EU Blue Card

Do you have an academic qualification and you have found a job in Germany? Learn about what requirements you have to meet for an EU Blue Card.

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What is the EU Blue Card?

The **EU Blue Card** (**Section 18g of the Residence Act [AufenthG]**) is a special **residence title** for foreign academics and people with comparable qualifications who want to take up **qualified employment** in Germany. To find out if you need a **visa** to enter Germany, see the "**How do I apply for a visa?**" section.

Overview of the requirements for the EU Blue Card

- You have a German academic qualification or a foreign academic qualification that is comparable to a German academic qualification. If you do not have a traditional **academic degree**, you must demonstrate that you have a tertiary-level qualification that took at least three years to complete in order to obtain an EU Blue Card. In Germany, this qualification must correspond to at least level 6 of the **International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011)** or level 6 of the European Qualifications Framework. Examples of such training qualifications include "Master craftsman training / Master craftswoman training" as well as non-academic vocational qualifications in educator professions. Information on the equivalence and recognition of foreign academic qualifications can be found in the "**Recognition**" section
- You already have a specific job offer from a company in Germany. The job offer must meet the following conditions:
  - The period of employment must be at least six months.
  - The job must match your qualification (academic degree). If a **licence to practise** (**regulated professions**) is required, this must be in place or in prospect at the time of the visa application.
  - Your job in Germany must enable you to earn a gross annual salary of at least **€50,700** (as of 2026).
- If you are employed in a **shortage occupation**, you can also obtain an EU Blue Card with a lower gross annual salary of at least **€45,934.20** (as of 2026) if the **Federal Employment Agency (BA)** has approved your employment. The salary thresholds are published annually by the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community. The following professions are considered to be **shortage occupations** in Germany:
  - Manufacturing, mining, construction and distribution managers
  - Information and communications technology service managers
  - Professional services managers, such as childcare services, health services and education managers
  - Academic **STEM** professionals
  - Academic professionals in architecture, spatial planning and transport planning
  - Medical doctors
  - Veterinarians
  - Dentists
  - Pharmacists
  - Academic and comparable nursing and midwifery professionals

- School and out-of-school teachers and educators

The detailed list of shortage occupations for the EU Blue Card can be found **here**.

EU Blue Card for young professionals

The following applies to new entrants to the labour market: If you obtained your last degree or equivalent qualification less than three years ago, you can also obtain an EU Blue Card if your job offer includes a gross annual salary of at least **€45,934.20** (as of 2026). This applies to entry-level jobs in all professions. The approval of the Federal Employment Agency is also required for the visa procedure.

Here you find an **overview** of how to secure your livelihood according to the purpose of stay.

In this video: How do I get the EU Blue Card?

Even if you do not meet the above-mentioned requirements for an EU Blue Card, there may be other options open to you. You can apply for a **work visa** for professionals with an academic qualification under **Section 18b of the Residence Act (AufenthG)**.

How to live and work with the EU Blue Card

The EU Blue Card is issued for the duration of your employment contract, plus an additional six months, and is valid for a maximum of four years. It is possible to extend the validity of this residence title in Germany if certain conditions are met.

After 27 months, EU Blue Card holders can obtain a **settlement permit** if they can prove that they have German language skills at level A1 according to the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)**. If language level B1 can be demonstrated, the settlement permit can be issued after only 21 months.

Do you want to live in Germany with your family? As an EU Blue Card holder, this is possible. To find out what you need to consider and what the requirements are, please see the "**Family reunification**" section.

What to consider when changing jobs with the EU Blue Card

Are you an EU Blue Card holder looking to change your employer in Germany? This is no problem. You will be able to start your new job with a valid EU Blue Card. However, if you change jobs within the first year of employment, you must notify your local **foreigners authority** of your new job. The foreigners authority will check whether you still meet the conditions for the EU Blue Card in your new job. If this is not the case, you may be granted another type of **residence permit**, such as a **work and residence permit for qualified professionals**.

EU Blue Card without a degree: opportunities for IT specialists

Do you want to work in Germany as an IT professional or manager without a formal qualification? Under certain conditions, you may be able to obtain an EU Blue Card.

- You must be able to demonstrate that you have a specific job offer as an IT professional in Germany. The period of employment must be at least six months.
- Your job in Germany must enable you to earn a gross annual salary of at least **€45,934.20** (as of 2026).
- You must have worked in IT for at least three of the past seven years. Your professional experience must have been at **university** level and a prerequisite for employment in Germany.

Do you meet the above-mentioned requirements? Then you are entitled to an EU Blue Card under **Section 18g of the Residence Act [AufenthG]**. Find out about the entry and visa process.

If you are an IT professional without a formal qualification, in addition to the EU Blue Card, you may be able to enter Germany under the **special regulations for individuals with practical knowledge**.

Apply for the EU Blue Card online

Do you meet the necessary requirements? Then you can apply for the EU Blue Card online here: **Consular Services Portal of the Federal Foreign Office**.

Video: Experience with the EU Blue Card

Information on the web

German Federal Employment Agency (BA)

Welcome to Germany! Important information about starting a job in Germany

Federal Foreign Office (FFO)

To find out which visa you need t come to Germany, use the Visa-Navigator

Print page

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