

Jobseeker visa for Germany

Germany Job Seeker Visa

Germany is not only a beautiful country; it is also one of the most powerful countries in Europe. With high growth and low unemployment, it is the perfect place to go if you are looking for a job. The country offers free education to its residents and is considered a highly safe and attractive living and working environment.

Germany is also one of the countries that is seeking highly qualified employees to work in well-paid positions, and encourages all young and skilled people to come visit and look for places to work. So if you have decided that you would like to work there, the first things you need to do is get a Germany job seeker visa.

What is a job seeker visa?

The job seeker visa for Germany is a Long-Term Residency Permit, which allows you to stay in the country for six (6) months and look for a job. If at the end of the six (6) months you have found a place of employment, you will be given the Germany work visa or a Germany work permit and you will be allowed to work and live there. Please note that having a job seeker visa does not allow you to start working immediately in Germany. It only means that you can visit the country and look for a job during your stay.

In order to obtain this visa, you need the following:

Be eligible to apply

Compile all the necessary documents

Fill out an application form and book your visa appointment

Eligibility of applicants

There are several criteria that you need to fulfill to be eligible to apply for the Germany job seeker visa. These are as follows:

Hold a Bachelor of Master's Degree from a German university or an equivalent foreign degree

Have a minimum of 2 years of experience in your related field of study

Show proof that you have sufficient funds to cover your stay during the time you are in Germany

Have travel or medical insurance for your entire stay in Germany or until you get your Work Permit

If you checked all of the criteria, then you are one-step closer to getting your visa.

Working in Germany: Getting a German Work Permit

Germany is a great choice for expats looking for a career boost! In this article you will find useful tips and information for people wishing to work and live in Germany – job search, visa and residency permit, insurances, and more.

Non-German and Non-EU nationals are an entitled labour force in Germany if appropriately meeting the set eligibility criteria.

Germany welcomes migrants, perceived as an additional value for Germany's economy and demography, fairly enabling to practice their skills and qualifications inside the advanced economy of Germany. Despite, they may only become eligible workers if holding the adequate residence and work permits. Thus, the article focuses on bringing the relevant information on the criteria and legislative rules applying to foreigners seeking to be part of the German labour force.

Speaking about work deficiencies, the German economy has a great demand for professionals in different occupations, especially in the field of IT, Engineers, Health, research and more.

Non-EU academics, scholars, researchers, graduate students and other professionals can access the labour market in Germany under the Residence Act and the Employment Regulation, while EU nationals are subject to the Freedom of Movement Act of EU.

Eligible foreign workers in Germany

Getting a gainful employment in Germany involves holding a work permit, as an authorising document giving the permit to become part of the German labour market. In the way of gaining a work permit, holding a residence permit is a compulsion, as an authorising document permitting to reside in Germany.

Before, migrants were obliged to apply for work and residence permit in two different authorities, but recently the procedure is simplified and harmonised through the adoption of a single permit directive of the European Union.

Single permit directive covering work and residence permit

Holding a single permit legally authorises non-EU nationals to work and reside in the EU countries, including Germany, through a single application procedure to a single authority.

Single permit applies for two categories of foreign nationals:

Non-EU nationals who intend to enter Germany for work and residence,

Non-EU nationals, already residing in Germany with access to German jobs

Single permit covers:

Single application procedure for working and residing in Germany,

Rights for non-EU workers, equal to German citizens.

Classified foreign workers in Germany

Becoming a work permit holder depends on mainly in the country of origin and its special agreements with the hosting country, i.e. Germany.

Categories of work permit holders in Germany are considered:

Foreign EU citizens, Switzerland and the European economic area (EEA), i.e. from Liechtenstein, Norway or Iceland

As for this foreigners category, residence or work permit is not required for living and working in Germany, enjoying the work force movement freedom. Carrying a valid passport or ID when moving to Germany is the only condition, needed to register at Civil Registry (Einwohnermeldeamt) in the chosen city.

Foreigners from Australia, Israel, Japan, Canada, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand or the USA

For this category of foreigners' visa is not required to enter Germany. Still, they must immediately register at the local foreigner's registration authority for a residence permit. This is the only category that can enter Germany without visa and take the residence and work permit before being employed.

Other non-EU nationals

As for this category, visa entrance is needed to enter Germany. The visa application should be accurate and related to the purpose of the stay. The short-stay visa cannot be changed into permanent residence visa, so it is very important applying for the correct visa.

Upon the arrival, nationals of this category must immediately apply for the residence and work permit. Requesting a work permit, they must show an evidence of already being employed by a local company, organisation or institution.

Categories of residence and work permit

The Immigration act, also known as “Residence Act” active since 2005 encompasses benefits, conditions and rules for foreigners who want to reside and get asylum in Germany for different purposes. Immigrants through this act are given comprehensive chances, despite their prospect to get employment.

Residence act important stipulations on migrants’ residence in Germany are:

Visa itself is a kind of residence permit, allowing foreign residence in Germany for a certain visa agreed period,

For longer stay in Germany, foreigners can be awarded with a temporary residence permit or settlement permit,

Non-EU nationals first time entering in Germany are obliged to carry a visa for the purpose of stay (i.e. work and residence) and upon their arrival, they must require temporary residence permit or settlement permit,

Settlement residence permits are issued to individuals who had a temporary residence permit for past five years and have shown they can fulfill some additional requirements,

Settlement residence permits are more likely to be taken by highly qualified workers and EU Blue Card holders,

Residence act also recognizes the long-term residence permit is considered comparable to the settlement residence permit,

Highly qualified employment of third country nationals is done through the EU Blue Card directive, the EU Blue Card which is a comparable card to temporary residence with a higher likelihood to get a settlement permit.

Entering and residing in Germany on different intensions, a migrant must be entitled with one of these following residence titles:

Visa pursuant,

Temporary residence permit,

EU Blue Card,

Settlement permit,

EU long-term residence permit

Applying for the single permit

It is a subject to origin and qualification of the applicant that determines which is the residence title that allows to work and reside in Germany.

Employment prospect for Academics

Being an academic with a recognized degree in Germany or holding a degree which is corresponding to a degree in Germany you should apply for the EU Blue Card.

Requiring the EU Blue Card, the applicant must prove being employed with a contract in Germany, in a field related to its qualifications. Besides, the annual salary of the worker contract must reach 48.800 Euros at the minimum.

EU Blue Card holders are eligible to get the permanent settlement permit after 33 months, then again if proofing that they fulfil the language requirement B1 (Common European Reference Framework for Languages) this residence permit can be obtained earlier, after only 21 months.

Individuals in this category who do not enjoy a work contract, they cannot apply for the EU Blue Card from home, but they can move to Germany and search for a job during 6 months. They can only apply for an EU Blue Card after they have been awarded with a work contract. If they visa validity has exceeded, the EU Blue Card applicant can stay in Germany until the EU Blue Card application is proceeded.

Non-EU Graduates from German universities

Non-EU graduates, so-called international students in Germany, who finished their studies in Germany are similarly eligible to get lawful employment within the country. They can require a residence permit for job seeking purposes at the Foreigners' National Authority. This applies if candidate of this category does not yet hold a work contract in Germany, while the validity of the residence permit under job seeking purposes is 18 months. Once the candidate has been awarded with a job contract, it becomes an eligible EU Blue Card holder, but the job given ought to be related to its qualification.

Non-EU nationals holding professional qualifications

Non-EU nationals which hold professional qualifications are also eligible to apply for residence and work permit in Germany.

Aspirants of this category can only require a residence and work permit if their qualification is recognised by the Federal State and over, only if they can also prove being awarded with a sound work contract related to its qualification. Cases of not having a recognised qualification, the authority for qualification recognition may possibly ask the candidate to get some added training education or practice in Germany to become an eligible applicant for residence and work permit. In such case, the candidate is eligible to require limited residence permit under the intention of becoming an eligible residence and a work permit holder. The candidate must apply for the qualification recognition before traveling in Germany using the information in the online portal Recognition Finder.

Non-EU nationals seeking to get professional education and work in Germany

Non-EU nationals which want to reside in Germany to get a professional education are eligible to do so. The criteria applying for this category is getting a permit from the Federal Employment Agency to reside under this intention. Once the candidate finishes the training, it becomes eligible for the residence permit that Foreign' National Office issues for residing in Germany up to 1 year under job seeking purposes. As soon as the candidate reaches employment contract in a field related to its qualification, it becomes eligible to apply for the proper work permit.

Visa application

Non-EU applicants shall require a visa to enter, work and reside in Germany. Visa will be issued in accordance with regulations for residence and work permit, such as: temporary residence, EU Blue Card, permanent settlement permit, or EU long-term residence permit.

Read: Germany Working (Employment) Visa!

Finding a job in Germany

Today's technology gives us the opportunity to access well-ranged information, including job vacancies around the globe. Moreover, there is a lot of available information also for specific occupations which greatly relate to one's qualifications.

Searching for a job

There are two options to get a job in Germany, getting a work contract before leaving to Germany or upon the arrival. Whatever the form is, searching online is amongst top opportunities to find a job.

There are diverse online channels with extended information on open job vacancies in Germany.

There are governmental institutions posting open job vacancies:

Federal Employment Agency

Also, there are other job-searching online channels:

EURES

Monster

Local job portals

You can always see if any local employment agency in your country is having information sessions or job fairs for open vacancies in Germany.

You can also get information on German occupations in demand.

Job application process

Once you have chosen your preferred job/s to apply in Germany, next you should prepare to apply. German companies might require from you to submit the job application in a hard copy form by post. However, the new trends are changing and due to this many job applications in Germany are done online. In such case, application documents must be submitted in a PDF form and together as attached documents.

Either way, required documents for job application are:

The Cover letter

The cover letter is a letter which helps the employer see all your gained formal and non-formal education and past experience in a one or two pages and how they can relate and be an added value to the job you are applying. The cover letter is the letter that is read first by the employer and if presented properly, it provokes it to proceed checking other application documents. Sometimes a bad cover letter can dismiss your opportunity to get a job.

Curriculum Vita (CV)

Curriculum Vita (CV) is a document which presents detailed information on your education, training, past work experience, personal data and special skills. EU employers typically require a standardised form of CV known as Europass CV. Make sure updating and filling realistically and properly all the

required information in this format. There is an opportunity also to fill the Europass CV online, giving all the needed instructions and samples.

Education

As an applicant, you must provide all the information on your education. This embraces schools attended, gained university degree/s and grades, professional training and all other educational activities being involved. All this information must also have proof documents in order to be considered as frank. Likewise, make sure placing this information in a chronological order, detaching formal, non-formal and professional education.

Computer skills

You must state which are the computer competences and especially if any of them pertains to the job you are about to do.

Language skills

You must provide the information on the language competencies, listing all the languages you are able to understand, speak and write.

Other skills and talents

Your application will be supplemented if you state your interpersonal skills which can be: verbal and non-verbal communication, listening, negotiation, decision making, problem-solving and further. Also, if having any special talent, even if it does not directly relate to the job, presenting it can make your application more interesting and unique from other applications.

Certificates

An important part of the application is proving your education, including formal, non-formal and professional. For the application to be properly considered and candidly, certificates you present must be in accordance with the information provided in other parts of the application.

Attending the job interview

If selected among other applicants, the company you applied for a job will invite you to attend a job interview. Job interview is a formal meeting with the company representatives, typically human resource officer/s, sometimes an interviewing panel, to discuss in person the information you have provided on your application and further. Companies typically require from the candidates to go to the company's facilities and discuss directly about the education, work experience, skills, aptitudes and more.

Job interview is the proper time for you to influence your future employer that you make a good asset for the company. Consider wearing the proper outfit and haircut and be on time for the interview. Listen carefully to the questions made and take your time to formulate your answer. Make sure the information has a sense of sameness to the information provided in your application. Prepare for the interview through the common job interview questions.

Typically German companies pay the interview costs of the applicant. In case you might not be able to physically attend the interview meeting as you are in your home country, you should write to the company earlier to require a phone or virtual interview. Make sure to present a realistic explanation on your incapability to physically attend the interview and why you are requiring an online interview. In case that company requires your physical presence anyhow, ask the company if you or the company will cover interview traveling and accommodation costs.

Either way, once you have attended the interview it is highly impressive to the company if you write an email thank you letter for the offered opportunity to attend the interview. Within the letter reaffirm key discussions made during the interview, to remind why you make the best candidate for the job.

When Employed

Once you have attended the interview, the company notifies you in just a few days if you have been selected or not for the job you applied. If being hired for the job position, the company in a short provides you with the work contract.

The work contract by the company is provided as a legal document of your recruitment, which proves the agreement of you as the employee and the company as the employer to cooperate within contractual terms and conditions. Contracts are mainly in a written form and in order to be valid it needs to be signed by both parties, you and the company. Before signing it, make sure reading all contract's articles carefully making sure you agree with all of them.

Work contracts typically have the following sections:

Work contract Parties

Names and addresses of employee and employer.

Work contract term

The period of time that the contract is valid.

Employee's probation time

The time that you will spend on a company in a probationary period.

Employee's place of the work

The contract needs to state if you are going to work in the same place or you have to move in different working places during the contract term.

Employee's job description

The contract should state the scope of work and all detailed description of the job you are awarded. Also, the job description might contain the time frame required to be respected for delivering job tasks within the requisite tone.

Employee's Salary

The contract shall state the wage level, the time of salary receipt, overtime payment, weekend payment and holiday payments. The salary amount is stated in gross numbers, meaning that taxes, health insurance, social contribution, long-term care insurance, pension and joblessness insurance will be deducted.

Employee's occupied hours

The contract shall state also occupied hours expected to be covered by the employee.

Holidays

The contract shall state the recognised holidays which permit the employee to go on a work leave.

Notification term

The contract must also state the given interval to inform the employer for leaving the job, also the employer must warn the employee during the given interval for an earlier contract termination.

Joint and work agreements

Coupled with work agreements often are joint agreements or so-called collective agreements. This applies to special industries which have employer association or trade unions, which can regulate salary, holidays, pluses. Some cases companies might have an Employee's Union, which can represent employees interests in the company. Typically about these agreements, the information can be taken directly by the employer.

Taxes to be paid as a foreign worker in Germany

As an employee in Germany, you will be subject to pay taxes, equally to German employees. The key tax that employees pay in Germany is the income tax.

There are several aspects you should know about paying taxes and other fees as an employee in Germany:

If employed in a company, the company takes care paying your taxes at the tax office from the deducting your gross salary,

The company takes care also paying on your behalf your "solidarity tax", "church tax",

The company, on your behalf pays your pension, health insurance and unemployment insurance,

Starting from 2014 subject to income tax are salaries higher than 354€,

Tax rates are 14% at minimum, up to 45% for higher salaries (for annual salaries 250.730 euros for individuals with single status and 501.460 euros for married individuals

Solidarity tax height is 5.5 % of the amount of your income tax,

Church tax height varies as they are set by religious groups. However, this tax can be 8%, 9% or more of the amount of your income tax,

There are tax reliefs for lone parents and families divided into 6 categories,

You pay your income tax on a monthly basis. However, you can require from the government information if you paid more income taxes than ought to and if eligible you will be refunded. This requirement is submitted in a form of income tax declaration.

Social Security System

As an employee in Germany, you will be subject to paying social security contributions. These fees are to protect you from any unexpected occurrences such as disease, accidents, unemployment or ageing.

An employee as a part of this social security system can be a subject to any of the following statutory social security groups:

health insurance (ex. Mawista Expatcare)

long-term care

pension

accident insurance

unemployment insurance

Social security card

Social security card is a card given to all employees in Germany, carrying a social security number in it. Social security number ensures you several social benefits in Germany. Also, in order to register you as an employee, your employer will need your social security number. In case of losing your social security number, you should require from the German pension fund to replace it.

Getting your pension fund

Being a German employee for a certain period and deciding to return to your home country, you are eligible to require getting your pension from the pension fund for the years you have worked in Germany.

Health insurance for Freelancers and Employees in Germany

It is always advisable to obtain working health insurance, which will cover you for up to 5 year and offer full coverage for any emergencies and accidents. This health insurance plan is heavily advised for expatriates.

If you are an expat, then a working health insurance must be purchased before you make any other commitments in Germany. The working insurance is also suitable for Germans traveling abroad, since you will be insured in any place you visit. If you are looking for great coverage for a good price, then your working health insurance awaits here!

Get together with your family

Being a legitimate worker in Germany you can benefit taking or bringing your spouse, husband or children in Germany with you.

Foreign EU Citizens workers in Germany

Are eligible to bring their family in Germany and they are eligible to live and work too, and they are free from any residence entitlement to do so.

Foreign third country nationals working in Germany

Even that you are a foreigner of a third country, you can be eligible to bring your spouse, husband or children in Germany.

Taking your spouse or husband with you in Germany

Taking your spouse or husband with you in Germany you must:

Be a residence permit or EU Blue Card holder,

Proof of renting an adequate size accommodation for a family,

Proof of enjoying money to cover family living costs,

Your spouse or husband must be 18 years old at least.

German language of spouse or husband needs to be elementary in order to become a residence permit holder. However, The German language will not be required if:

You possess an EU Blue Card,

You have a job as a qualified worker in Germany,

Your spouse or husband holds a university degree,

You are a citizen of Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand or the USA.

Bringing your children in Germany

You can bring your children in Germany and they can receive a German residence permit if:

You and your spouse or husband hold a residence permit,

If you are a lone parent, you have the right of custody and child is up to 16 years old.

Bringing your family in Germany

You can bring also your family in Germany. The procedure to get the residence permit of family members is the following:

Your family members apply at home German Embassy or Consulate for a residency permit in Germany for the purpose of family reunification,

Once your family arrives in Germany you register them at Resident's Registration Office and at your Foreigner's Registration Office.

Living and working eligibility for my family arrived in Germany

Your family members once in Germany, are eligible to benefit from life and work opportunities in Germany, as they will be holding a residence permit. They are allowed also to access education in Germany, such as high school, higher education, professional education and other sorts of education available in Germany.

Other benefits of joining family members in Germany

There are several other benefits for foreign working families in Germany which are:

Benefiting from parental leave,

Getting support as a young family

And more.