



The
Federal Government

Make it in Germany

Working in Germany: the official website
for qualified professionals

Recruiting international trainees

Legal aspects, integration and practical guidance for employers

bundeswirtschaftsministerium.de





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for qualified professionals

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Preface

Training people for skilled occupations is a key issue for Germany's future. Due to demographic change and the growing shortage of skilled workers, international trainees are becoming an increasingly important pillar of the German labour market. While the number of German trainees has been declining for several years, there has been a notable increase in the number of people with foreign citizenship choosing to start vocational training.

This development is not only linked to the integration of refugees into the vocational training market. It is also the result of targeted immigration from EU Member States and third countries for the purpose of vocational training. The 2023 reform of the Skilled Immigration Act has further improved the legal framework and introduced additional opportunities in this area.

Demand remains high: in 2024, around 20,000 people from third countries received a residence permit for vocational training in Germany for the first time (see [BAMF](#)).

In addition, there are trainees who hold the nationality of a Member State of the European Union or of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).

This exact group is of relevance in this guide: people living in other European countries and beyond who wish to come to Germany to start vocational training or are planning to do so. Many of them already have professional experience and may hold an academic or vocational qualification. Their willingness to begin vocational training in Germany often reflects a high level of motivation and, depending on their previous experience and chosen occupation, valuable professional skills. Recruiting trainees from abroad can therefore be a real opportunity for employers.

The following pages show how companies can successfully find, recruit, and retain international trainees. It guides you step by step through the recruitment process – from identifying suitable candidates and addressing legal requirements to supporting successful integration. You will also find practical guidance, useful links, and key contacts to support you along the way.

Contact:

This brochure was created on the authority of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy by the project team of "Make it in Germany".

Questions and suggestions can be sent to make-it@iwkoeln.de.

Further information can be found on the following website: www.make-it-in-germany.com/en.

1 How can I find trainees from abroad?

Recruiting trainees from abroad offers many opportunities – but it also requires time, planning and careful preparation. A recruitment process outside the EU can take between six months and more than a year, depending on the country of origin and whether language skills still need to be developed before arriving to Germany.

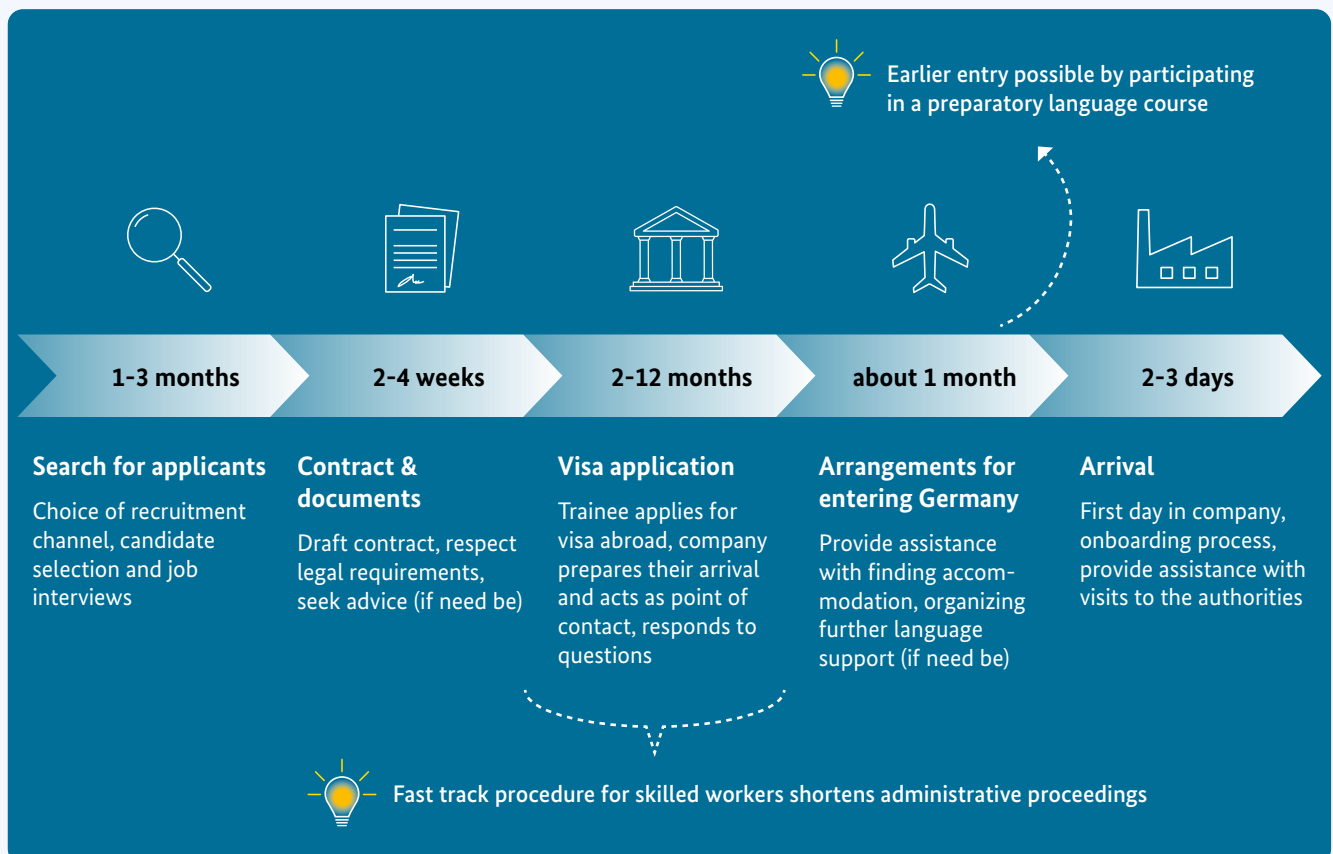
It is therefore important to understand the process from the very beginning and to approach it in a structured way. You should consider the following questions at an early stage:

- Which countries would I like to recruit from? Do I already have employees with contacts in certain regions?
- Are there contact or advisory services in my region, association or professional network that can support me?
- What requirements, standards and procedures apply in the application process?

The following sections explain how to create and publish an attractive job advertisement, and what to pay particular attention to during the interview stage. The graphic below provides an overview of the key stages in the recruitment process.

Recruitment process for international trainees

Figure 1: Simplified overview of the typical recruitment process for a trainee who requires a visa



1.1 Job advertisements and recruitment channels

Reaching trainees: how do I formulate a job advertisement?

The first point of contact with a potential trainee is usually through a job advertisement. When designing it, similar principles apply as for domestic job postings: it should be clear, easy to understand and engaging. The following tips can help you tailor your advertisement to an international audience:

Be specific: Clearly describe the knowledge and skills required for the role and avoid using abbreviations. Write the job advertisement in simple, accessible language.

State language requirements: Indicate in which languages applications can be submitted. Also specify the level of German required to start working and training in your company. For a visa application, applicants usually need to provide proof of at least B1 level German.

Provide a multilingual advertisement: Ideally, publish your job advertisement in English as well. If you are recruiting in a specific region, consider providing it in the native language of your future trainee. This allows you to reach applicants whose German is not yet fully developed and signals that your company is internationally oriented.

Highlight support services: Mention any support your company may offer, such as language courses or help with finding accommodation.

Which channels can I use to reach potential trainees?

As an employer, you can use a variety of channels to reach trainees from third countries specifically. The most suitable options for your company

depend on your available resources, the target group you want to address and your sector. Below you will find an overview of the most important recruitment channels.

The “Make it in Germany” job listings

Through the [job listings of “Make it in Germany”](#), you can make your apprenticeship vacancy visible internationally and benefit from the portal’s wide reach. To do this, publish your vacancy in the [job portal](#) of the Federal Employment Agency (BA). Alternatively, you can report your vacancy directly to the [Employer Service](#) of the Federal Employment Agency. In both cases, you must actively agree to the publication of your vacancy on “Make it in Germany”. Instructions on how to do this can be found on [“Make it in Germany”](#).

Job portal of the Federal Employment Agency

The [job portal of the Federal Employment Agency](#) is one of the most important tools for recruiting trainees – including internationally. Through connections with partner portals such as “Make it in Germany” and EURES, your vacancies are widely distributed. Using the portal is **free of charge**.

Applicant database of the Federal Employment Agency

The applicant database of the Federal Employment Agency provides up-to-date profiles, including those of people interested in vocational training from Germany and abroad. Applicants who are still living abroad are specifically prepared for the German labour market by the International Placement Service (ZAV). By entering the keyword *incoming* under the tab “Include or exclude the following terms” (*Folgende Begriffe einschließen*

oder ausschließen), you can filter profiles of people interested in vocational training. You can access the [applicant database](#) here.

Social media

Many people interested in vocational training abroad actively seek information through social media channels such as LinkedIn, Instagram, or TikTok. These platforms allow you to present your company and your vocational training opportunities easily and in a way that addresses your target group – including in several languages.

Online vocational training platforms and vocational training fairs

You can also use online vocational training platforms or international vocational training fairs, for example those organised by the Federal Employment Agency, Chambers of Industry and Commerce, Chambers of Crafts, professional associations, Goethe-Institutes, or employer associations. These events offer not only digital visibility but

also opportunities for personal contact – online or on site. International events allow you to establish contacts with young people from third countries in a targeted way.

Further recruitment channels

iMOVE is an initiative of the Federal Ministry of Education, Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMBFSFJ) and is based at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB). iMOVE supports employers in Germany through a network of internationally active German training providers. For example, you can use the cooperation platform and the provider database to search for suitable partners.

The recruitment channels presented here are only examples – many other options are available. You can also contact your Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK) or Chamber of Crafts (HWK) to find suitable channels for your search. In [section 1.3](#) you will find practical guidance on recruiting applicants through agencies and public programmes.



1.2 How can I assess and get to know potential trainees better?

Assessing applications

Experience shows that once you open your recruitment channels to applicants from abroad, you will often receive a large number of applications. To help you assess them, the following tips may be useful.

1. Be open to different application formats:

In many countries, applicants typically submit only a CV and their graduation certificates. Do not reject such applications too quickly simply because they do not correspond to the formats commonly used in Germany.

2. Assess foreign qualifications carefully:

The [BQ-Portal](#) and its country profiles help you classify non-academic vocational qualifications obtained abroad. Your **Chamber** can also advise you individually on this matter. The Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB) provides information on the evaluation of foreign school-leaving certificates in the [anabin](#) database, particularly with regard to access to higher education in Germany. All secondary school certificates that grant access to higher education in the country of origin are listed there, which allows you to further assess individual qualifications.

3. Consider individual life paths:

Applicants may present an unusual CV or educational background. Use the interview to learn more about the person behind the application. In many cases, an unconventional career path can indicate strong potential.

Getting to know potential apprentices in the interview

As with applicants in Germany, it is important to understand the candidate's motivation and identify which professional skills and competencies they already possess. Video conferencing tools can be particularly helpful for interviews with applicants abroad, as they allow you to get to know candidates personally despite the geographical distance. When recruiting international apprentices, you should pay particular attention to the following questions:

- Which **school-leaving qualifications** and learning experiences do they have?
- Which **language skills** do they already have – and where is additional support needed?
- What **long-term goals** does the applicant pursue in Germany?
- Does the applicant require a **visa** to enter Germany?



Tip: The [checklist](#) provided by the initiative “NETZWERK Unternehmen integrieren Flüchtlinge”, the Goethe-Institut and the project “Hand in Hand for International Talents” can help you assess language skills in practice.

You can also use the interview to introduce your company and explain the German vocational training system. Clearly communicating expectations towards apprentices helps establish a transparent basis for cooperation from the start. You may refer applicants to resources such as the [website](#) of the campaign “Die Duale” of the Federal Ministry of Education, Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMBFSFJ) as well as the multilingual [GOVET website of the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training \(BIBB\)](#), which includes an [explanatory video on the dual vocational training](#) system. You should also ask the applicant to present their identity document.



Note: Applicants from visa-required countries need confirmation of their vocational training position in order to apply for a visa under Section 16a of the Residence Act (AufenthG). Further information can be found in the chapter “**Visa and residence: what legal aspects do I need to consider?**”

Additional testing options

To gain a more comprehensive picture of an applicant’s competencies, you can use additional assessment methods, for example:

- occupational aptitude tests
- math problems
- language assessments, for example the [Goethe-Test PRO](#)

Some applicants may already have obtained professional experience or even academic qualifications in their country of origin. If an applicant already holds a qualification, the responsible advisory service can help assess whether a recognition procedure may be an alternative to starting vocational training.

The relevant Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK) or Chamber of Crafts (HWK) can also support you in assessing qualifications. Further information and online tools are available on the official websites “[Recognition Finder](#)” and “[BQ-Portal](#)”.

1.3 Recruitment agencies: what you should know

Are you considering working with a recruitment agency to find skilled workers from abroad? To support you in the recruitment process, both private recruitment agencies and publicly organised placement services are available.

Private recruitment agencies

Private recruitment agencies offer a wide range of services to employers when placing international trainees. These may include matching candidates with companies, individual support with entry and visa procedures, organising language training or assisting with integration within the company.

Although recruitment agencies have no direct influence on official decisions, their expertise and networks can simplify the recruitment process and help reduce the workload for your company.

The market for recruitment services is large. When selecting a recruitment agency for the fair and sustainable recruitment of apprentices, you should therefore consider the following aspects:

- ▶ **Employer Pays Principle:** In the context of vocational training placement, the employer must exclusively bear the placement fees (see Section 296a of the Social Code Book III [SGB III]). The employer is also generally responsible for covering other recruitment-related costs, such as language courses or visa procedures. It is therefore important to clarify the cost distribution in advance.
- ▶ **Transparent communication:** The recruitment process and all associated costs should be clearly explained in writing and in an understandable language – both for companies and for apprentices. Information should be provided in written form and in the first language or official language of the country of origin.
- ▶ **Planning language learning past B1 level:** The agency supports language learning in the country of origin up to B1 level and organises language testing as well as the issuance of a language certificate recognised by the visa authority (for example Goethe-Institut, telc or ÖSD). Further language training can then be planned together.
- ▶ **Specialised focus on specific countries or sectors:** Reputable agencies usually focus on specific countries of origin and occupational fields. This often indicates specialised knowledge and strong networks in the respective regions.
- ▶ **Support with integration and transition:** Good agencies provide preparatory information about living and working in Germany – starting in the country of origin and continuing with support in the company. It is advisable to clarify in advance how these services complement your company's own integration measures.
- ▶ **Good availability:** The agency should be reliably available for both you and your apprentices and provide designated contact persons for questions regarding the procedure.

By following these basic principles, you contribute to fair and sustainable recruitment of apprentices.

Further information [on fair and ethical recruitment](#) of international skilled workers and apprentices can be found on “Make it in Germany”.

Quality criterion: membership in an association

To become a member of an association, for example the Gesamtverband der Personaldienstleister (GVP) or the Bundesverband internationale Fachkräftegewinnung (bvifg) e.V. private providers must meet and comply with specific quality criteria. Membership in such an association is therefore a good indicator of a reputable service.

Public recruitment services

Furthermore, projects implemented by state actors or Chambers, such as the Federal Employment Agency (BA), the DIHK Service GmbH, or the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), can support you in recruiting trainees from abroad and integrating them into your company.

Many of these programmes also offer a comprehensive service for placing trainees. Your advantage as an employer: the projects are committed to fair and ethical recruitment.

Make sure you familiarise yourself with the relevant conditions in advance. A regularly updated overview of projects can be found in the section [“Current projects for recruiting skilled workers”](#) on “Make it in Germany”.

For smaller, regional projects, please contact your **local advisory services** (e.g. Chambers, business development agencies or employer services). Ask specifically about existing cooperation programmes for recruiting trainees from abroad and about financial support for recruitment with the help of private agencies. You can search for suitable contact points under [“Find advisory services”](#) on “Make it in Germany”.



Tip: The **Employer Service (AGS) of the Bundesagentur für Arbeit (BA)** in your region provides advice on recruiting from abroad via telephone. If you do not yet have a personal contact, use the free service hotline **0800 4 555520** or alternatively send an email to ZAV.BIPP@arbeitsagentur.de.

2 Visa and residence: what legal aspects do I need to consider?

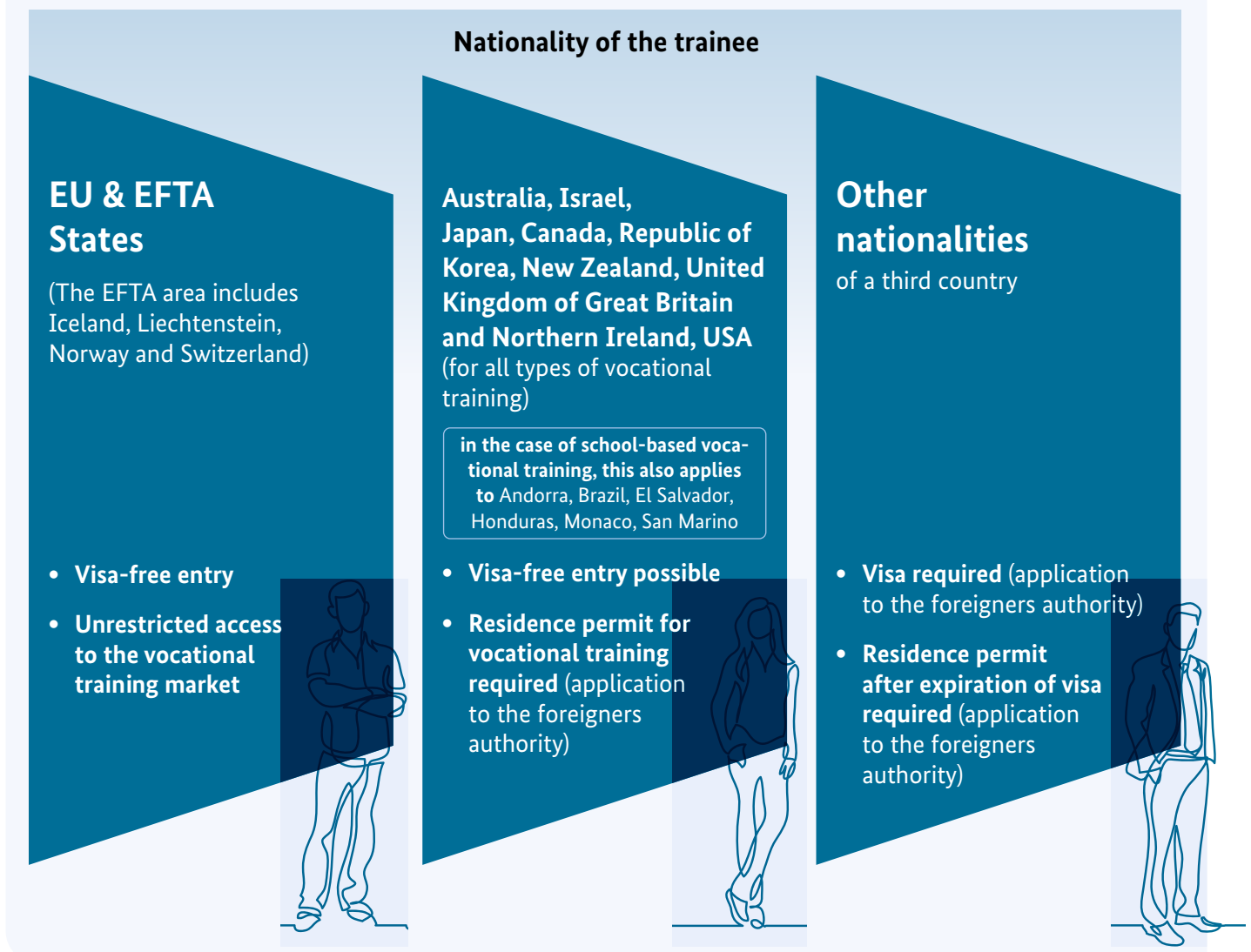
To complete vocational training in Germany, applicants from “third countries” (i.e. outside the EU and EFTA) generally require a visa for entry (issued abroad) or a residence permit (issued in Germany after entry). The requirements are the following: a vocational training place in Germany, German language skills and proof of sufficient financial means. If a right of residence already exists (for example on humanitarian grounds or in the context of family

reunification), it must be assessed on a case-by-case basis whether vocational training is permitted.

2.1 Who needs a visa?

Whether prospective trainees need to apply for a visa or residence permit for vocational training depends on their nationality.

Figure 2: Access to vocational training: who needs a visa?



EU and EFTA states

Persons who are nationals of a Member State of the European Union (EU) or the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland) can enter Germany **without a visa** and start vocational training without restrictions.

Third countries

Nationals of other countries – so-called third-country nationals – require a residence title in order to complete vocational training in Germany. If they do not already hold another residence title that permits training, they need a visa or residence permit for the purpose of vocational training in accordance with **Section 16a of the Residence Act (AufenthG)**.

As a rule, the visa is applied for at the German mission abroad in the future trainee's place of residence. The application is submitted either online via the Foreign Office's [Consular Services Portal](#) or directly at the competent German embassy or consulate general. The visa authorises entry and the start of vocational training. Before the visa expires, trainees must apply for a residence permit at the foreigners authority.



Please arrange your appointment early

There are often long waiting times at the foreigners authorities. Therefore, trainees should book an appointment for their residence permit as soon as possible. Please make sure you inform your trainees accordingly.

Entry of privileged nationals ("best friends" regulation)

Nationals of Australia, Israel, Japan, Canada, the Republic of Korea, New Zealand, the United States and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland can enter Germany without a visa and stay for up to 90 days in accordance with Section 41 (1) of the Residence Ordinance (AufenthV). However, they are **not allowed to start vocational training** during this period. They must also apply for a residence permit pursuant to Section 16a before starting training at the competent foreigners authority in Germany.

Due to often long waiting times at the foreigners authorities, it is advisable to apply for a visa for vocational training while still in the country of residence. This ensures that trainees are legally secure in time for the start of their training.

2.2 What requirements must trainees meet for the visa?

General requirements

If your future trainee requires an entry visa, they must apply for it at the competent visa office (contact details can be found on [“Make it in Germany”](#)). The following general requirements must be met:

- proof of identity and nationality
- valid passport
- proof of sufficient financial means
- no grounds for expulsion and no threat to the interests of the Federal Republic of Germany

In addition, there are specific requirements for the visa and residence permit under Section 16a of the Residence Act (AufenthG).

Please follow the instructions provided by the German mission abroad

Before applying for a visa, applicants should always obtain detailed information from the competent German mission abroad about the required documents. Information on the necessary documents is usually available on the respective websites.

Requirements for the visa for vocational training

Vocational training contract

If you wish to employ trainees from third countries, confirmation of a specific vocational training place is the basis for issuing the visa. It is therefore important that you, as the future employer, issue a corresponding contract as early as possible. You may include a clause stating that the contract only becomes valid once the visa has been granted.

Means of subsistence and health insurance

The trainee must have sufficient funds to cover living expenses for the entire duration of their stay. Proof can be provided through the training allowance, a blocked account, or a formal Declaration of Commitment. Current amounts required as proof of sufficient funds can be found on [“Make it in Germany”](#) under [“Visa for vocational training”](#). If subsistence is financed via the training allowance, the contract must specify a minimum gross remuneration.

If the training allowance is insufficient, applicants can cover the difference via a blocked account or a [Declaration of Commitment](#) by a person living in Germany.



Accommodation and meals provided by the employer can also be taken into account. These benefits can be specified in the training contract or in a written confirmation. Please consult the competent Chamber or another advisory service for further details.

Please also remember the following: trainees must provide proof of valid health insurance from the first day of entry when applying for the visa. If statutory health insurance coverage is not available, private health insurance is required that corresponds to the benefits of statutory health insurance (Section 11 of the Social Code Book V [SGB V]) and is valid without limitation – without restrictions regarding age, occupation, or length of stay.

Language skills

For a visa for vocational training, German language skills at **level B1** (CEFR) are generally required. In the nursing sector (→ [Chapter 3](#)), higher requirements may apply.

Language skills can be proven as follows:

- by a **language certificate** (e.g., from the Goethe-Institut, Telc GmbH, TestDaF Institute or another ALTE-certified institute). As a general rule, the certificate should not be more than one year old at the time of application.

or

- by **confirmation from the company providing the vocational training** that the existing language skills are sufficient for the intended vocational training (stated in the Declaration of Employment).

Approval by the Federal Employment Agency

For company-based vocational training, approval by the Federal Employment Agency (BA) is generally obtained during the visa procedure. This includes, for example, checking whether the trainee is employed under the same conditions as German trainees. No action is required on your part.

Pre-approval by the Federal Employment Agency

As an employer, you can apply for [pre-approval](#) directly from the Federal Employment Agency (BA) in order to speed up the application process. This can be applied for online and, once granted, is valid for up to nine months.

Plan arrival before the start of vocational training

An intended **date of entry** must be specified in the visa application. **This date should not coincide exactly with the start of vocational training.** Instead, allow a **buffer period** of several days (e.g. up to two weeks) to complete administrative procedures, clarify organisational matters and ensure a smooth start to vocational training. Make sure that health insurance is valid for this period and that funding is secured.

Secondary employment is permitted under the residence law

With a [residence permit](#) for vocational training, under current residence law, trainees are allowed to work up to 20 hours per week alongside their vocational training, either in the training company or for another employer. Other regulations (e.g. youth employment protection law and contractual agreements) must be observed.

Excursus: school-based vocational training

For school-based vocational training, similar requirements apply as for company-based vocational training – with some specific aspects that you, as an education provider or employer, should consider:

- **Written confirmation from a vocational school:** Applicants require a binding letter of acceptance from a recognised vocational school.
- **Proof of sufficient language skills:** As a general rule, language skills at level **B1** or higher are required. These can be proven either by confirmation from the vocational school or by an **ALTE-certified language certificate**.

- **Recognised school-leaving certificate:**

Admission often requires a school-leaving qualification recognised in Germany. The recognition of foreign school certificates is carried out by the relevant **recognition authorities** in the federal states. The responsible bodies can be found via the [anabin](#) database under “Recognition and advisory services in Germany”. A brief guide is available on “Make it in Germany” under [“Requirements for vocational training”](#).

Important: When applying to the competent recognition authority, a **registered address in Germany** or a **confirmed vocational training place** is usually required – only then can the application be processed. Further information and the relevant recognition and advisory bodies can be found on the [anabin](#) information portal.

You should also contact the schools directly to find out about their admission requirements. In addition, there are differences between the federal states – therefore, always consider the specific requirements of the respective recognition authority.

2.3 My obligations to provide information as an employer

If you employ persons from countries outside the EU, the EEA or Switzerland, specific legal requirements apply to you as an employer. You have the following obligations:

- **Check residence permits:**

Ensure that your trainees hold a valid residence permit authorising vocational training at the start of the vocational training. Keep a copy of the valid residence permit in paper or electronic form.

- **Consider renewals:**

In the case of temporary permits, remind trainees to apply for an extension in good time.

- **Inform trainees about advisory services:**

Since 1 January 2026, employers based in Germany are obliged under Section 45c of the Residence Act (AufenthG) to inform third-country nationals who reside or usually live abroad, at the latest on their first day of employment, in writing about the possibility of receiving advice on labour and social law through the “Fair Integration” advisory service. Employers must also provide trainees with the contact details of the advisory centre closest to their workplace.

On the website of the [“Faire Integration”](#) advisory service, you can download an information sheet for employers as well as a template for employees/trainees. The template also includes an overview of all [advisory centres](#).

Exception: If you recruited the trainees through [a recruitment agency](#), this obligation does not apply to you as the employer and instead lies with the agency.

Further contact points can be found in [→ Chapter 7](#).

Termination, change or switching of vocational training

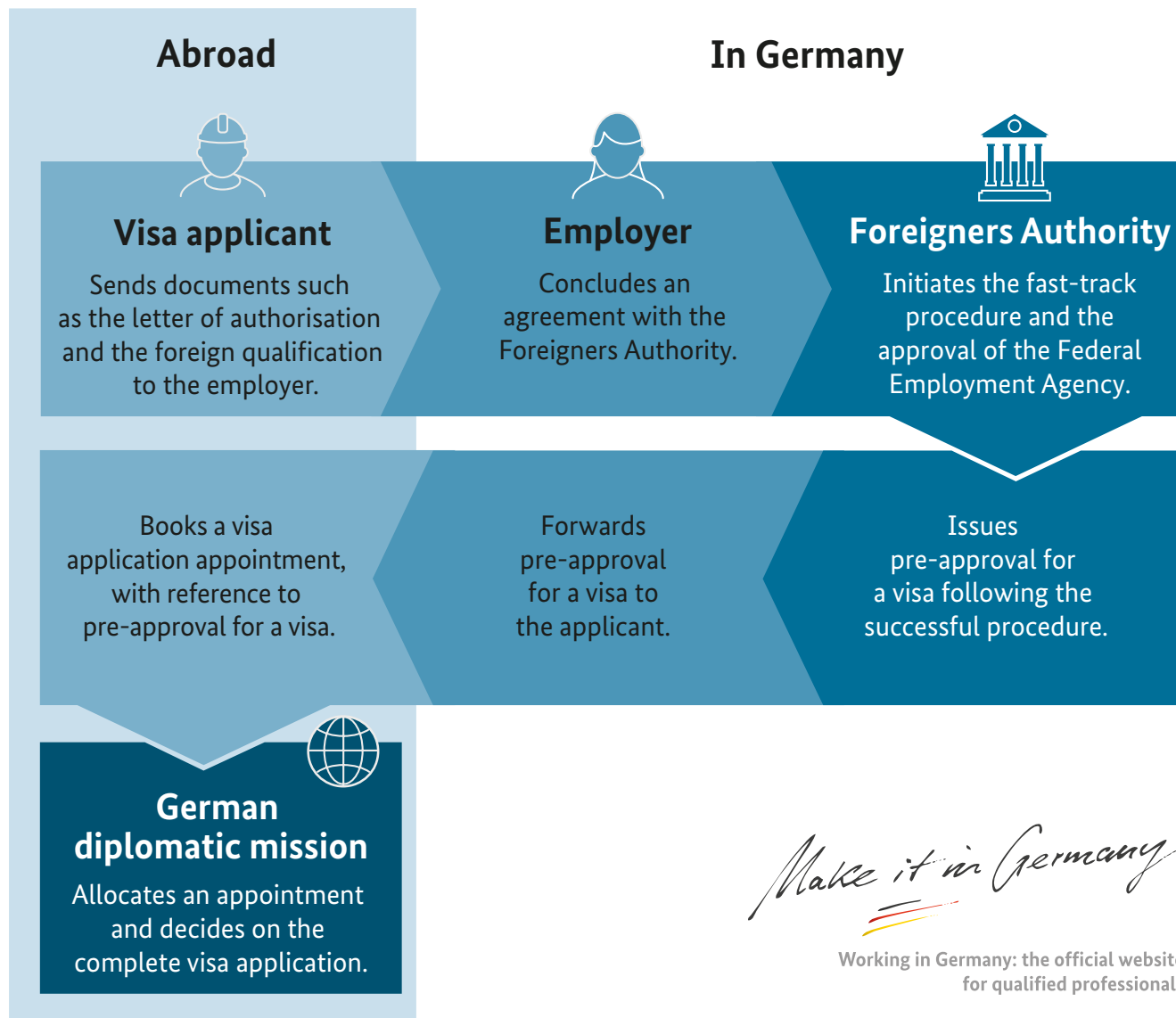
In the event of early termination, changes or switching of the vocational training, trainees must notify the competent foreigners authority within two weeks of becoming aware of the change. You should inform your trainees of this requirement in order to ensure they retain the possibility of finding another vocational training place.

2.4 How can I speed up the entry of trainees?

You can speed up the entry of your future trainees by using the [fast-track procedure for skilled workers](#). For this, you need a power of attorney from your future trainee. To initiate the procedure, contact the competent foreigners authority. After a consultation, you conclude an agreement and pay a fee of €411.

An explanatory video, the contact details of the competent authorities and a brochure with questions and answers about the procedure can be found on the portal under [“The fast-track procedure for skilled workers”](#).

Figure 3: Ideal-typical course of action for the fast-track procedure for skilled workers



2.5 Excursus: applicants for vocational training already in Germany

Not all applicants from third countries need to enter Germany – many potential candidates are already living in Germany. They have already gained initial experience in the country and are directly available on the training market. These individuals may already meet important requirements, such as having a recognised qualification or sufficient language skills. The following groups may be of particular interest to you as an employer:

- persons with a visa for [seeking a vocational training place \(Section 17 \(1\) of the Residence Act \[AufenthG\]\)](#)
- holders of an [opportunity card \(Section 20a of the Residence Act \[AufenthG\]\)](#)
- [international students who wish to switch to vocational training \(Section 16b of the Residence Act \[AufenthG\]\)](#)
- persons with an existing residence permit for employment (e.g. [Section 18a of the Residence Act \[AufenthG\]](#)) who wish to take up vocational training
- persons in a voluntary service who wish to start vocational training
- persons with an asylum background, e.g. recognised refugees, persons with tolerated status, asylum seekers or persons entitled to protection (further information can be found at [“Netzwerk Unternehmen integrieren Flüchtlinge”](#)).

How can you recruit these persons for vocational training in your company?

To recruit these target groups for vocational training, the following requirements must generally be met:

- Binding vocational training offer
- secured means of subsistence
- language skills, usually at least level B1 (CEFR)

Most of the above-mentioned groups can then switch to a residence permit for qualified employment (→ [Chapter 2.1](#)). For persons with an asylum background, the legal situation depends on their residence status.



Seek advice

Regional Welcome Centres support companies and applicants in finding suitable candidates. You can find local contact points in the database [“Find advisory services”](#) on [“Make it in Germany”](#).

Please note: the decision is taken by the competent foreigners authority. Make sure to find out early which documents are required.

3 Excursus: what do employers in the care sector need to consider?

For employers in the care sector, foreign trainees present a valuable opportunity to recruit motivated young talent. This is particularly true given that, unlike nursing professionals trained abroad, no recognition procedure is required and trainees learn nursing practice in Germany from the ground up.

Visa and residence regulations do not differ from the general provisions described in [Chapter 2.1](#). In addition, further requirements apply.

What requirements must trainees in the care sector meet?

For vocational training as a **nursing professional**, the following requirements apply:

- **intermediate school-leaving certificate** officially recognised in Germany. Recognition is carried out by the competent authorities of the federal states. The responsible bodies can be found via the [anabin](#) database under “Recognition and advisory services in Germany”.



Registered address may be required

Generally, applicants must either have a registered address in the relevant federal state or a binding vocational training offer for the application to be processed. Please check with the competent authority for further requirements.

- **German language skills:** depending on the [federal state](#), proof of German language skills at level B2 or B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is required
- **medical fitness for the profession:** proven by a medical certificate from Germany or the country of origin (can be submitted after entry)
- **certificate of conduct:** proof of a clean criminal record and reliability (*Certificate of Good Standing* from the country of origin or German authorities)

The WHO list: recruitment and placement ban

As an employer in the healthcare or care sector, please note the [recruitment and placement ban](#) for healthcare and care personnel from countries on the [WHO list](#) of the World Health Organization. From these countries, persons may not be recruited or placed in employment or vocational training in healthcare and nursing professions in Germany – except via the Federal Employment Agency (BA) (Section 38 of the Ordinance on the Employment of Foreigners [BeschV]). The aim is to prevent recruitment from countries with a shortage of healthcare personnel. If trainees apply on their own initiative (i.e., without prior contact by the employer or placement by an agency), this is not covered by the ban. The WHO list was updated in 2023; the next revision is planned for 2026.

Nursing assistant trainees

In addition to vocational training as a nursing professional, you can also recruit nursing assistants from abroad. As with vocational training as a nursing professional, German language skills at B1-B2 level and proof of a clean health and criminal record are required for trainees from third countries. A **basic school-leaving qualification** (*Hauptschulabschluss* or *erster allgemeinbildender Abschluss [ESA]*) is sufficient, provided it is also recognised in Germany. The general residence regulations applicable to all trainees also apply here.

How can I identify reputable recruitment agencies in the care sector?

To define and establish requirements for good international recruitment in the care sector, the **state-backed quality seal “Faire Anwerbung Pflege Deutschland” (Fair Recruitment in German Care)** was developed. The seal serves as a **guide** for private recruitment agencies in the care sector and can help identify reputable agencies. It is based on the standards of a fair, ethical and transparent recruitment process.

Companies, recruitment agencies and other organisations can obtain certification from the quality association based on fixed criteria, which helps employers select a suitable provider. However, only the placement of qualified nursing staff has been assessed so far. The agencies are not officially certified for the placement of trainees. Nevertheless, the criteria of the quality seal can serve as a guide.

Government projects to recruit skilled workers in the care sector

- The [APAL](#) project also places trainees in the care sector in accordance with the principles of fair and ethical recruitment.
- The [Triple Win](#) programme supports employers in recruiting nursing staff from abroad and trainees from India.



4 Arrival in Germany: the most important steps for a successful start

1

Search for accommodation and registration of your place of residence



- Make appointment to register place of residence.
- Registering your place of residence must occur within two weeks of entering Germany. Please note that addresses of hotels can only act as places of residence in exceptional cases. Find more tips on searching for an accommodation below.

2

Apply for an identification number (IdNo or Steuer-ID)



- After registering your place of residence, the IdNo/Steuer-ID will automatically be sent to the registered address.
- For a maximum period of three months, the employer can deduct income tax even without an IdNo/Steuer-ID.

3

Apply for a residence permit



Make an appointment at the competent foreigners authority in due time. The following documents must generally be presented (please check with the authority whether additional documents are required): *passport and entry visa, biometric passport photo, registration certificate, proof of health insurance, vocational training contract, tenancy agreement.*

4

Open a bank account



Foreign trainees may open a German bank account shortly after arriving to Germany, so that they can receive their training allowance. Usually, the following documents are required for this purpose: *valid passport, residence permit, registration certificate, IdNo/Steuer-ID (if available), pay slip (depending on the type of bank account).*

5

Get a SIM card

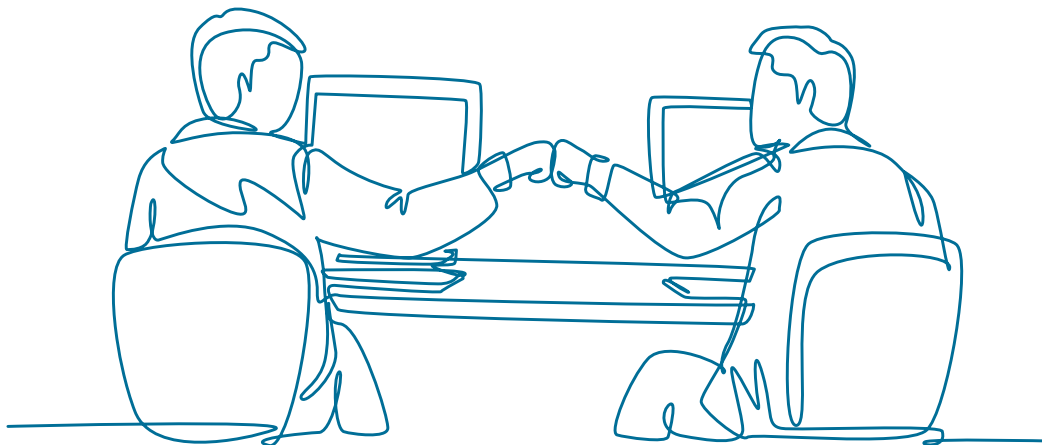


- **Ensure contactability:** get a SIM card shortly after arriving to Germany (for example, in a supermarket or a phone provider shop).
- **Activation:** ID required, restrictions may occur if you do not have any German documents.
- **Alternative:** eSIM as practical interim solution.

5 Integration: How can I, as an employer, provide support?

If you are expecting trainees from abroad, please keep in mind that they often begin their vocational training under particular circumstances. The initial situations vary widely. In addition to language-related challenges, the concept of practice-oriented dual vocational training is new to many, in addition to the challenge of finding their feet in a foreign country. Integration does not happen automatically. Investing in integration at an early stage lays the foundation for successfully completing vocational training and helps ensure that trainees remain with the company beyond their vocational training. But what does successful integration look like?

The first key factor in the success of vocational training is **language support** for everyday life at work and at vocational school. Language forms the basis for understanding the course content, learning the job and passing the exams. You can find tips for successful language support in [Chapter 5.2](#). If your trainees are additionally experiencing difficulties with their vocational training, for example with its content or organisation, the VerAplus programme might help. A training mentor as part of assisted vocational training can also offer support via coaching or tutoring. Ask your Chamber or an advice centre about further funding opportunities.



VerAplus – Improving training outcomes

The nationwide [VerAplus](#) mentoring programme run by the Senior Expert Service (SES) pairs young people in vocational training with retired **experts** in a **tandem model**. The mentors are specifically prepared and trained to support trainees with challenges in vocational school and in the workplace, with exams and, for example, with self-organisation. The programme is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education, Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMBFSFJ) and is free of charge.

Support for trainees and companies – Assistierte Ausbildung (AsA)

[“Assistierte Ausbildung”](#) (AsA) supports trainees and companies. The Employment Agency or the Job Centre can assist you by assigning supporting vocational training mentors. Depending on your needs, services such as social-educational support, language tuition and remedial lessons for trainees may be available.

If you are interested, please contact the Employer Service.

Intercultural skills are another important factor in the success of vocational training. Training supervisors in Germany can help strengthen these skills. You can receive advice on this topic from [the Advisory Service for Vocational Training Abroad](#), a service provided on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Education, Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMBFSFJ).

To ensure the vocational training programme is successful in the long term, suitable **accommodation** (→ [Chapter 5.1](#)) is also important, because trainees need a quiet space where they can study in peace or make phone calls to their families. Otherwise, they will find it difficult to concentrate on their vocational training.

The importance of fostering a genuine **welcoming culture** should not be underestimated. Whether you pick trainees up from the airport, appoint mentors, show them around the city, or give them tips on local clubs and events – gestures like these boost satisfaction and motivation and are therefore crucial to success. The key is to draw inspiration from others and get creative. There is no “right” or “wrong” way of doing things!



Tip: Put together a welcome package. On [“Make it in Germany”](#), you’ll find a template for a [welcome folder](#) containing plenty of essential information for getting started in Germany (including topics on accommodation, mobility, the healthcare and social security system, taxes, authorities, childcare and support services). You can add region-specific tips and useful information about your company and send the folder to your trainees before they enter Germany.

Tips for communication

Experience shows that open communication and **managing expectations** are very important when training people from abroad. Therefore, as a general rule, be mindful of the following aspects:

- Provide the prospective trainee with a contact person within the company right from the start
- It is better to explain something too many times than not enough. In some cultures, it is not commonplace to ask questions proactively.
- Be specific, for example when it comes to training allowance (including social security contributions) or the location of the company.
- Ask what your trainees need and listen to them.
- Involve your staff. Include them in the integration process and make yourself available to answer their questions too.
- If you are unsure, seek advice from experts (e.g. the Welcome Centers or Chambers → [Chapter 7](#)).

Free tools and information resources

- **Make it in Germany:** [“Successful Integration”](#)
- **Initiative Neue Qualität der Arbeit (INQA):** [“Onboarding foreign skilled workers”: checklist of the most important steps for onboarding with a timeline](#)
- **Unternehmen Berufsanerkennung:** [Successful approaches to onboarding and integration support for international skilled workers – from the first interview to the 100th day at work!](#)
- **THAMM Plus:** [“A good start in Germany”](#)
- You can find practical examples in the [database](#) on “Make it in Germany”

- **ESF Plus Federal Programme “IQ – Integration through Qualification”:** Through “regional integration networks for a welcoming culture and recognition of international workers”, IQ supports employers in preparing workforces and teaching staff at vocational schools to collaborate with international workers and trainees. There, they receive tailored information resources, for example on plain language, the risks of discrimination in the workplace, or support in the workplace.

Is it not a good fit?

If you or your trainees no longer wish to continue the vocational training, or if the vocational training profession is to be changed within the company, the foreigners authority must be informed by the trainee within two weeks. The trainee generally has the option of finding a new training company and can seek advice on this matter from the Federal Employment Agency (BA).

5.1 How can trainees find accommodation?

Affordable housing is a major challenge for international trainees. It is virtually impossible to look for accommodation from abroad, and important documents such as SCHUFA credit reports or certificates of no rental debt are often missing. Temporary solutions such as furnished rooms or holiday apartments are often used initially; however, registration of residence is not permitted in these – even though it is required by law. At the same time, trainees' budgets are usually very limited, as costs for visas, language courses, flights and moving have already been incurred and the trainees lack local family networks.



Please note: A local address must already be provided for the visa application – a hotel address is often sufficient at first. However, a permanent residence is required at the latest for registration of residence.

With your support as a point of contact in Germany, trainees have a much better chance of finding affordable accommodation. But how can you, as a company, take action? Some concrete measures are presented down below.

Direct supporting measures for providing accommodation:

- Renting living space that is made available to trainees – possibly at reduced rates. Cooperating with partners such as housing associations can ease the organisational burden on SMEs. For small businesses, collaboration with other companies in the region can also be a solution.

- Cooperating with youth residences or social welfare organisations
- Providing company-owned accommodation (e.g. staff housing or shared flats)
- Using your own network to find accommodation
- Referring trainees to landlords
- Hiring an estate agent
- Providing support with rental agreements
- Accompanying trainees to viewings

If you are able to do so, you might also consider offering financial support in the following ways:

- Advance payment on the first training allowance
- One-off loan or grant for deposit, furniture, etc.
- Regular rent allowance
- Providing information on state funding, such as financial [vocational training support \(BAB\)](#)



Please note that BAB can only be applied for within Germany. For school-based training, state grants (BAföG) may be available.

You can find further tips and practical examples on the website of [the Competence Center for Securing a Skilled Workforce \(KOFA\)](#).

5.2 Developing language skills together – ways to support my trainees

[Language support](#) is a key factor for success in vocational training. Language barriers often become apparent, especially when attending vocational school, and can have an impact by the time of the final examination at the latest. You should therefore support your trainees in their language acquisition both before and during their vocational training.

Preparatory language course for vocational training

Trainees with a visa under Section 16a of the Residence Act (AufenthG) can enter Germany **before the start of their vocational training** to attend a preparatory language course.

The advantage is that trainees are well prepared linguistically for their vocational training and can gain initial experience in Germany even before it begins. Please inform your trainees about this option and assist them in finding a suitable course.

The preparatory language course can be a state-funded vocational language course (e.g. [vocational training-related language courses](#)) or a course offered by a private language course provider designed for specific preparation. Please note that this must be a **full-time classroom-based course** (at least 20 lessons per week, each lasting 45 minutes). Participants are recommended to have **prior language skills** of at least level A2 to ensure that they make progress within a reasonable timeframe.

The following requirements are to be met for the **visa application** in the case of a language course in preparation for vocational training:

- Proof of eligibility to attend and proof of payment from the language course provider (To receive the document providing proof of eligibility, the vocational training contract is required.)
- Pre-approval from the Federal Employment Agency
- Proof of means of support (As no remuneration is paid prior to vocational training, a blocked account or a Declaration of Commitment may be submitted. A part-time job may also be taken into account.)



Health insurance is required

To be able to stay in Germany and attend a preparatory language course, “incoming” health insurance is required, as statutory health insurance does not yet apply. Please make sure to inform your future trainees of this circumstance. They will also be checked on this by the visa office before entering Germany.

Please also consider the general requirements ([→ Chapter 2.2](#)).



Good to know: Part-time employment of 20 hours per week is permitted during the preparatory period, as it is during the vocational training.

Language course accompanying vocational training

Funded vocational training-related language course

Trainees in a dual vocational training programme or in a vocational training role within the care sector receive tailored support with language acquisition through the [vocational training-related language course](#) (Azubi-BSK) during their vocational training. These courses place a special focus on the specific vocational training context (training content, examinations and technical vocabulary) and support trainees in dealing with the concrete challenges at vocational school. Trainees can attend the course free of charge.

To ensure the courses are tailored to the trainees' needs, the vocational training-related courses are divided into four occupational fields:

- skilled trades, industry and technology (including service and administrative professions, commercial and manufacturing occupations)
- hospitality and catering industry,
- warehousing and logistics,
- nursing and care (all training occupations in the care sector eligible for funding under Section 57 (1) of the Social Code Book III [SGB III])

Duration: A vocational training-related language course taken alongside the vocational training for one vocational school year. Ideally, the course begins at the start of vocational training, but a later date is also possible. Additionally, it is possible to complete several vocational training-related language courses consecutively over the entire duration of the vocational training.

Course offer: Various providers approved by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) run the courses throughout Germany. You can find the current course listings on the [KURSNET](#) portal of the Federal Employment Agency.



Note: It is recommended to release trainees from work for course hours to avoid overburdening them.

Requirements: To participate in a vocational training-related language course free of charge, trainees must submit an application for eligibility to the BAMF. In addition to presenting their vocational training contract, participants must be required to attend vocational school and require support with language acquisition. Once they have been granted eligibility, trainees can register directly with the course provider.

The BAMF course coordinators' contact details and further details can be found on the [BAMF website](#).

Further course offers in Germany and abroad

In addition to [state-funded courses](#), [adult education centres](#) and [Goethe-Institutes](#), for example, also offer German language courses. These two, as well as many other providers, have free online resources (such as exercises, videos, podcasts and apps). Offers like these are ideal for making good use of waiting times for a visa. You can find a compilation of such resources on [“Make it in Germany”](#) in the section for skilled workers. You may recommend the website or specific resources to your trainees.

How to spot reputable course providers: If you are looking for suitable language courses, the [Goethe-Institut's](#) website offers a helpful guide on how to identify good language courses both in the country of origin and abroad.

Language support in the workplace

Aside from attending language courses, companies can also take action in their day-to-day operations. Encourage your staff to speak slowly and to avoid using dialect at first. **Involve the trainees into daily routines:** have lunch together and ask them questions. This allows them to practise their German in real-life situations.

Practical tips for everyday working life:

- vocabulary lists or flashcards with the most important technical terms in German and the employee's native language
- apps or AI-powered tools for quick translations
- encourage your trainees to create their own checklists for work processes and instructions – this helps them consolidate technical content in their own words.
- when it comes to important company documents and safety briefings, you should ask and/or check whether your trainees really understand them. Providing these in simplified language can also be a real help.

Free digital resources for vocational language support

- [Job-specific vocabulary leaflets](#) in 11 languages from the “Unternehmen integrieren Flüchtlinge” network
- [“Profis gesucht”](#): sector-specific language trainers for vocational training trades from Deutsche Welle
- [Fachstelle Berufsbezogenes Deutsch “German in the Workplace”](#): Here you will find interesting practical examples and tips on language support.
- [Language app “Lunes”](#): The free language app *Lunes* offers vocabulary for over 40 professions across various sectors.
- [Language portal of the Austrian Integration Fund](#)

Language support requires time and patience

Even if your trainees already have a good B1 level, further language support is necessary – and this takes time. Language acquisition also places an additional burden on top of the vocational training. Therefore, please be patient and continue to actively support your trainees in their learning.

6 What do I need to bear in mind when taking on trainees?

6.1 Change of residence permit

If you wish to take on your trainee(s) after their vocational training, the trainee can submit an application to the foreigners authority for a [residence permit to work as a skilled worker](#) under Section 18a of the Residence Act (AufenthG).

An appointment to change the residence permit should be arranged well in advance of the end of the vocational training with the competent foreigners authority so that the next steps can be planned.

Early appointment reminder: To ensure everything runs smoothly, please remind your trainee(s) in good time of their appointments at the foreigners authority!

What requirements must be met when changing a residence permit?

- Vocational training completion certificate
- concrete job offer (verified by the “Declaration of Employment”)
- proof of secured livelihood (e.g. through salary)
- further evidence, if required (to be clarified with the competent foreigners authority)

The job offer may, in principle, be in a different **occupational field** from the vocational training. For example, a person trained in the hotel industry may also work as an office clerk. The key factor is that qualified vocational training has been completed and that the position is **qualified employment**: the role must require either qualified vocational training or an academic degree. Auxiliary roles do not meet this condition.

In the case of a regulated profession such as a nursing professional, a **licence to practise** must also be held.

Failed the exam?

Don't worry: if the trainee fails the final examination, they can apply for an extension of the residence title at the foreigners authority in order to repeat the exam. The “Netzwerk Unternehmen integrieren Flüchtlinge” has also published a brochure on how companies can support trainees in preparing for exams.

6.2 Promoting long-term prospects

Your trained skilled worker is now part of your team – but the journey doesn't necessarily end here. Even after the vocational training has been completed, there are various aspects you, as an employer, can consider to actively help shape the long-term path. Here are some examples:

Settlement permit

Your trainees from third countries can apply for a **settlement permit** after just **two years of employment in Germany**, provided they have successfully completed vocational training (Section 18c (1) (2) of the Residence Act [AufenthG]). Certain requirements must be met, such as securing a livelihood and sufficient German language skills. Further information can be found in the [“Settlement permit”](#) section on “Make it in Germany”.

Career paths after vocational training

After completing their vocational training, a wide range of opportunities for **further qualifications** are available – from specialist or master craftsman (bachelor's level) to business administrator (master's level). This allows your employees to gradually take on more and more responsibility.

The **training advisers** at your local Chamber can help you identify your company's training needs, find suitable courses and make use of funding opportunities.

Thinking about family

Many trainees initially leave their spouses or children behind in their home country when they start out in Germany in order to create new opportunities. However, for **sustainable integration**, it is important to discuss **family reunification** at an early stage. Support your trainees by making them aware of the existing options. You can find up-to-date information on the requirements in the [“Family reunification”](#) section of the **“Make it in Germany”** portal.



7 Further information and advice

Contact points

Recognition in Germany – Portal for the recognition of foreign professional qualifications, including a search function for occupations and the relevant authorities.

www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/de/arbeitgeber.php

Anabin – Information portal on foreign educational qualifications from the Central Office for Foreign Education.

<https://anabin.kmk.org/db/schulabschluesse-mit-hochschulzugang>

Federal Office for Migration and Refugees

(BAMF) – Information on language courses, integration programmes and support services.

<https://www.bamf.de/EN/Themen/MigrationAufenthalt/migrationaufenthalt-node.html>

Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training

(BIBB) – The BIBB is a state-funded centre of excellence for research and development in vocational education and training. It advises the Federal Government and promotes international cooperation in vocational education and training.

<https://www.bibb.de/en/48.php>

BQ Portal – Information portal of the Chambers of Industry and Commerce on foreign vocational qualifications and assessment tools for employers.

<https://www.bq-portal.de/en>

Federal Employment Agency (BA) – Advice and placement of international skilled workers and trainees through the International and Specialized Services (ZAV) and the Employer Service (AGS).

<https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/unternehmen/fachkraefte-ausland/beratung>
<https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/vor-ort/zav/personal-aus-dem-ausland>

German Chamber of Industry and Commerce

(DIHK) – Information, networks and advice on vocational training and recruiting skilled workers.

<https://www.dihk.de/de/themen-und-positionen/fachkraefte/aus-und-weiterbildung/ausbildung>

European Employment Service (EURES) – EURES

is a European cooperation network of public employment services. The network supports both jobseekers in finding employment in Europe and companies in recruiting skilled workers abroad.

https://eures.europa.eu/index_en

Faire Integration – Advice on employment and social security law for third-country nationals in many different languages.

<https://www.faire-integration.en/>

Goethe-Institut – Language courses and exams worldwide, preparation for entering the German labour and vocational training market, language and cultural mediation in Germany, as well as online services.

<https://www.goethe.de/en/spr/mig.html>

“Working and Living in Germany” Hotline –

Through the “Working and Living in Germany” hotline, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) and the International and Specialized Services (ZAV) of the Federal Employment Agency (BA) provide advice in German and English to foreign skilled workers, prospective trainees and students both in Germany and abroad, as well as to employers in Germany, on the topics of job hunting, work and careers, the recognition of foreign professional qualifications, entry and residence, and learning German. The hotline can be reached via the following phone number: +49 30 1815-1111

Network IQ – Integration through Qualification (IQ) offers nationwide information, advice and training opportunities within the framework of the recognition of foreign professional qualifications for people who are already in Germany.

www.netzwerk-iq.de

iMOVE – The initiative supports employers in Germany through a network of internationally active German training providers who train skilled workers and trainees abroad.

<https://www.imove-germany.de/en/index.htm>

Youth Migration Services – Advice for teenagers and young adults aged 12 to 27, aimed at supporting young people with their integration, particularly in the areas of school, vocational training and work.

<https://www.jugendmigrationsdienste.de/en/>

KOFA – Competence Center for Securing a Skilled Workforce – Support for small and medium-sized enterprises in recruiting and integrating international skilled workers.

<https://www.kofa.de/mitarbeiter-finden/ausbildung/azubis-finden/>

Make it in Germany – Official portal of the German Federal Government on skilled labour migration: information on entry, residence and employment of foreign skilled workers and trainees in Germany. Services: job listings, free webinars, events calendar, newsletter, practical examples and much more.

<https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/looking-for-foreign-professionals>

“Make it in Germany” database with regional contact points – overview of regional advisory and support services for businesses.

<https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/de/unternehmen/unterstuetzung/beratungsstellen-finden>

mbeon – Migration advice for adults – Free, app-based advice on residence, work and qualifications.

<https://www.mbeon.de/en/>

Netzwerk Unternehmen integrieren Flüchtlinge

– Platform for businesses offering practical tips, experience sharing and support services for the integration of refugees.

www.unternehmen-integrieren-fluechtlinge.de

Welcome Centers – Regional contact points for businesses and skilled workers with information on residence, work and integration.

<https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/service/advisory-contact-services/in-germany>

ZDH – German Confederation of Skilled Crafts

– Advice and information services specifically for businesses in the crafts and trades.

<https://www.zdh.de/ueber-uns/fachbereich-berufliche-bildung/ausbildung/unterstuetzung-fuer-ausbildungsbetriebe/>

Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB) – The ZAB is the federal states’ centre of expertise for the assessment of foreign qualifications in Germany. The ZAB prepares expert reports on the assessment of foreign educational qualifications for public authorities and issues certificate evaluations for foreign higher education qualifications to private individuals.

<https://zab.kmk.org/en>

8 Glossary

Residence permit

The Residence Act provides for various residence titles that regulate entry into and residence in Germany. The residence permit is one of them. It is issued for a limited period and for a specific purpose, such as employment, vocational training or family reunification, or for humanitarian, international law or political reasons by the foreigners authority in Germany.

Residence title

A residence title is the authorisation required by persons from abroad to enter and stay in Germany. Residence titles may be issued in the form of a visa, residence permit, EU Blue Card, permanent settlement permit or long-term EU residence permit.

Foreigners authority

A foreigners authority is an authority responsible for implementing the Residence Act and clarifying the legal status of third-country nationals. As a rule, there is a foreigners authority in each district or independent city. Central foreigners authorities are generally responsible for the fast-track procedure for skilled workers. Find the relevant authority for your matters on “Make it in Germany”.

<https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/pdf-zentrale-auslaenderbehoerden-en>

German mission abroad

German missions abroad are diplomatic or consular representations outside Germany. They represent the interests of the German state abroad and promote political relations. Most missions abroad – but not honorary consuls – have a visa department. They decide on the entry of visa-required third-country nationals. Find the contact details of German diplomatic missions on “Make it in Germany”.

<https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/service/advisory-contact-services/worldwide>

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

The CEFR is a reference tool developed by the Council of Europe for language work. It provides a basis for the comparability of foreign language skills and is used in Europe and beyond.

Blocked account

A blocked account is a special bank account that trainees from third countries must open abroad in order to prove their financial security when applying for a visa or residence permit. A minimum amount required by law is paid into the account, and access to this money is restricted to limited monthly instalments.

Declaration of Commitment

People from non-EU countries who want to apply for a visa to come to Germany may be invited by people living in Germany if the latter submit a Declaration of Commitment to a foreigners authority in Germany. This declaration obliges the inviter to guarantee financially supporting the visa applicant during their stay in Germany.

Visa

A visa entitles the holder to enter or travel through another country. In Germany, third-country nationals require this kind of residence permit. There are exceptions for EU nationals and nationals of some selected countries. Depending on the purpose and duration of the stay, there are different visa types. The German missions abroad are responsible for issuing visas.

Preliminary approval for a visa

A pre-approval of the visa will be issued by the **foreigners authority** after successful completion of the fast-track procedure for skilled workers. With this pre-approval, the foreign skilled worker or trainee receives an appointment for the visa application at the responsible German mission

abroad (embassy or consulate) more quickly, as well as a decision on the application within a fixed period (usually three weeks). The pre-approval of the visa is usually valid for three months from the date of issuance.

The Federal Employment Agency also issues pre-approvals independently of the fast-track procedure for skilled workers. In this case, the Federal Employment Agency issues the required approval before the third-country national applies for a visa at a visa office abroad or for a residence permit at a local foreigners authority in Germany. The visa office or the foreigners authority then does not need to seek the Federal Employment Agency's approval themselves.

Welcome Centers

Welcome Centers (also called Welcome Services) support international skilled workers and their families when entering Germany and integrating into an area. In some cases, they also cater to international students and trainees, and advise companies on recruitment, the recognition of qualifications and creating a welcoming environment. They are usually funded by local authorities or federal states.

