

# INFORMATION FOR INTERNATIONAL SKILLED PROFESSIONALS

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If you are working as a doctor, a nurse or a child care worker and you are planning to start a career in the south-west of Germany (Baden-Württemberg) the following paper will inform you about legal guidelines, professional recognition of your degree and general conditions regarding living and working in Germany.

We'd like to support you in all of these topics and in finding the proper helpdesk/the right contact persons for your specific concern. Please check the following document for basic information.

## ABOUT US

The Welcome Center Sozialwirtschaft Baden-Württemberg offers support for international skilled professionals who are planning to work in social services in Baden-Württemberg as a nurse, a doctor, a child care worker et cetera. The Welcome Center Sozialwirtschaft Baden-Württemberg is located in Karlsruhe and Stuttgart. You can reach us by email or phone.

## ENTRY, RESIDENCE AND ACCESS TO THE LABOUR MARKET

Am I allowed to stay and work in Germany?

### **For citizens of the European Union, European Economic Area (EEA: Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein) and Switzerland:**

“As a citizen of a Member State of the European Union (EU) you have freedom of movement and can enter Germany and reside here without a visa or residence permit. All that is required for entry is a valid passport or national identity card. There are no limits to your access to employment and self-employment in Germany. Your spouse and your children can likewise live and work in Germany without restrictions. The same applies to citizens of Switzerland and the European economic area (EEA), i.e. from Liechtenstein, Norway or Iceland.

In Germany you are required to register with the authorities at your place of residence. When you move into a residence, you should register with the registration authority (Einwohnermeldeamt) in the city in which you live. Please note that the deadlines for registration are different in each federal state.

The International Placement Services (Zentrale Auslands- und Fachvermittlung – ZAV) will answer your questions about the EU work permit procedure by telephone: 0049 228 - 713-2000<sup>1</sup>

### **Standard rules for nationals from third countries**

As a national of another country you must apply to a German diplomatic mission (visa offices of the Embassies and Consulates General) in your home country for a visa before entering Germany. You

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/en/eu\\_liechtenstein\\_norway\\_iceland\\_switzerland.php](http://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/en/eu_liechtenstein_norway_iceland_switzerland.php)

may only work in Germany, if you own a residence title for this purpose. Usually you must apply for a visa before you enter Germany. For information on visa requirements and application forms, see the portal of the Federal Foreign Office.

As Germany is looking for international skilled personell the requirements to obtain a visa have been eased.

**Please ask for advice! In individual cases a lot of specific must be taken into account which we can not inform you about in this brief overview.**

## ACCESS TO LABOR MARKET

*If you wish to work in Germany in the occupation you have learned, this section will enable you to find out in which occupations you need to obtain recognition for your foreign vocational and professional qualifications.*

### What is professional recognition?

Professional recognition means the evaluation and – in the event of a positive decision – confirmation of the equivalence of foreign professional and vocational qualifications with German qualifications. A formal procedure takes place to consider whether training was equivalent to comparable training in Germany and whether the qualifications can be recognised. If you are not sure, wether the occupation you have learned is regularted or not, please refer to this database [Anerkennungsfinder](#) to find out.

### Regulated professions

With regulated professions, recognition is a precondition for working in this profession as well as for using the job title. Without recognition, persons with professional and vocational qualifications gained abroad may not work in these professions in Germany. Regulated professions in Germany include doctors, nurses, lawyers, teachers, nursery school teachers and engineers.

### Non-regulated professions

Recognition is not an essential precondition for exercising non-regulated occupations. Persons may apply for work directly and work on the labour market in these occupations. An evaluation may, however, be helpful in order to provide employers and companies with a better understanding of your qualification.

### University graduates working in non-regulated professions

If you are working in a non-regulated occupation (e.g. business sciences, arts, social sciences etc.), the professional recognition is not possible. This is the case in approx. 90% of all academic occupations. If you are working in a non-regulated occupation, you have however the possibility to apply for an individual certificate from the “Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen” – Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB). A Certificate from the ZAB may be helpful in order to provide employers and companies with a better understanding of your qualification. It will inform employers about the nature and duration of your academic studies, as well as the comparability of the academic level (bachelor, diploma, master etc.). This evaluation of your qualifications is valid for all federal states (Bundesländer).

The evaluation of your academic degree is however not a professional recognition. This evaluation does not have any legal consequences. It does, nevertheless, confirm, that you have an academic degree at your command. Each employer will decide himself how much he counts on this evaluation.

You will find all further information on the homepage of the ZAB. [ZAB](#) (in German language)

Using the Anabin-database you can receive more information on your degree beforehand. [Anabin-Datenbank](#)

### **Which public authority is responsible for the professional recognition?**

Responsible for the examination of the homogeneity of your degree are different authorities. When searching the correct competent authority for the recognition procedure the “Anerkennungsfinder” (Recognition in Germany portal), will be very useful. [Anerkennungsfinder](#)

### **Procedure and possible results**

The professional recognition of foreign qualifications consists of the comparison of the foreign qualification with the German qualification. For this, a so called examination of equivalence will be executed. Relevant for the outcome of this examination is, if essential differences between the qualification exist, concerning duration and contents of the education. Existing professional experience will also be taken into account for this examination, as this may result in the compensation of essential differences in the education. It is important, that the professional experience is proven by job references according to German standards (i.e. written certificates from the former employers including information of length and content of employment).

After the examination of equivalence has taken place, three different results are possible:

1. No essential differences exist or the existing differences can be compensated by professional experiences. If this is the case, the full recognition will be certified
2. Essential differences exist and can not be compensated by professional experiences. In his case a partial recognition will be certified (Teilerkennung) and you will have the possibility to compensate the missing competences by an adaptation period (Anpassungslehrgang) or an aptitude test (Kenntnisprüfung).
3. The differences between duration and content of your qualification are such (even considering your work experience), that the recognition can and will not be certified. In this case the application will be declined.

### **Which documents are necessary?**

Usually you will have to submit the following documents as certified copy:

- CV (in table form)
- Proof of identity
- Proof of foreign graduation
- Proof of work experience
- Other certificates of proficiency
- Translations of foreign documents

### **Costs involved:**

The cost for the procedure vary, depending on the authority involved and usually lie between EUR 100-600. You will have to bear the costs yourself. In case you are entitled to unemployment assistance there is a possibility that the Job center will take over the costs if you make an application. A legal claim does however not exist, the approval of the application lies within the discretionary power of the responsible authority. It is not possible to apply retrospectively.

### **GERMAN COURSES:**

If you want to live in Germany, you should learn German. This is especially important, if you are looking for work, need to attend to official business, would like to help your children with school homework or simply want to get into contact with other people and participate in social life in Germany.

### **INTEGRATION COURSES**

For immigrated persons who are planning to permanently stay in Germany, special integration courses are offered. Integration courses are funded by the “Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge” (BAMF) and aim to help you to achieve a language level with which you are able to find your way around on your own as well as give you an insight in German culture, the German legal system and history. These courses therefore cover a language course, a language test and a course on history, politics and society, which end in a test. Depending on your country of origin, your German knowledge and the type of your visa you might be entitled or obliged to take such a course. The conditions will be verified on individual case basis by the responsible aliens department. The courses are partly funded by the “Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge” (BAMF). Under certain circumstances you can be relieved of the costs.

You can find more information on the following websites:

[BAMF – Integrationskurse](#)

[Make it in Germany – Integrationskurse](#)