



The  
Federal Government

*Make it in Germany*

Working in Germany: the official website  
for qualified professionals

# Questions and answers about the EU Blue Card

[bundeswirtschaftsministerium.de](https://www.bundeswirtschaftsministerium.de)





*Make it in Germany*

Working in Germany: the official website  
for qualified professionals

[www.make-it-in-germany.com/en](http://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en)

#### **Imprint**

##### **Publisher**

Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy  
Public Relations  
10100 Berlin  
[www.bundeswirtschaftsministerium.de](http://www.bundeswirtschaftsministerium.de)

##### **Status**

February 2026

**This publication is available for download at 'Make it in Germany'**

##### **Design**

PRpetuum GmbH, 81541 Munich

##### **Image credit**

Wavebreakmedia / iStock / title

This publication is issued by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy as part of its public relations work. The publication is available free of charge. It is not for sale and may not be used for electoral campaigning.

# Table of contents

Benefits and background to the EU Blue Card.....	2
1 Who can obtain an EU Blue Card in Germany? .....	3
2 How is the comparability of foreign qualifications checked? .....	8
3 What are the language requirements for obtaining an EU Blue Card?.....	9
4 What must be included in the employment contract of a skilled foreign worker wishing to apply for an EU Blue Card?.....	10
5 What is the role of the Federal Employment Agency (BA) in issuing EU Blue Cards? .....	11
6 How long is the EU Blue Card valid? .....	12
7 What happens to the EU Blue Card if an individual changes employer or job within the company?.....	12
8 What should be done when an employment contract is terminated?.....	13
9 Can employees with a German EU Blue Card be deployed in overseas branches?.....	13
10 What long-term opportunities does the EU Blue Card offer? .....	14
Important points of contact .....	15

## Benefits and background to the EU Blue Card

The EU Blue Card is the main residence title for skilled migration to Germany. It is aimed at highly qualified third-country nationals with academic qualifications, graduates of tertiary-level education, and IT specialists and managers without formal qualifications who wish to pursue a professional career in Germany. EU Blue Cards can only be issued if the employment is commensurate with the applicant's qualifications and a certain salary level is reached. Unlike some other residence titles, there is even a legal entitlement to an EU Blue Card if the conditions are met. The EU Blue Card also makes it easier to obtain a settlement permit and to initiate family reunification.

The EU Blue Card was first introduced into the Residence Act [AufenthG] in June 2012.<sup>1</sup> Since then, the EU Blue Card has been an integral part of the residence regulations for the entry and employment of highly qualified third-country nationals in Germany.

EU law was transposed into German law on 18 November 2023. The new provisions on the EU Blue Card in Germany are contained in Sections 18g, 18h and 18i of the Residence Act [AufenthG], which provide EU Blue Card applicants with further facilitations for entry and employment in Germany:

- The salary thresholds have been lowered compared to the previous law.
- Family reunification with EU Blue Card holders has been made easier: proof of sufficient living space is no longer required. This will apply to applications for family reunification submitted from 1 March 2024.<sup>2</sup> In addition, since 18 November 2023, family reunification with EU Blue Card holders who previously held an EU Blue Card issued by another EU Member State and lived there with their family is no longer subject to a means of subsistence test. However, the family members must still prove that they have adequate health insurance coverage. In addition, from 1 March 2024, EU Blue Card holders will be able to bring their parents and parents-in-law to Germany when the EU Blue Card is issued to them for the first time. In this case, too, proof of adequate health insurance coverage must be provided for the holder's parents or parents-in-law who are joining them.
- EU Blue Card holders can obtain a permanent right of residence (settlement permit) more quickly than before, and also more quickly than other skilled foreign workers: after 27 months or, if they have sufficient knowledge of German (level B1 CEFR), after only 21 months of employment.

1 This was based on EU Council Directive 2009/50/EC – conditions of entry and residence of non-EU nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment. In EU law, Council Directive 2009/50/EC has since been repealed and replaced by Directive (EU).

2 For family reunification with EU Blue Card holders who previously held an EU Blue Card issued by another EU Member State and lived there with their family, this has already been applicable since 18 November 2023.

- Mobility within the EU has now become easier with the EU Blue Card: even if the EU Blue Card was not issued by a German authority, visa-free entry and short-term employment in Germany are possible. If the holder of an EU Blue Card wishes to live in Germany on a long-term basis, it is possible for a German authority to issue an EU Blue Card under simplified conditions.

On the one hand, these regulations increase the attractiveness of Germany for highly qualified third-country nationals; on the other hand, the advantages of the EU Blue Card benefit both the skilled foreign workers themselves as well as German companies, given that the aforementioned advantages provide them with greater planning security.

With almost 40,000 first-time issuances in 2022, the EU Blue Card accounts for about one third of all first-time residence titles issued to skilled foreign workers.<sup>3</sup> Given the expansion of bottleneck professions and the lowering of salary thresholds in Section 18g of the Residence Act [AufenthG], a further increase in immigration with the EU Blue Card can be expected.

This brochure provides you, as an employer, with concrete answers to the most important questions about the EU Blue Card and will help you to recruit highly skilled workers from non-EU countries. In addition to this brochure, the [www.make-it-in-germany.com](http://www.make-it-in-germany.com) portal also offers additional information services such as explainer videos, charts, etc.

## 1 Who can obtain an EU Blue Card in Germany?

The EU Blue Card under Section 18g of the Residence Act [AufenthG] is a residence title for foreign higher education graduates or persons with a comparable tertiary-level qualification. The legislation, which was amended in 2023, also makes it possible for IT specialists with work experience and no formal educational qualification to obtain an EU Blue Card. The following conditions must be met for an EU Blue Card to be issued:

### Job offer:

The applicant must have a specific job offer from a company in Germany. The advertised position must correspond in form and content to the qualifications of the skilled worker (higher education qualification or comparable tertiary-level qualification). The job offer should usually be for a full-time position. A certain salary threshold must be reached. In some cases, this is checked by the Federal Employment Agency (BA) as part of the approval process in the case of bottleneck professions, career starters and IT specialists; see [Question 5](#). For more information on what else is important when drawing up an employment contract, see [Question 4](#).

### Recognised or comparable higher education qualification or qualification at a comparable level:

The skilled worker must provide proof of having a German higher education qualification, a recog-

3 Graf, J. (2023): Educational and Labour Migration Monitoring: Annual Report 2022, Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) – [https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/Forschung/BerichtsreihenMigrationIntegration/MonitoringBildungsErwerbsmigration/mobemi-jahresbericht-2022.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile&v=4](https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/EN/Forschung/BerichtsreihenMigrationIntegration/MonitoringBildungsErwerbsmigration/mobemi-jahresbericht-2022.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=4)

nised foreign higher education qualification or a foreign higher education qualification that is comparable to a German higher education qualification. If a licence to practise (regulated professions) is required, this must be in place or in prospect at the time of application. Please refer to [Question 2](#) to find out more about this topic.

**Good to know:** A tertiary-level qualification is considered equivalent to a higher education qualification in Germany if it takes at least three years to complete. Examples of training qualifications assigned to this level of education include “Master craftsman/craftswoman training” as well as professional qualifications in educator professions.

### Minimum salary:

There are certain salary thresholds for obtaining an EU Blue Card. A minimum gross salary of 50 per cent of the annual assessment ceiling for pension insurance is usually required.

However, there are also certain groups of people for whom a minimum gross salary of 45.3 per cent of the annual assessment ceiling for pension insurance is sufficient to obtain an EU Blue Card:

- **Skilled workers in bottleneck professions:** Following the extension of the list of bottleneck professions in 2023, the following occupations are included in the group of people subject to the lower salary threshold for applying for an EU Blue Card:
  - Science professionals
  - Mathematicians
  - Engineering professionals
  - Information technology professionals
  - Information and communications technology service managers
  - Medical doctors
  - Veterinarians
  - Dentists
  - Pharmacists
  - Nursing and midwifery professionals
  - Professional services managers, such as childcare or health services managers
  - Manufacturing, mining, construction, and distribution managers
  - School and out-of-school teachers and educators

The complete list of bottleneck professions is available on the “Make it in Germany” portal: <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/pdf-engpassberufe-en>.

- **New entrants to the labour market:** Higher education graduates or people with a comparable level of qualification who have obtained their most recent qualification within the last three years can also benefit from the lower salary threshold in all professions.
- **IT specialists:** People without an equivalent or comparable qualification can also obtain an EU Blue Card at the lower salary threshold if they can prove that they have at least three years of comparable professional experience at an academic level. For more information on this, see [Question 5](#).

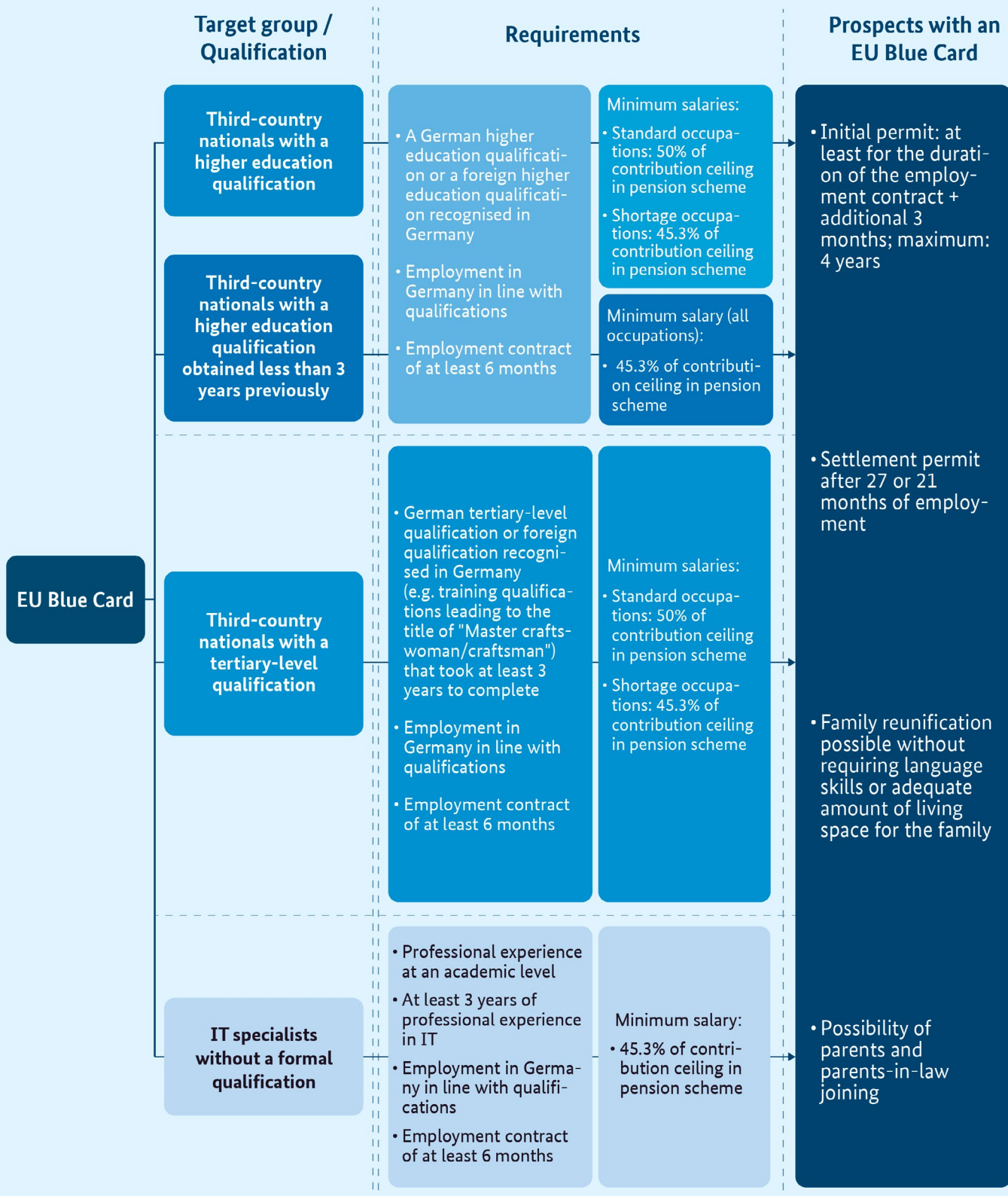
In the case of bottleneck professions, career starters and IT specialists, i.e. whenever the lower salary threshold is applied, compliance with the salary threshold is checked by the Federal Employment Agency (BA) as part of the approval process; see [Question 5](#).

**Tip for employers:** Special payments agreed in the employment contract, such as Christmas bonuses or holiday pay, which can be assessed on a case-by-case basis, count towards the gross salary. In this context, it is important that these payments are not conditional.

The minimum salaries for each calendar year are announced in the *Bundesanzeiger* [Federal Gazette] by 31 December of the previous year and published on the [www.make-it-in-germany.com](http://www.make-it-in-germany.com) portal. The annual adjustment of the salary thresholds does not affect residence titles that have already been issued. The amended requirements only need to be complied with if an employee intends to extend their residence title (see [Question 6](#)) or change employer (see [Question 7](#)).

**Good to know:** A further condition for applying for an EU Blue Card is that there are no grounds for refusal under Section 19f (1) and (2) of the Residence Act [AufenthG]. A ground for refusal would be, for example, if an application has already been made for a residence title on humanitarian or international law grounds and a final decision is pending. For more information, visit: [https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/aufenthg\\_2004/\\_19f.html](https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/aufenthg_2004/_19f.html)

## At a glance: EU Blue Card – simplified



\*The following are currently considered shortage occupations: manufacturing, mining, construction, and distribution managers; information and communications technology service managers; professional services managers, such as childcare or health services managers; academic specialists in the STEM sector; academic specialists in architecture, spatial planning and transport planning; medical doctors; veterinarians; dentists; pharmacists; nursing and midwifery professionals; school and out-of-school teachers and educators.

If your candidate or your job offer does not qualify for an EU Blue Card, you should consider whether their employment or stay could be covered by a work visa for qualified professionals under Section 18b or Section 18a of the Residence Act [AufenthG]. For example, there are no specific salary thresholds as in the case of the EU Blue Card – as long as the skilled worker is no older than 45. For more information on this topic, please refer to the “Make it in Germany” portal: <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/looking-for-foreign-professionals/entering/german-work-visa>.

**Tip for employers:** Find out what options are available to you when recruiting foreign skilled workers with the “Make it in Germany” Quick-Check for employers: <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/looking-for-foreign-professionals/entering/quick-check-employers>

## Entry and visa process

To enter the country, your future employee from a third country will usually need an entry visa, which they must apply for at the embassy in the country of origin.

**Good to know:** In some countries, it is possible for potential immigrants to apply online for an EU Blue Card. You can find more information on the digital application process on the Consular Services Portal of the Federal Foreign Office: <https://digital.diplo.de/Blaue-Karte>

In addition to the specific conditions for an EU Blue Card, the foreign skilled worker must also meet the general requirements of [Section 5](#) of the

Residence Act [AufenthG], regardless of the purpose of their stay:

- Their identity must be established: this requires, for example, the presentation of a valid passport.
- The applicant must have a secure means of subsistence: for example, it will be assessed whether their future income will be sufficient to cover the cost of living in Germany. This guarantee of subsistence is generally met by the salary thresholds set for the EU Blue Card. If the professional’s family is to enter the country with them, the family’s livelihood must be secured.
- There is no public interest in expelling the foreigner: the competent bodies must determine in an internal examination procedure that the applicant’s stay in Germany does not threaten or jeopardise the interests of the Federal Republic of Germany.

The professional should apply for a visa as early as possible before the date they intend to start work, as it takes a long time to process.

**Tip for employers:** With your skilled worker’s consent and approval, you can pay a fee to speed up the administrative process for obtaining a visa by applying for the fast-track procedure for skilled workers. This may make particular sense if the waiting time for an appointment at the German embassy in the country of application is very long. For more detailed information on this topic, please visit the “Make it in Germany” portal: <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/looking-for-foreign-professionals/entering/the-fast-track-procedure-for-skilled-workers>

## 2 How is the comparability of foreign qualifications checked?

To obtain an EU Blue Card, applicants with foreign qualifications must demonstrate the equivalence or comparability of their qualifications. There are several ways for skilled foreign workers to do this. It is important to distinguish whether the intended employment is in a regulated or non-regulated profession.

**Good to know:** To find out which professions are regulated in Germany, please refer to the European Commission's database: <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regprof/professions/bycountry>

### Regulated professions

If the skilled worker wishes to work in a regulated profession (e.g. as a doctor or nursery school teacher), they must apply for recognition of their foreign qualification. In the **recognition procedure**, the competent authority in Germany checks whether the qualification is comparable to a German qualification and whether there are any significant differences. To find out which official body is responsible for recognition in your applicant's case and what else you need to know about the procedure, visit the Federal Government's information portal "Anerkennung in Deutschland": <https://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/de/arbeitgeber.php>.

### Non-regulated professions

The majority of professions are non-regulated. In this case, the foreign higher education qualification must be proven to be comparable to a German higher education qualification. There are two ways of providing this proof:

- **Positive results in the anabin database:** The anabin database is operated by the Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB). It provides information on the assessment of foreign higher education qualifications and on universities. The tool also helps authorities, employers and private individuals to classify a foreign qualification within the German education system. When applying for a visa, the applicant can use printouts of positive results for their university and higher education qualification as proof of equivalence. The database is currently available in German: <https://anabin.kmk.org/anabin.html>.

**Tip for employers:** To make it easier for you and your skilled worker to use the database, "Make it in Germany" provides multilingual instructions and an explainer video: <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/working-in-germany/recognition/academic-qualifications>

- **Individual Statement of Comparability:** A Statement of Comparability is an official document that describes the foreign higher education qualification and specifies the level of

the German qualification to which the foreign qualification is comparable. An individual Statement of Comparability can be obtained from the ZAB on request. Not all foreign higher education qualifications and higher education institutions are listed in the anabin database. In such cases, an individual Statement of Comparability is required.

Please contact the ZAB for information on the assessment procedure, including a list of documents required and the costs involved: <https://www.kmk.org/zab/statement-of-comparability.html>.

**Exceptional cases:** IT specialists without a formal qualification who apply for the EU Blue Card are not required or able to demonstrate the equivalence/comparability of their qualification. In this case, the Federal Employment Agency (BA) will check whether the applicant's professional experience is comparable to a higher education qualification; see [Question 5](#).

Skilled workers who have completed tertiary-level education must have their qualifications recognised. To find out which official body is responsible for recognition in this case and for important information about the procedure, visit the Federal Government's information portal "Anerkennung in Deutschland" (<https://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/de/arbeitgeber.php>).

**Good to know:** It is the responsibility of the skilled worker to organise proof of the equivalence or comparability of their qualification and to submit it to the German embassy as part of the visa application. The fast-track procedure for skilled workers is an exception. In this case, if the applicant does not already have proof of the equivalence or comparability of their foreign qualification, this will be checked and, if necessary, approved by the Federal Employment Agency (BA) after the application for the fast-track procedure has been submitted.

### 3 What are the language requirements for obtaining an EU Blue Card?

The EU Blue Card has no specific language requirements for residence purposes. However, it depends on the profession. For example, in the case of regulated professions, a certain language level is usually required, but this is already checked during the recognition procedure. When applying for a visa at the German embassy, it is therefore not necessary to provide separate proof of language proficiency.

In the case of employment in a non-regulated profession, it is up to you as the employer to decide whether an applicant's language skills are sufficient for the job. Although in many cases no knowledge of German is initially required, breaking down language barriers at an early stage is an important key to successful integration and smooth communica-

tion in the workplace. To help your skilled worker learn German, you can offer in-house language courses or encourage them to attend language courses offered by external providers.

**Tip for employers:** Visit the “Make it in Germany” portal to find out what language courses are available and how you can help your skilled worker learn German: <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/looking-for-foreign-professionals/integration/german-courses>

Learning German is particularly important with a view to long-term settlement in Germany. If your skilled worker wants to apply for a settlement permit, i.e. permanent residence in Germany, after a certain period of time, they will also need to provide proof of their German language skills; see [Question 10](#).

## 4 What must be included in the employment contract of a skilled foreign worker wishing to apply for an EU Blue Card?

An EU Blue Card can only be issued if the applicant has a specific job offer; see [Question 1](#). Proof is usually in the form of an employment contract or a specific job offer. It is important that the contract stipulates an employment period of at least **six months**.

**Tip for employers:** As an employer, you can stipulate in the employment contract that the contract does not take effect until the residence title for taking up employment has been issued. For more information on the recruitment of qualified professionals from abroad, visit: <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/looking-for-foreign-professionals/recruitment/application-process/employing>

Particular attention should be paid to the detail of the job description contained in the contract, as the role must be commensurate with the applicant’s qualifications. If only the lower salary threshold needs to be met (e.g. for employment in bottleneck professions), the **job title** and job description must reflect the bottleneck profession as accurately as possible.

**For example:** If a qualified engineer is employed on the basis of an employment contract in which her position is merely described as “sales representative”, she will not be able to obtain an EU Blue Card – because it is questionable whether the sales work is commensurate with her engineering training. On the other hand, if the job title of the engineer in the employment contract includes the word “engineer” and the duties meet the requirements of an engineering profession, an EU Blue Card is an option in the visa process.

## 5 What is the role of the Federal Employment Agency (BA) in issuing EU Blue Cards?

The EU Blue Card is a residence title for taking up employment in Germany. Before an EU Blue Card is issued, the Foreigners' Authority or the German diplomatic mission abroad must check whether or not the employment is subject to approval. If the employment requires approval, the competent authority will involve the BA as part of the visa process; as the employer, you do not need to take any action.

The BA must grant its approval in the following cases:

- Employment in bottleneck professions at the low salary threshold; see [Question 1](#)
- Employment of IT specialists with professional experience, without a formal qualification, at the low salary threshold; see [Question 1](#)
- Employment of career starters at the low salary threshold; see [Question 1](#)

If you could theoretically employ the skilled worker at the lower salary threshold, but you choose to pay the higher salary of at least 50 per cent of the assessment ceiling for general pension insurance (standard salary threshold for the EU Blue Card), the EU Blue Card will be issued without requiring the approval of the BA.

When an application for an EU Blue Card is made and approval is required from the BA, the BA will check the conditions of employment – for exam-

ple, whether the salary is lower than that of a comparable domestic worker. The BA will also check that the job matches the applicant's qualifications and that it is in a bottleneck profession. In the case of recruiting IT specialists with professional experience and without a formal higher education qualification, the BA checks whether the relevant professional experience is comparable to an academic qualification.

**Good to know:** Approval can only be granted if the foreign skilled worker is to be employed in Germany. If the skilled worker is employed in this country and is subject to social security contributions, the employment relationship can be assumed to be domestic. As part of the approval process, the company number of the company providing the employment is required.

If the working conditions are comparable and the employment matches the applicant's qualifications or, in the case of IT specialists, the professional experience is assessed at an academic level, approval for employment will be granted under Section 39 (2) of the Residence Act [AufenthG], usually for up to four years.

How long the approval process takes at the BA depends on the type of procedure: in the regular visa procedure, the BA has two weeks to decide whether to approve the employment. In the fast-track procedure for skilled workers under Section 81a of the Residence Act [AufenthG], approval is deemed to have been granted if the BA does not respond within one week of the application for approval being submitted.

**Tip for employers:** To ensure planning security, employers can arrange for a check to be carried out before the visa application is submitted to determine whether the legal labour market requirements for the subsequent approval for employment have been met. You can do this by completing the “Declaration on the employment relationship” form ([https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/datei/erklaerung-zum-beschaefigungsverhaeltnis\\_ba047549.pdf](https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/datei/erklaerung-zum-beschaefigungsverhaeltnis_ba047549.pdf)) and submitting it to the relevant BA Labour Market Approval team. You will find more information on the issue of pre-approval here: <https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/unternehmen/fachkraefte-ausland/vorabzustimmung-fuer-auslaendische-beschaefigte>

**Good to know:** The EU Blue Card is normally issued as an entry visa for a period of twelve months. Once in Germany, skilled workers must apply to the competent Foreigners’ Authority for a relevant residence title within this period.

## 6 How long is the EU Blue Card valid?

The EU Blue Card is a temporary residence title. In the case of first-time issuances, the EU Blue Card is issued for the duration of the employment contract, plus an additional three months, and is valid for a maximum of four years. If the employment contract provides for a probationary period, this is no reason to issue the EU Blue Card for a shorter period than the employment contract.

In the case of a permanent contract, the EU Blue Card is issued for four years.

If the employment relationship remains in place and the conditions of the EU Blue Card continue to be met (see [Question 1](#)), it can be renewed on application to the competent Foreigners’ Authority. The salary thresholds applicable at the time of renewal will be taken into account. The lower salary threshold applies if the applicant has obtained a higher education qualification or a comparable qualification within three years of the application for renewal or within two years of the first EU Blue Card being issued to a career starter.

In contrast to other third-country nationals with temporary residence titles, skilled workers with an EU Blue Card can obtain permanent residence in Germany under more favourable conditions; see [Question 10](#).

## 7 What happens to the EU Blue Card if an individual changes employer or job within the company?

An EU Blue Card is issued for the purpose of employment with a specific employer. However, EU Blue Card holders may change job – within the company or to another company – without requiring permission from the Foreigners’ Authority. This means that EU Blue Card holders are completely free in their choice of employment. However, the

change of job must be reported to the Foreigners' Authority if it occurs within the first twelve months of employment.

Both you and the skilled worker should inform the Foreigners' Authority of any change of job. The authority can then suspend the change of job for a maximum of 30 days to check whether the new job with the new employer meets the criteria for admission for the EU Blue Card. The BA will be involved if necessary (see [Question 6](#)). The same applies if the skilled worker changes job within the current company, provided that this change is based on a new employment contract.

**Good to know:** A change of company name without any change in the terms and conditions of employment of the skilled foreign worker is not considered to be a change of employer and therefore does not need to be notified to or approved by the relevant Foreigners' Authority.

If the employment contract is terminated, the original purpose of the residence permit ceases to apply, which means that the EU Blue Card may subsequently be limited in time by the Foreigners' Authority. However, the Foreigners' Authority must allow a period of three months to enable the holder to look for work (up to six months if the EU Blue Card has already been in existence for two years). Alternatively, an application can be made for a residence permit for jobseekers for up to six months or, from 1 June 2024, an opportunity card for up to twelve months.

**Good to know:** The employment relationship is also considered to have ended if the foreign skilled worker terminates the employment relationship in order to take up further training and there is a contractual option to return to the employment relationship. In this case, whether or not it is necessary to change the residence permit should be clarified with the competent Foreigners' Authority.

## 8 What should be done when an employment contract is terminated?

In Germany, employers who recruit people with a residence permit for the purpose of employment have a duty of notification. They are required to notify the competent Foreigners' Authority if the employment for which the residence permit was issued is terminated prematurely (unilaterally or by mutual agreement) (Section 4a (5) of the Residence Act [AufenthG]). The notification must be made within four weeks of becoming aware of the termination.

## 9 Can employees with a German EU Blue Card be deployed in overseas branches?

Under Directive (EU) 2021/1883, the EU Blue Card entitles its holder and their family members to enter and work in other EU Member States.

However, a German EU Blue Card does not automatically entitle the holder to work in other EU countries. On the other hand, a German EU Blue Card may make it easier for the holder to obtain

a residence permit in other EU countries if the skilled foreign worker is moving from Germany to another EU country on a long-term basis or is to be sent abroad for work. The exact requirements and procedures may vary from country to country. It is therefore advisable to contact the relevant authorities in the other EU country to find out about the exact steps and requirements. Even in the case of short-term business trips to another EU country, it may be advisable to find out about the specific implementation of the rules on short-term mobility in the Member State concerned.

For country-specific information on the Blue Card regulations in EU Member States, please visit the “EU Immigration Portal”: [https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/eu-immigration-portal\\_en](https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/migration-and-asylum/eu-immigration-portal_en).

When foreign skilled workers from other EU countries come to Germany with an EU Blue Card, the EU Directive distinguishes between short-term and long-term stays:

- For a **maximum stay of 90 days** in any 180-day period, EU Blue Card holders from other EU countries may come to Germany and stay here for the purpose of a business activity directly related to their employment. Neither a visa nor a work permit from the BA is required for such short stays.
- After a minimum stay of **12 months** with an EU Blue Card in another EU country, a long-term move to Germany is possible without a visa. After entering Germany, the professional must apply to the Foreigners’ Authority for a German EU Blue Card. This is usually issued if the requirements of Section 18g of the Residence Act [AufenthG] are met.

**Good to know:** Germany also has a National Contact Point for matters pertaining to EU Blue Cards, located at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF). This office acts as a link between the German Foreigners’ Authorities and the National Contact Points of other EU Member States. Through the BAMF, the Foreigners’ Authorities in Germany can request information from the competent authorities of other EU countries in order to check the EU mobility requirements of Blue Card holders.

## 10 What long-term opportunities does the EU Blue Card offer?

EU Blue Card holders can apply for a settlement permit under Section 18c (2) of the Residence Act [AufenthG] after 27 months of employment subject to social security contributions or statutory pension insurance contributions. Other requirements for this permanent residence permit are the following:

- Basic knowledge of German at level A1 CEFR: if knowledge of German at level B1 CEFR can be demonstrated, the period is reduced from 27 to 21 months.
- Basic knowledge of the German legal and social system must also be demonstrated, usually by taking the “Living in Germany” test.
- Proof of sufficient living space and sufficient resources to maintain themselves.

Employers also benefit from these less stringent requirements for permanent residence. This is because international employees have the opportunity to establish themselves in Germany on a long-term basis without the uncertainty associated

with a temporary residence permit. The prospect of being able to settle permanently in Germany in the near future provides planning security – not only for international skilled workers, but also for employers.

## Important points of contact

- **Make it in Germany** – General information on the recruitment of foreign skilled workers: <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/looking-for-foreign-professionals>
- **Make it in Germany** – Find out who to contact about the fast-track procedure for skilled workers: <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/de/unternehmen/unterstuetzung/beratungsstellen-finden>
- **“Working and Living in Germany” hotline** – Contact the hotline if you have any questions about skilled immigration: <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/looking-for-foreign-professionals/support/contact-us/hotline>
- **Employer Service of the Federal Employment Agency (BA)** – Get in touch with your local employer service for personalised advice and support: <https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/unternehmen/arbeitgeber-service>
- **Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BMBF)** – Information on mobility with the EU Blue Card: <https://www.bamf.de/EN/Themen/MigrationAufenthalt/ZuwandererDrittstaaten/MobilitaetEU/MobilitaetBlaueKarteEU/mobilitaet-blauekarteeu-node.html>
- **Anerkennung in Deutschland** – Check the German federal government’s portal for information on the competent recognition body and the procedure: <https://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/de/arbeitgeber.php>
- **Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB)** – Find out about the equivalence assessment of foreign academic qualifications: <https://www.kmk.org/zab/zentralstelle-fuer-auslaendisches-bildungswesen.html>

