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Work

Information

How and when you can work in Germany all depends on your Residence status. For specific Informations and Contact persons, please visit [Access to the Job Market](#).

Welcome Centre Potsdam

The **Welcome Centre** is an advice centre for people who have immigrated from abroad or have a migration background. We provide advice on the subject of work and job hunting.

Our **counselling services**:

- Preparation for job interviews
- Advice on the labour market
- Search for work, training and language courses
- Help with writing applications
- Placement in training, internships and work
- Counselling on all aspects of the topic: Life, family, leisure time, education and everyday life in Potsdam
- Counselling is available in German, English, Arabic, Kurdish, Turkish, Russian, Ukrainian and French possible.

Welcome Center | Landeshauptstadt Potsdam

📍 [Behlertstr. 3a, 14467 Potsdam](#)

@ Welcome-Center@Rathaus.Potsdam.de

☎ [+49 \(0\) 3312892870](tel:+493312892870)

🌐 <https://vv.potsdam.de/vv/produkte/willkommen-in-b...>

Looking for work

Looking for Work - Advice and Help

The following centres in Potsdam offer support for job-seekers:

Agentur für Arbeit Potsdam | Bundesagentur für Arbeit

📍 [Horstweg 102 - 108, 14478 Potsdam](#)

☎ [+49 \(0\) 3318802000](tel:+493318802000)

🌐 <https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/vor-ort/potsdam>

Jobcenter Landeshauptstadt Potsdam | Bundesagentur für Arbeit

📍 [Horstweg 102 - 108, 14478 Potsdam](#)

@jobcenter-landeshauptstadt-potsdam@jobcenter-ge.de

☎ [+49 \(0\) 3318804000](tel:+49(0)3318804000)

🌐 <https://www.jobcenter-potsdam.de/>

Jugendberufsagentur Potsdam

📍 [Horstweg 96, 14478 Potsdam](#)

@JBA-Potsdam@arbeitsagentur.de

☎ [+49 \(0\) 8004555500](tel:+49(0)8004555500)

🌐 <https://www.meinejbainbrandenburg.de/potsdam/>

Berufsinformationszentrum (BiZ) | Agentur für Arbeit Potsdam

📍 [Horstweg 102-108, 14478 Potsdam](#)

@Potsdam.BiZ@arbeitsagentur.de

☎ [+49 \(0\) 3318802149](tel:+49(0)3318802149)

🌐 <https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/vor-ort/potsdam/biz...>

Welcome Center | Landeshauptstadt Potsdam

📍 [Behlertstr. 3a, 14467 Potsdam](#)

@Welcome-Center@Rathaus.Potsdam.de

☎ [+49 \(0\) 3312892870](tel:+49(0)3312892870)

🌐 <https://vv.potsdam.de/vv/produkte/willkommen-in-b...>

erlenhof32 | Landeshauptstadt Potsdam

📍 [Erlenhof 32, 14478 Potsdam](#)

@Erlenhof32@Rathaus.Potsdam.de

☎ [+49 \(0\) 3312896280](tel:+49(0)3312896280)

🌐 <https://www.potsdam.de/de/willkommen-im-erlenhof32>

Passgenaue Besetzung und Willkommenslotsen | Handwerkskammer Potsdam

📍 [Am Mühlenberg 15, 14550 Götz](#)

@ holger.muenster@hwkpotsdam.de

☎ [+49 \(0\) 3320734325](tel:+493320734325)

🌐 <https://www.hwk-potsdam.de/artikel/passgenaue-bes...>

Industrie- und Handelskammer (IHK)

📍 [Breite Straße 2 a-c, 14467 Potsdam](#)

@ info@ihk-potsdam.de

☎ [+49 \(0\) 33127860](tel:+4933127860)

🌐 <https://www.ihk.de/potsdam/>

🌐 **You can search for job openings online and get information here:**

- [The Agentur für Arbeit's \(Federal Employment Agency\) Jobbörse \(job board\)](#)
- Job exchange for refugees: www.workeer.de
- www.make-it-in-germany.com is the official multilingual online portal for international skilled workers
- [BERUFENET](#) – Find career information easily
- [Fachkräfteportal Brandenburg \(Brandenburg Skilled Workers Portal\)](#)
- [IHK-Lehrstellenbörse](#) (Chamber of Industry and Commerce apprenticeship exchange) for training and internships
- handbookgermany.de/de

Access to the Job Market

Residence status and labour market access

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.

Access to the labour market for refugees depends primarily on their legal residence status and the current duration of their stay in Germany. A distinction is made between residence permits (Aufhaltstitel), exceptional leave to remain (Duldung) and temporary residence permits (Aufenthaltsgestattung):

- **Residence permit:** Persons whose asylum application has been positively decided and who have received a residence permit have permission for residence and a work permit.

- **Temporary residence permit:** Persons who have applied for asylum but for whom no decision has been made yet are granted a temporary residency permit (Aufenthaltsgestattung), which is not a residence permit (Aufenthaltstitel).
- **Exceptional leave to remain (Duldung):** Persons whose asylum application has been rejected and whose deportation is not possible for legal or practical reasons receive exceptional leave to remain (Duldung; "Certificate for the suspension of deportation"). The exceptional leave to remain is not a residence permit.

The Immigration Offices (Ausländerbehörden) are responsible for residence law issues. The employment permit can only be issued upon application for persons with an exceptional leave to remain (Duldung) or temporary residence permit (Aufenthaltsgestattung). This requires a job description and the approval of the Federal Employment Agency (BA) before the Immigration Office can grant permission for employment.

There are different rules for [self-employment](#)!

Advice 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 process is still ongoing, you have been recognised as a refugee, or you have a certificate granting temporary postponement of deportation (Duldung).

Welcome Center | Landeshauptstadt Potsdam

📍 [Behlertstr. 3a, 14467 Potsdam](#)

@ Welcome-Center@Rathaus.Potsdam.de

☎ [+49 \(0\) 3312892870](tel:+493312892870)

🌐 <https://vv.potsdam.de/vv/produkte/willkommen-in-b...>

Agentur für Arbeit Potsdam | Bundesagentur für Arbeit

📍 [Horstweg 102 - 108, 14478 Potsdam](#)

☎ [+49 \(0\) 3318802000](tel:+493318802000)

🌐 <https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/vor-ort/potsdam>

Jobcenter Landeshauptstadt Potsdam | Bundesagentur für Arbeit

📍 [Horstweg 102 - 108, 14478 Potsdam](#)

@ jobcenter-landeshauptstadt-potsdam@jobcenter-ge.de

☎ [+49 \(0\) 3318804000](tel:+493318804000)

🌐 <https://www.jobcenter-potsdam.de/>

Passgenaue Besetzung und Willkommenslotsen | Handwerkskammer Potsdam

📍 [Am Mühlenberg 15, 14550 Götz](#)

✉ [@holger.muenster@hwkpotsdam.de](mailto:holger.muenster@hwkpotsdam.de)

☎ [+49 \(0\) 3320734325](tel:+493320734325)

🌐 <https://www.hwk-potsdam.de/artikel/passgenaue-bes...>

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. If you receive social benefits, the earnings will be taken into account.

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 (e.g. 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.

You can find advice on the topics of employment contracts and labour law here:

The Office for Migration and Good Work in Brandenburg (Fachstelle Migration und Gute Arbeit Brandenburg) offers free counselling on labour law issues for immigrants living or working in Brandenburg. It also conducts training with workers and multipliers to prevent problems in the workplace. Counselling is available in different languages and is aimed at all refugees and new immigrants regardless of their residence status.

Fachstelle Migration und Gute Arbeit Brandenburg

📍 [Breite Straße 9a, 14467 Potsdam](#)

✉️ [@info@rightsatwork.de](mailto:info@rightsatwork.de)

☎️ [+49 \(0\) 033127357998](tel:+493033127357998)

🌐 <https://rightsatwork.de/>

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

states what kind of work is involved or training is required and what the company expects from the employee. It also includes information about where and how to apply. If the company of your choice does not currently have any suitable vacancies published, you can also apply on your own initiative.

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.

Curriculum vitae: The CV lists all your experience and is structured in the form of a large 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.

Certificates and references: It is very important that you include copies of your credentials and references in the application (do not send the original documents!). Certificates are your school-leaving certificate, your university degree and work 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 advertisement tells you how to apply. Please read it carefully.

In writing: 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.

Email: 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 evident 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 created here: [Bewerbung.net](#), [StepStone](#) or [Lebenslauf2go](#). You may also be able to import your data from Xing or LinkedIn. It is also possible to write your own text within the template or import files.

🌐 You can find more information and templates for cover letters and CVs here: [Bewerbung2go](#), [BewerbungsWissen](#), [Karrierebibel](#)

Language practice

🌐 You can find exercises for practising 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.

JOBLOQ

JOBLOQ is an online application tool and offers a password-protected workspace with an application folder for applying in the state of Brandenburg. You can also get important instructions, information and support here in written form and in six explanatory videos in a total of six languages (Arabic, English, Farsi, French, Russian). You can find more information at 🌐 www.jobloq.de

Business Start-Up and 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.

Free counselling on business start-ups and self-employment is available from the following offices:

Wirtschaftsförderung | Landeshauptstadt Potsdam

📍 [Edisonallee 5-9, 14473 Potsdam](#)

@ wirtschaftsfoerderung@rathaus.potsdam.de

☎ [+49 \(0\) 3312892822](tel:+493312892822)

🌐 <https://www.potsdam.de/de/content/wirtschaftsfoer...>

Industrie- und Handelskammer (IHK)


📍 [Breite Straße 2 a-c, 14467 Potsdam](#)

@ info@ihk-potsdam.de


☎ [+49 \(0\) 33127860](tel:+4933127860)

 <https://www.ihk.de/potsdam/>

SOCIAL IMPACT LAB POTSDAM | Gründungsberatung


 [Schiffbauergasse 7, 14467 Potsdam](#)

 @potsdam@socialimpact.eu

 [+49 \(0\) 03316207944](tel:+49(0)03316207944)

 <https://potsdam.socialimpactlab.eu/>

Further general information

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

Immigration of Skilled Workers

 Here you can find [counselling centres in Brandenburg for the topic of the Skilled Workers Immigration Act \(Fachkräfteeinwanderungsgesetz\)](#)

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, i.e. 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!