



Residence permit for the purpose of undertaking a qualification measure in the context of professional recognition

Information on requirements, entitlements and the application process

With the German Skilled Immigration Act (adopted in March 2020) skilled workers from non-EU countries whose foreign qualification is only partially recognised by the German recognition authorities do not have to give up yet. They have the opportunity to take part in additional qualification measures in Germany – with the aim of receiving full recognition of their foreign qualification.

Skilled workers who want to take up employment in a **regulated occupation** in Germany are allowed to take part in a “**compensation measure**” in Germany. Skilled workers who want to take up employment in a **non-regulated occupation** that requires vocational training in Germany are allowed to take part in an “**adaptation measure**”.

Requirements

If you are a skilled worker from a non-EU country whose foreign qualification is only partially recognised by the German recognition authorities and who now wants to take part in additional qualification measures in Germany, the following requirements apply in order to receive a visa:

- **vocational training certificate** or **university degree**
- for all regulated occupations in Germany: **notification of recognition** that names the necessary “compensation measure” that allows you to gain full recognition of your foreign qualification in Germany
- for non-regulated occupations that require vocational training in Germany: **notification of recognition** that describes the main differences between your foreign qualification and the German reference occupation; it is then up to you to seek a suitable “adaptation measure”
- evidence of sufficient **German language skills** (at least language level A2). If the language acquisition is part of your planned qualification measure, there is no specific language skills requirement
- evidence of **enrolment for a qualification measure** in Germany (for regulated occupations: compensation measure, for non-regulated occupations: adaptation measure)
- **proof of sufficient financial means** to cover your living expenses (2020/2021: 11.365,20 € per year), e.g. through a blocked bank account or Declaration of Commitment
- **approval of the German Federal Employment Agency** regarding the working conditions if your qualification measure mainly takes place in a company (> 50% of the time)

Good to know: Skilled workers who want to work in a non-regulated occupation in Germany that requires vocational qualification have the possibility to undertake an “adaptation measure” in the form of employment in a company in Germany in order to gain full recognition of their foreign qualification. But this option exists only if the notification of recognition states that the applicant mainly lacks

practical experience.
>> for this special case see handout 4b

Entitlements

If you meet the above-mentioned requirements, you are entitled to:

- obtain a **residence permit** for the purpose of undertaking a qualification measure in the context of professional recognition for up to 18 months (extension of six months possible)
- have **unrestricted access to employment** during the qualification measure (no time limitation) in an occupation that is related to your professional qualification (e.g. an aspiring doctor may work as a nursing assistant); before taking up employment, the German Federal Employment Agency has to issue an approval
- have **restricted access to employment** during the qualification measure (up to ten hours per week) in an occupation that is not related to your professional qualification
- request a **residence permit** for the immigration of your **spouse and children** (under the age of 18) if you fulfil the following criteria:
 - adequate residential space for you and your family
 - sufficient financial means to cover living expenses for you and your family
 - proof of basic German language skills of your spouse
- **change the residence permit** for another residence purpose after you gain the full recognition of your qualification (e.g. residence permit for the purpose of taking up qualified employment, seeking employment, vocational training or studies)

Application process in four steps



1. Recognition of qualification

As a skilled worker from a non-EU country who wants to complete a qualification measure in Germany, you need to prove that your foreign qualification is **partially equivalent** to the German reference occupation.

In order to do so you have to go through the **recognition procedure** and receive a **notification of recognition** that certifies to which extent your foreign qualification is equivalent to the reference occupation in Germany. In order to obtain this notification, please contact the “Service Center for Professional Recognition” (ZSBA), accessible via the hotline “Working and Living in Germany”.

The ZSBA advisors will support you in identifying the appropriate reference occupation in Germany, compiling the application documents and identifying the responsible recognition authority.

The recognition procedure costs between 100 € and 600 € and can take up to four months. Only if the notification of recognition states that your foreign qualification is not fully, but only partially equivalent and that specific requirements must be fulfilled to receive full equivalence, you may apply for the residence permit for the purpose of undertaking a qualification measure in the context of professional recognition.

Website “Recognition in Germany”

www.anererkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/en/index.php

Hotline “Working and Living in Germany”

+49 30 1815 1111

2. German language skills

Proof of German language skills is a mandatory requirement for skilled workers from non-EU countries who want to come to Germany to undergo additional qualification measures in order to receive a full recognition of their foreign qualification. German language skills are not only very important to support the successful completion of your qualification measure, but also for your overall successful integration in Germany. In many countries, various language schools offer – mostly fee-based – **courses of German as a foreign language**. In order to prove your German language skills, you need a **language certificate** from a certified exam provider. In many countries, the Goethe-Institute offers language courses and conducts certified exams. There are a number of other certificates that are also often accepted (see selection below). It is best to check with the German embassy or consulate in your country which certificates will be accepted by them.

Goethe-Institute

www.goethe.de/en/

Austrian German Language Diploma (ÖSD)

www.osd.at/en/

The European Language Certificate (TELC)

www.telc.net/en

Test German as Foreign Language (TestDAF) >> website in German language only

www.testdaf.de

German Language University Entrance (DSH)

<https://en.dsh-germany.com>

German Language Diploma (DSD) >> website in German language only

<https://www.kmk.org/themen/deutsches-sprachdiplom-dsd/>

3. Enrolment in qualification measure

If you want to work in a regulated occupation in Germany, the responsible German recognition authority determines in its notification of recognition the specific “**compensation measure**” that you have to undergo in order to receive a full recognition of your qualification.

If you want to work in a non-regulated occupation in Germany, the certificate of recognition describes main differences between your qualification and the German reference occupation; it is then up to you to seek a suitable “**adaptation measure**”.

Information on existing opportunities of qualification measures that are accepted by German authorities can be found via the database KURSNET of the German Federal Employment Agency. The “Service Center for Professional Recognition” (ZSBA) also offers advice on suitable qualification measures via the hotline “Working and Living in Germany”.

KURSNET Database >> website in German language only

<https://kursnet-finden.arbeitsagentur.de/kurs/>

Hotline “Working and Living in Germany”

+49 30 1815 1111

4. Visa application

Before taking up a qualification measure in Germany, you need a **visa**. The website of the German Foreign Office has a “visa navigator” which helps potential applicants to check which visa they need. First of all, you have to make an appointment at the **German Mission Abroad** (embassy or consulate). You have to bring to your appointment translated and certified copies of the required documents for the residence permit for the purpose of recognition of foreign qualification (see listed requirements above) and the following documents:

- completed and signed application form
- biometric passport photos
- valid passport
- approval of travel health insurance
- visa fee

The German Mission Abroad will then examine your application and request an approval from the German Federal Employment Agency – if necessary. The waiting time for a confirmation or rejection of a visa application differs from place to place.

“Visa navigator” of the German Foreign Office

<https://visa.diplo.de/en/#/vib>

Visa regulations of the German Foreign Office

www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/einreiseundaufenthalt/-/215870

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