you find hotspots: for example, "WLAN Instabridge" or "Wifi Map".

👤As an asylum seeker in Germany, you unfortunately have no legal right to internet access (Wi-Fi) in your accommodation. However, Wi-Fi has been set up in all shared accommodation in the district. Please enquire with the management.

If there is a telephone connection in the accommodation, it is also possible that you can sign up for a Wi-Fi contract yourself. Ask your support network to advise you in choosing a good contract. Speak with the other people living in the accommodation about the cost. Consider whether a contract that you can always cancel is better than a contract that is valid for a long time (for example 2 years) . Talk to your accommodation facility management team first and, before entering into a contract, ask whether Wi-Fi is technically possible and how you can

give the technician access to the building.

Current Account (Girokonto)

A current account (Girokonto) is an account for people who want to make payments via a bank. Your money is available in your current account (Girokonto) at any time. Make sure you have enough money in your account for all withdrawals and payments.


With a current account (Girokonto), you can:


- transfer money
- Receive cashless payments (disbursements from agencies/authorities/social benefits are often cashless, meaning they are transferred directly to a personal current account (Girokonto))
- set up standing orders
- Use direct debit services
- Cash a cheque, make cashless payments with an EC/Maestro card
- withdraw money at the bank counter or an ATM
- print your bank statements


Opening an account


Decide which bank you want to open an account with. Make an appointment to open the account. Please bring one of your identity documents with you: Arrival certificate, residence permit, or ID card. If no current address is recorded on the identity document, please provide a registration certificate or similar document.


- Once the account has been opened, you will receive an EC card with a four-digit PIN code. Sign the back of the EC card and memorise your PIN code. You will need the PIN code for cashless payments and to withdraw money from ATMs. **Make sure you keep your card and your PIN code separate!**
- If you wish to withdraw cash, it is best to use the ATM of the bank where you have your account. Withdrawals are then free of charge. If the PIN code is entered incorrectly three times at the ATM, the EC card is withdrawn and blocked. If this happens, you must speak to your bank.
- If you lose your EC card or it is stolen, have it blocked immediately. Tell them your sort code and your account number. Then ask your bank for a new EC card.

 [116116](tel:116116)

 Around the clock.

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

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

 If you need assistance using the EC card correctly, ask your [support network](#).

Contracts and mobile phones

Contracts

Very important: Never sign something that you have not understood or been able to read. Otherwise, you may sign a contract or agreement that requires you to pay something. It is sometimes very difficult to undo this. Always check and compare several offers and decide at your leisure. Do not let anyone push you for a signature.

Mobile phones

In Germany, there are two different types of mobile phone contracts: **pre-paid contract** and **fixed-term contract**. The prepaid contract does not have a fixed term. The fixed-term contract has a minimum contract period. This contract is automatically renewed if you do not cancel. If you do not want the contract to be automatically renewed, you must cancel in writing. Pay attention to the deadline.

10 important questions for the conclusion of a contract:

- What is the basic fee? Does the fee increase after a certain period?
- Is there a minimum monthly fee?
- How long is the contract period (12 or 24 months)?
- If I don't terminate the contract, will it be renewed automatically?
- When do I have to cancel if I do not want to extend the contract?
- How much are the fees for setting up, changing or deactivating?
- What is the charging period? Do you have to pay each and every minute you start?
- How much does a minute cost (different/own network)?
- What are the costs for buying a mobile phone with and without a contract?
- How much does Internet access cost?
- How much does it cost to call abroad?

💡 Ask your Support Network for help, so that you can choose and finalise a good contract.

Meeting Points

Protestant Parish Kleinmachnow
Jägerstieg 2, 14532 Kleinmachnow

Meet-up café Zehlendorfer Damm 112; Sundays 2 - 5 p.m.
info@fluechtlingshilfe-kleinmachnow.de
buero@ev-kirche-kleinmachnow.de

Protestant Parish Teltow
Meet-up café
Ritterstr. 11, 14513 Teltow
Fluechtlingshilfe-teltow@gmx.de

New Neighbours Networks

Meet-up café, accompaniment, support in learning German

Support and accompaniment of refugees and migrants in Werder (Havel), especially people from the local shared accommodation

kontakt@netzwerk-neuenachbarn-werder.de

www.netzwerk-neuenachbarn-werder.de

Infocafé Der Winkel

open café, internet café, information evenings

Straße der Einheit 25, 14806 Bad Belzig

infocafe@derwinkel.de

www.derwinkel.de

For further offers, please contact the specialists for intercultural projects, the integration officer or the volunteer coordinator.

Taxes and tax returns

Your income in Germany will be taxed. If you have an employer (i.e. are “angestellt”), you will receive the net sum of your salary from your employer – in other words, your taxes have already been deducted. If you are self-employed, you need to calculate your taxes yourself.

Tax ID number

The tax ID is a 11-digit number and is used for income tax. The employer needs this number. If you do not have this number in your documents, you can ask for it personally at the registration office (Meldebehörde) or in writing from the Federal Tax Office (Bundesamt für Steuern).

💡 If you need help with your tax return, you should contact the local tax authority. If you have any further questions, the tax office can also help you.

Religion

Freedom of religion

The principle of the freedom of religion is in force in Germany. It 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. It is also prohibited to discriminate against people on the basis of their religion, for example when looking for a job. Religious freedom also includes accepting the faith of others. Germany does not have a state church. The state and religion are separate.

That means, for example:

- All people are allowed to freely choose and practice their own religions and beliefs
- Everyone also has the freedom not to be religious - those who do not believe in God are allowed to say so publicly

- People of different religions and faiths may marry among themselves
- Marriage only counts as legally binding if it is entered into at the Register Office (Standesamt). Marriages entered into exclusively within the framework of a religion are not legally binding in Germany.
- Religious laws do not govern the legal system in Germany

Religious Practice

Many religious communities are organised in their own local church congregations.

Being in contact with a religious community is not only important for celebrating mass together, but also for interacting with others in different groups or meetings. You can find out about all the different offers of the respective religious community on their website, over the phone or in person.

Leisure and sport

Having fun when exercising is one thing. But sport offers you another benefit, too: It is a great and proven way to settle into a new environment and make contact with new people. The rules of sport do not know any cultural or national boundaries and are usually understood without a common language. Sport offers a good, informal possibility to make contact with locals through new friends.

The Kreissportbund promotes integration through sport in sports clubs: www.ksb-pm.de

Libraries

A library is an institution where you can borrow books, CDs, learning materials and learning aids to use at home. It is also a quiet place where you can go to read or study.

📍 [Here](#) you can find libraries in your area (alphabetical order). You have to register to use it. There is also the possibility to borrow eBooks and online journals (if you have a device for reading, for example eBook reader or PC/tablet). The use of the library costs a (small) annual fee. Note: If you return borrowed media too late, you have to pay a late fee. Therefore, please make sure to hand everything in on time or extend it if possible! The exact rules will be explained at registration.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans* and inter* (LGBTI)

Many people live together in Germany. They have different religions. They are of different genders. They come from different countries. They have different political views. All these people live together peacefully. They have the same rights.

The same applies to people of different sexual orientations or gender identities. These include lesbians, gays, bisexuals and 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". Transgender people can change their gender in Germany. They can also change their name. 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. 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. There you will find support, social contacts and information. You can find contact details at the LSVD project "Queer Refugees Deutschland". You can also find more information:

Lesbian and Gay Federation in Germany (LSVD)

Queer Refugees Germany" project

🌐 www.queer-refugees.de

✉ queer-refugees@lsvd.de