



Relocation Guide GERMANY

All You Need To Know Before Moving



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INTRODUCTION

Moving to another country is one of the most exciting and promising new starts in a person's life, and it's very important to be properly prepared for it. Key objective of this guide is to give you a brief overview of life and work in Germany. We have compiled and systematized useful information from public open sources in order to provide answers to the most important relocation questions in one place.

What is happening with IT industry in Germany? Is it an expat-friendly country and how to fit into its specific business culture? How to obtain work visa? We hope, this guide will clarify these and many other issues, facilitate your move and help you put things in order. We also tried to make it as short, informative and comprehensive as possible.

If you have any specific questions or suggestions, please feel free to reach out!

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Things you should know about Germany before moving

Brief country's profile

Germany is the largest and most populous country in the European Union and a driver in numerous bloc's economic, political and defense structures. As the fourth biggest economy in the world, Germany is characterized by smart government's economic policies focused on innovative technologies and high rate of investments in economy. The most developed sectors of country's economy are chemical, automotive, and machinery & equipment ones, which provide a high percentage of Germany's significant exports.

Germany has been a democratic parliamentary federal republic since 1949. Following reunification in 1990 it now consists of 16 federal states. The Federal President (*Frank-Walter Steinmeier*) is the head of state, while the government is led by the Federal Chancellor (*Angela Merkel*).

The country's population is about 82 million people and distributed throughout the country rather evenly. Top-5 country's biggest cities includes [Berlin](#) (3.5 million of people), [Hamburg](#) (1.8 million), [Munich](#) (1.4 million), [Cologne](#) (1 million) and [Frankfurt am Main](#) (730,000). According to the recent research by Deloitte, Munich is a main tech hub in the country and along with the capital city of Berlin constitutes the so-called "Big-2" – the most attractive cities for tech talents. Munich dominates both the Tech Hub Status Index, assessing the current tech performance of the country's cities, and the Tech Hub Potential

Index, forecasting possible future performance. Munich is a locomotive of Germany's information and communications technology (ICT) sector and boasts the highest number of STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) jobs. At the same time, Berlin is characterized by strong positive dynamics in ICT sector employment and is the most popular location for technology students in the country.

However, if you've got a job in a smaller German city – don't be upset, as the country's IT industry is developed and diversified enough and, fortunately, is not geographically limited to several largest cities. For example, [Darmstadt](#) leads the field in research and education, as well as in STEM jobs, while [Erlangen](#), [Karlsruhe](#) and [Aachen](#) are noteworthy due to their technology-oriented economies and focus on research in the field.

In this regard, the German government's [Digital Hub Initiative](#) looks particularly interesting as an ambitious move to create Germany's own Silicon Valley, however, using own model for that. The initiative, launched in 2016, aims to increase connectivity and cooperation between 12 German tech and digital hubs (i.e. cities) and bring together different local competences drawing a broad picture of the country's tech landscape. According to **Brigitte Zypries, Germany's Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy**, the Digital Hub Initiative goes the other way in comparison with the US experience of creating Silicon Valley, where the main national tech strengths are concentrated in one place: *"In a nutshell one can say that we have many Valleys and we need to connect them."*

Below are the 12 tech hubs participating in the initiative and its main specialization within the industry:

- *Berlin: Fintech, Internet of Things (IoT)*
- *Munich: Mobility*
- *Frankfurt: Fintech*
- *Hamburg: Logistics*
- *Dortmund: Logistics*
- *Cologne: InsurTech*
- *Karlsruhe: Artificial Intelligence*
- *Stuttgart: Future Industries*
- *Dresden//Leipzig (Twin Hub): Smart Systems, IoT and Energy*
- *Potsdam: MediaTech*
- *Nuremberg/Erlangen: Digital Health*
- *Ludwigshafen/Mannheim: Chemistry*

Language

Another topical issue for those foreigners preparing to move to Germany for a job is language. Generally, you don't need to have fluent level of German for majority of IT positions. Over the half of the population fluently speaks English, while the other part understands and does their best to speak it. At the same time, your day-to-day life in Germany will be much easier if you manage to learn the country's official language at least at a basic level. There are plenty language courses in almost every German city, with those of [the Goethe Institute](#) being the most popular among expats. By the way, you can start attending these classes even in your home country, as the institute also offers distance learning schemes.

Labor migration to Germany: key facts and figures

Once you're mulling over the possibility to relocate to Germany for a job, it's essential to look at the overall situation with labor migration to the country. This will give you an understanding of what is the best way to fit in the country's market and benefit from your decision to move.

Germany's solid labor market has been a key pillar of a national economic upturn in the recent years. The fact that the country's unemployment rate is currently at the lowest level since 1990s (slightly over 3 percent as for February 2019) speaks for itself. In comparison, in the United States, the world economic leader, as many as 3.8 percent of the population don't have permanent jobs.

So, the German labor market is ready to accept as many people trying to get access to it as possible. But at this point one of the main possible constraints on the country's future growth becomes evident – shortage in high-skilled employees. Why is it happening? In the case of Germany, it is a typical situation when demographic indicators could potentially hinder economic growth rate – the country lacks enough specialists, especially in the STEM sector, due to ageing population, decreasing number of young people and low birth rates.

According to the research that was published by the Bertelsmann Foundation in 2019, the German population will shrink by a third by 206 without immigration. The study also stipulates that there is a need to accept much more non-EU migrants to meet labor demand – 260,000 workers per year, while 146,000 should be from outside the European Union.

To alleviate consequences of this trend, the government approved new legislation in late 2018 to fill gaps in skilled workers. New laws significantly

facilitate process of moving to Germany for non-EU specialists and tighten restrictions for unskilled workers.

By the way, Germany is the second most popular destination for immigrants in the world after the United States. Most of the non-EU foreigners come to Germany from Turkey (13.5 percent of foreign nationals), Syria (6.8 percent), Bosnia and Herzegovina (8 percent), Afghanistan (2.4 percent), Russia (2.3 percent). As for 2018, Ukrainians accounted for 1.3 percent of German foreign population. When it comes to Latin American countries, Germany is quite popular location for Brazilians, Colombians and Mexicans. According to recent researches, the number of Latin Americans moving to Germany tends to increase in the medium term.

Generally, these figures mean that if you are an expert in your field or promising young specialist, be sure that you are welcomed in the German labor market!

Cost of living in Germany

Germany is one of the best European countries to relocate in terms of average living standards. According to recent researches, Germany's [Munich](#), [Frankfurt](#) and [Dusseldorf](#) are in top-5 most desirable cities for foreign employees to work and live in. Why is it so? Cost of living in German cities is relatively low in comparison to other top European cities – it is much cheaper than in London, Paris, Zurich or Brussels, for example. At the same time, the country's well-developed transport, education, healthcare systems are really attractive for expats, not to mention numerous opportunities to get employed in booming Germany's economy.

Of course, there are some differences in average spending across the country. Namely, prices are relatively higher in western Germany, and if you are looking for a cheaper way of life it would be logical to consider eastern parts of the country for relocation.

Below are some useful links for you to get an idea about prices in different cities of Germany:

<https://www.expatica.com/de/about/basics/cost-of-living-in-germany-how-much-do-you-need-1085100/>

<https://www.expatistan.com/cost-of-living/country/germany>

Accommodation in Germany

Of course, if you decided to relocate to Germany, bear in mind that a relatively significant part of your income will be spent on rent.

There are plenty of websites, where you can check available options in any German city, photos of rooms and additional information. Below are some of the most popular ones (note that almost all of them have only German version):

<https://www.immobilienscout24.de/>

<https://www.immowelt.de/>

<https://www.immobilo.de/>

https://www.mrlodge.com/?utm_source=expatica&utm_campaign=rentingingermany (flats in Munich)

<https://www.wohnungsboerse.net/>

<https://zeitwohnwerk.de/en/>

To book a short-term accommodation until you find a long-term one, you can use following websites:

- Airbnb
- www.wg-gesucht.de
- <https://wunderflats.com>
- <https://www.nestpick.com/>
- <https://www.muenchen.de/uebernachten/hotels-privatunterkuenfte.html>

However, finding a flat in most of the cities is not always that easy, primarily, because of large population of the country's key spots and booming employment market. That is why it's logical to use maximum of possible ways to find an accommodation. The traditional search via newspapers can also be successful and it makes sense to ask your future colleagues whether they know about a free flat. Contacting a real estate agent is also a good idea but you will have to pay for agent's services.

When you find an option that is looking particularly interesting to you, contact a landlord without any delay. You can also consider flats outside a city center, as reliable public transport system allows to travel, for example, to Munich or any other city in an optimal amount of time even if you live in the suburbs. Locations next to Munich, such as [Germering](#), [Fürstenfeldbruck](#) or [Mering](#), may prove to be a good alternative to living in the city center.

Once you've found a suitable option, note that landlords will require you to provide a proof that you have a regular income (you can prove this, for example, with a copy of your work contract or a written confirmation from an employer). You can approach the employer's HR department if you need such a confirmation.

Please keep in mind that landlords usually take a deposit amounting to 2-3 rents (excluding utilities). Good news is that you will receive the money back at the end of your lease.

And one more useful link with a detailed guide on how to rent a flat in Germany for expats: <https://www.expatica.com/de/housing/renting/deciding-to-rent-in-germany-103803/>

Business culture in Germany

There are a lot of stereotypes around Germans concerning their way of doing business and behaving at a workplace. Sometimes they're even described as extremely arrogant, obsessed with hierarchy and rules. Obviously, it's a bit of an exaggeration, but if you are planning to or have already relocated to Germany for a job, you should be ready to adapt to your new company and responsibilities and also some practices and way of communication in German business environment as well.

Business etiquette in Germany varies company to company and you should not think that there is a strict set of rules all Germans are obliged to comply with at their working places. Yes, it's true that Germans highly appreciate business planning and perfectionism at work but remember that a business culture rather depends on a particular company.

Anyway, below is a list of three essential features of German business environment that you still better keep in mind:

- Punctuality

Respect for schedules and each other's time is a pillar of German business culture. Punctuality is considered as an indicator of person's good manners, so if you have a planned meeting set for a particular time in your schedule, be accurate, as even 5 or 10-minute delay could be viewed as disrespect for your colleagues' time.

- Focus on the task

Respect for a task is a central element in all business interactions in Germany. All the negotiated agreements concerning a particular issue should be met properly and in time. Be aware that employees' roles regarding the implementation of a task are also usually clearly assigned among team members.

- Value of structures

As we've already mentioned, it's a stereotype that Germans are obsessed with hierarchy at work, however, it cannot be denied that people in Germany tend to follow chain of command and various determined procedures. It does not mean that there is no room for flexibility but remember that Germans prefer to break a task down to smaller controllable units and designate implementation to different levels of company's hierarchy.

German IT sector

Industry's overview

The IT sector in Germany, which is often referred to as a main part of the country's ICT industry (it also includes communication sector), is undoubtedly best performing one in national economy. It is developing much faster than traditional sectors, including mechanical engineering and chemicals, in terms of innovations and mid-term growth rates. The ICT industry employs about 1.1 million people in the country to date and has generated some 150,000 new jobs over the past 5 years. Actually, these figures are mostly attributed to IT services and software developing branches within the industry, as most booming ones. Moreover, according to various estimations, 40,000 new jobs are expected to be added in 2019 (3.5-percent increase compared to 2018), and ICT will remain an engine of employment growth in the long term.

Take a look at main trends that are currently shaping German's IT industry:

- The upswing in German IT market is facilitated by **strong SME sector in national economy**, large amount of investments in the industry and skilled workforce;
- Germany – is the largest software market in Europe, representing over **22 % of the value of the European market**;
- Germany is the **second largest European market (5.9 billion euros) for security technology** after the United Kingdom;
- By 2020, the German **cloud market is estimated to be the largest in Europe**, with constant year-on-year growth of 25 %;

- As many as **57 % of companies in German ICT sector are innovators** (have introduced to the market a new product or service over the last three years);
- IT sector has the second-largest **revenue in innovations** following the automotive industry;
- IT sector in Germany has the **highest startup rate** with about 6,000 new companies are created in the field annually;
- As life, business and industry are rapidly digitalizing, the issue of security of IT systems arises. New threats in cybersecurity lead to increased vulnerability of the IT sector, that's why **IT security sphere is rapidly developing** in Germany and offers a lot of new jobs for specialists in the field from all over the world.

Salaries in IT sector in Germany

As we've already mentioned before, significant number of IT markets all over the world, including the German one, are currently experiencing certain shortages in tech talents. This fact is also reflected in the situation with salaries in the local IT markets. If we look at the overall picture, software developers and other IT-skilled professionals are currently gaining momentum and showing up in statistics as being among the top average earners. This is also valid for Germany that means that it's the best time for career changers looking for professional upgrade and increase in level of expertise to move to the country.

According to Trading Economics & Statistisches Bundesamt, the average salary in Germany is 45,708 euros a year (as for January 2018). At the same time, in its another research Statistisches Bundesamt provides statistics on all salaries

across Germany and, according to these figures, IT workers are the second highest earners among all other economic sectors after those employed in finance & insurances one. An average annual wage of IT specialist in Germany amounts for about 59,000 euros. If we look at similar rates in other European countries, only the United Kingdom, Norway, Denmark and Switzerland are ahead Germany in terms of IT wages.

Meanwhile, you should remember that wages in IT in Germany could vary depending on the city, years of proven experience and sometimes the size of a company you are going to work in (actually not the common case). You will certainly earn more in Big-2 cities (Berlin and Munich) than in a small city in eastern Germany.

To find out more about market salaries we recommend using the following resources:

Stackoverflow: <https://stackoverflow.com/jobs/salary>

Glassdoor: <https://www.glassdoor.de>

Payscale: <https://www.payscale.com/research/DE/Country=Germany/Salary>

How to get a work visa to Germany?

In fact, it's not that difficult to obtain official permission to live and work in Germany if you're a skilled non-EU citizen with a job offer from a local company. Surely, you will have to get through some more paperwork than those, who come to Germany from other EU member states, but don't be scared – your efforts will pay off.

In general, there is no so-called "visa sponsorship" in Germany. If a company is ready to offer a candidate a job contract, he/she can apply for the work permit. It is, actually, much faster and easier to receive a work permit in Germany compared to other developed countries.

Once you've got a job offer from a German employer, you can immediately start preparing documents for visa and work permit. The first step you should make is to determine what kind of work visa to Germany you can apply for and seek assistance from your local German consulate or embassy. Find out which is the closest one to you here: <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/visa/local-contacts/world-map/>

Types of German work visas

There are at least two types of work visas that are suitable in case you've already got a job offer: **EU Blue Card** and **German (Work) Employment Visa**.

EU Blue Card

EU Blue Card (Blaue Karte EU) is a residence title for academics (high-skilled individuals with a recognized degree in Germany or a degree which is corresponding to a degree in Germany) from outside the European Union, who wish to work in an EU member state. To obtain an EU Blue Card, applicants are required to have a university degree and a work contract which meets the minimum gross salary requirement of 39,624 euros a year (3,302 euros per month) for IT-skilled workers.

For more details concerning Blue Card we recommend you to check the official website: <https://www.bluecard-eu.de/eu-blue-card-germany/>

You can find out whether your university degree is recognized in Germany, by referring to the following web page: <https://anabin.kmk.org/anabin.html>. (Please, pay attention to the fact that there is only German version of the page, however, in our experience, using Chrome Translate for the website will be enough to get necessary information.)

To apply for an entry visa to Germany, you will need to prepare the following documents:

- ✓ Work contract (original)
- ✓ University degree (original and official translation)
- ✓ Health insurance
- ✓ Proof of application fee payment
- ✓ Additional documents (for the list of needed papers, please, check your consulate's website)

If all your documents meet the requirements, a consulate will issue an entry visa within 1-4 weeks.

Work Visa

Work Visa is an option for those people, who don't possess a university degree, but as with Blue Card, already received an offer from a German company. The application process for Work Visa is a bit longer since an employer is obliged to ask the German Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) for a pre-approval (Vorabzustimmung) of candidate's intention to enter the German labor market. To get this preliminary permission you would need to prove that you have 5 years of work experience in the field.

The application process for a work visa is quite similar to one for obtaining Blue Card, but still envisages some additional steps:

- ✓ The first step should be made by a company: once it decided to hire you, it sends a request to the Federal Employment Agency (note that your detailed CV, ID details and some additional documents may be needed for the request);
- ✓ The agency decides on the request (it may take up to 4 weeks) and if it's approved, issues a permission;
- ✓ Then you should go to an embassy and submit an original permission and certificates from previous employers proving you have necessary work experience.

Upon your arrival to Germany, you would need to make an appointment with the local Foreigners Office (Ausländerbehörde), which is responsible for issuing Blue Cards and Residence Permits.

For further information regarding the documents you will need to present to the Foreigners Office, please, refer to its webpage: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en>

Below are some more helpful links with additional information regarding visas, work permits and documents needed for registration:

German government's official information on immigration issues:

<https://www.make-it-in-germany.com>

Website with a lot of valuable information for expats:

<https://www.justlanded.com/>

Portal for the recognition of foreign professional qualifications:

<https://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/tools/berater/en/>

Social security and taxes in Germany

Types of insurances

Once you've become an employee of a German company, you can benefit from the country's well-developed social security system. To be included in the system, you must make payments to four parts of it, namely, to health insurance, long-range nursing care, pensions and unemployment schemes. These payments usually account for about 40 percent of an employee's gross income, but an employer normally pays half of the cost. By the way, accident insurance is fully covered by an employer.

Let's look at main types of insurances in Germany in details:

- Health Insurance (Krankenversicherung)

Contributions to health insurance consist of two parts. In accordance with the German legislation, employers and employees each pay half of the cost of the health insurance. On top of this comes an additional premium that may vary depending on a particular health insurance fund. As an employee, you are either compulsorily insured or a voluntary member. The difference lies in the level of income and has no impact on a sum of contribution or benefits.

Employees, whose salary regularly exceeds a specific threshold are no longer compulsorily insured, but become a voluntary member of a health insurance company or go for a private health insurance company membership.

You will be treated upon presentation of your health insurance card (you will receive it after becoming a member) when visiting a doctor or a hospital. In

Germany you do not have to pay for a visit to hospital. Contract partners (doctors or hospitals) will bill your health insurance directly. However, in some cases there are co-payments that you must pay directly to a care provider.

Once you've registered in a health insurance program for the first time, you'll automatically receive your pension insurance number. There is a right of free choice, meaning you can choose any health insurance. However, you'll need to inform your employer about a type of health insurance you've chosen.

Person's spouse and children living in Germany are usually covered by one's health insurance. Make sure you can provide birth and marriage certificates.

There are two types of health insurances in Germany: *public* (Gesetzliche Krankenkasse) and *private* (Private Krankenkasse). If you earn less than 54,900 euros gross per year (4,575 euros per month), you'll automatically be insured on a public health insurance scheme. If you earn above the 54,900 euros salary threshold, you can choose to completely leave the public health insurance system and go for private health insurance instead. Your employer will still be liable to pay roughly half of the contributions, but this is capped at the same rate at which they would have to pay if making contributions for public insurance.

Whether you choose to be in the public health insurance scheme or you're obliged to be, you can take out an extra private health insurance policy as well, for extra peace of mind. Some public health services have been downgraded or completely cancelled in recent years in Germany; things like private rooms in hospitals, certain types of dental work and more complex procedures or specialist care may not be included on your policy. Be sure to check out all the terms of your public and private insurances so that you can familiarize yourself with what's included and be prepared for any extra costs you may face.

- **Long-term care insurance (Pflegeversicherung)**

Anyone can become in need of long-term nursing care regardless of age. If that happens, care and nursing assistance must be performed on a sustained basis, sometimes for decades. An independent branch of social insurance, long-term care insurance, was developed to cover the risk of cases when long-term nursing care is required. In order to keep administrative costs as low as possible, health insurance companies generally perform the tasks related to long-term care insurance. This means that when you register for health insurance you are automatically included in long-term care insurance scheme as well.

Employees and employers pay half of the contributions each. When you reach the age of 23 and don't have children you must pay an extra amount.

- **Pension insurance (Rentenversicherung)**

You are automatically included in pension insurance program once you get a job. You can ask the Deutsche Rentenversicherung (<http://www.deutsche-rentenversicherung.de>) about your pension insurance number.

After an employee has retired from active working life, pension insurance provides for a relatively secure retirement in financial terms. However, a private pension plan is urgently recommended in addition to the state pension system in order to maintain a given standard of living during old age. Pensions are not only paid out during old age, but also in specific cases of reduced earning capacity or after a death of a family provider.

Contributions are calculated from gross salary and paid 50/50 by employer and employee.

- **Unemployment insurance (Arbeitslosenversicherung)**

Unemployment insurance aims to lessen financial impact of losing a job. This type of insurances allows unemployed persons with no income of their own to receive benefits for a limited time. All people who have a paid work (except so-called "450€ jobs") are automatically insured.

Contributions are calculated from gross salary and paid 50/50 by employer and employee.

- **Accident insurance (Unfallversicherung)**

Accident insurance provides financial assistance in case of accidents that happen during work or occupational training. Furthermore, benefits are also granted for commuting accidents and occupational illnesses. This type of insurance is covered completely by an employer.

And what about taxes?

Employees of German companies are normally assigned a tax class by the country's tax authorities in accordance with various categories. A "Tax Class" (Lohnsteuerklasse or Steuerklassen) is important in determining amount of withholding tax deducted from a salary, as well as value of a number of social benefits a taxpayer may be eligible for. A tax class may be assigned to an employee by the authorities based on marital status and other criteria. In some cases, a taxpayer can request to be placed in a certain class.

- **Class I** applies to single (unmarried) people; those living in a registered civil partnership; those who are divorced, widowed or married unless they fall under tax class II, III or IV;

- **Class II** applies to those, who are a single parent and living alone with a child or children and are entitled to the child allowance (Kindergeld) and/or other government assistance;
- **Class III** applies, upon request, to married employees if both spouses live together in Germany and one spouse is a sole wage earner; or the other spouse earns a salary but chooses to be categorized under Class V. Also applies to widowed employees for the calendar year following the death of a spouse if both were employees and living together in Germany on the day the spouse died;
- **Class IV** applies to married workers who live together and have not chosen Tax Class III or V for one of them;
- **Class V** applies to a taxpayer, whose spouse is classified under Tax Class III;
- **Class VI** is an optional class available to individuals who may have more than one job and earn money from other employment. A taxpayer may have more than one tax classes if have multiple jobs.

Check out general calculations of the two most common tax schemes in Germany (EUR):

Class I										
Gross "brutto" / year	40.000	45.000	50.000	55.000	60.000	65.000	70.000	75.000	80.000	90.000
Gross / month	3.333	3.750	4.167	4.583	5.000	5.417	5.833	6.250	6.667	7.500
Income taxes	538	659	787	928	1.087	1.254	1.427	1.599	1.776	2.115
Social security	691	777	864	934	979	1.024	1.069	1.114	1.141	1.143
Net per month	2.105	2.314	2.516	2.721	2.934	3.138	3.338	3.537	3.749	4.240

Class III (1 child, wife doesn't work)

Gross "brutto"/year	40.000	45.000	50.000	55.000	60.000	65.000	70.000	75.000	80.000	90.000
Gross/month	3.333	3.750	4.167	4.583	5.000	5.417	5.833	6.250	6.667	7.500
Income taxes	251	344	447	551	667	787	911	1.039	1.176	1.443
Social security	683	768	853	923	968	1.013	1.057	1.103	1.130	1.132
Net per month	2.400	2.638	2.867	3.109	3.365	3.617	3.865	4.108	4.361	4.923

To find out more information on German income tax rates click here:

<https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/jobs/taxes/income/>

<https://www.howtogermany.com/pages/germantaxes.html>

In case you relocate with family

Family reunification visa

If you hold a residence permit there is actually no problem for your spouse and children to also move to Germany.

Before moving, a spouse needs to obtain a family reunion visa (Visum zum Familiennachzug). If you are not married and plan to enter into marriage in Germany, you will need a confirmation of that from your home country.

For more information on family reunification visa, please, refer to the following link: <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/living-in-germany/family-reunification/spouses-non-eu-countries/>

And this one:

<http://www.bamf.de/EN/Migration/EhepartnerFamilie/ehepartnerfamilie-node.html>

Upon entering the country, a spouse should register with your local Citizen's Office (Bürgerbüro) to get a registration (Anmeldung). Pay attention to the fact that it's necessary to bring all required documentation for the immigration department as soon as possible, because time is needed to process every application.

German school system

School enrollment in Germany starts at the age of 6 or 7 with primary school. Primary school includes grades from 1 to 4 and is the common school for

children aged from 6 to 10. Children learn basic skills of reading, writing and doing arithmetic. After those 4 years in primary school the parents will have to decide which kind of secondary school their children will go to (*Mittel-, Realschule or Gymnasium*).

- ✓ *Mittelschule* includes grades from 5 to 9. Class is mostly based on occupational contents. Degrees: Certificate of Secondary Education, qualified Certificate of Secondary Education, Secondary School Level Certificate.
- ✓ *Realschule* includes grades from 5 to 10. Students will receive a well-grounded educational background in order to move on to an apprenticeship after school. Degree: Secondary School Level Certificate.
- ✓ *Gymnasium* (Grammar school) includes grades from 5 to 12. Students will receive an education qualifying them for university entrance as well as an apprenticeship. Degree: Final Secondary-School Examinations.

Use the following link to find out more about schools in Munich:

<https://www.muenchen.de/rathaus/Stadtverwaltung/Referat-fuer-Bildung-und-Sport/Schule.html>

Münster: <https://www.muenster.de/schulen.html>

Berlin: <https://www.berlin.de/sen/bildung/schule/berliner-schulen/>

Nursery school

It is highly recommended for children to attend nursery school/kindergarten/early childhood education as it significantly contributes to developing their language skills. Children from the age of 1 have a legal right to be placed in a

nursery school, although in reality it often takes a little while to secure a place, as nursing schools are quite popular in Germany.

In general, there are following options of childcare:

At the age of 0 to 3:

- ✓ Krabbelgruppen (groups for small children)
- ✓ Tagesmütter und Tagesväter (daytime nannies)
- ✓ Spielkreise (play groups)
- ✓ Kinderkrippen (day nursery)
- ✓ Altersgemischte Kindergärten (nursery school with mixed ages)

At the age of 3 until start of school:

- ✓ Kindergarten (nursery school)
- ✓ Sonstige schulvorbereitende Einrichtungen, Kindertagesstätten (other pre-school institutions)
- ✓ Tagesmütter und Tagesväter (day nannies)

From school age:

- ✓ Ganztagschule (full-time school)
- ✓ Hort (after school care)
- ✓ Hausaufgabenbetreuung (homework assistance)

Family benefits: Kindergeld

Parents or parent guardians (adoptive parents, stepparents, foster parents, and grandparents) have the right to receive child benefits for children who live in the same household.

There are different benefits for families with children from the time of birth up to their 18th birthday (and longer in some cases). Note, that only parents or parent guardians can receive those benefits (not a child). If your child is a student or unemployed person, you will receive the kindergeld up to his/her 25th birthday.

To receive child benefits parents should apply in writing to the employment agency. Together with the application you will need the birth certificate of your child. The agency needs about 4-6- weeks of application processing time.

We hope, this guide will clarify some key aspects of life in Germany and be helpful for you! It is also a subject to constant updates as far as fresh information appears.



WHO WE ARE?

Zero to One Search is a Germany-based international recruitment agency with a focus on connecting IT professionals with tech companies. Our mission is to help tech players to find candidates in accordance with their businesses' needs, and IT specialists to get the right jobs with interesting challenges and opportunity to relocate to Europe. The company was established in 2017 as a remote agency with a team of recruiters from all over the world.

LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH!

Are you looking for an IT job in Germany and keen to relocate?

We are here to assist you with best recruitment practices! We speak 7+ languages and will be happy to help with your next career move in Germany.

Check out available jobs on our Job Board or contact us via email:

**<https://jobs.zerotoonesearch.com>
info@zerotoonesearch.com**

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