Artists

Not only doctors and engineers but also the so-called “special occupational groups” have access to the German labour market. Skilled qualified professionals that require a specific qualification profile or have an existing public interest. Artists are part of that specific occupational group.

As a citizen of the EU, the European Economic Area or Switzerland you neither require an entry visa nor a residence permit in order to work as an artist in Germany.

As citizen of Australia, Israel, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, Republic of Korea and the USA you may enter Germany without a visa and obtain a residence permit after entering the country. However, you may not take up gainful employment until you have been granted the relevant residence permit.

If you come from a different country, you will initially require an entry visa that you can later convert into a residence permit that allows you to take up gainful employment in Germany. Self-employment as well as employment as employee or clerk are considered gainful employments.

Dependent employments

In case of a dependent employment in the cultural and entertainment fields that does not take up more than 90 days the procedure runs as follows: After the artist has applied for a work visa at their German mission abroad, the Federal Employment Agency (BA) will be contacted by them in order to obtain their consent. In case of approval by the BA, the visa can be issued. You can get more information on that topic at your local German mission abroad.

There may occur exceptions in the case of temporary dependent employments. If the requirements are met, the German missions abroad alone can decide whether the employment in question does or does not require approval:

- The individual is working in the context of performances, music and festivals of artistic value while maintaining their regular residence abroad, without having the duration of their activity exceed 90 days within 12 months,
- The individual is performing in daily performances up to 15 days a year.

Self-employed activities

Artists from abroad who are planning a long-term stay (more than 90 days) in order to work independently usually need a visa for self-employment. In Germany, this visa subsequently needs to be converted into a residence permit for the practice of self-employed activity. The residence permit requires, among other things, proof of your financial means to cover your living expenses and the approval of the BA. The profession of an artist is considered an independent occupation. Some of these
independent professions may be practiced in Germany without meeting any specified preconditions for admission. Detailed information on requirements, tax issues and the legal forms of freelance professionals can be found on Baden-Württemberg’s service-webpages.

This information is valid nationwide. Exceptions may apply in cases of temporary employment. If the following requirements are met, the German mission abroad alone can decide whether the employment in question does or does not require approval:

- The individual is working in the context of performances, music and festivals of artistic value while maintaining their regular residence abroad, without having the duration of their activity exceed 90 days within 12 months,
- The individual is performing in daily performances up to 15 days a year

On www.touring-artists.info performers, creatives and creative artists as well as those wanting to work in Germany, find answers to their questions regarding international mobility.

Information on the internet

**Federal Employment Agency (BA)**
Information regarding the access to the German labour market (German, English, Arabic)
Guidelines regarding the employment of foreign employees in Germany (German, English) (PDF)
Information and advice on finding a job (German, English)
Information and advice on the management of artists (German)

**Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)**
Immigration of self-employed and freelance migrants from non-EU countries to Germany (German) (PDF)

**The informative website for internationally touring artists and creatives**
Information for performers, creatives and creative artists (German, English)

**Service-bw**
Information for self-employed workers and freelancers (German, English, French)

**Website for start-up businesses**
German legal forms at a glance (German, English, Turkish, French, Russian, Italian)

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