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How to become a teacher in Germany

The following text refers more to school teachers in Germany and less to qualified employees in nursery schools.

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1. Who can work in Germany or complete practical training?

1.1. To be allowed to work in Germany

People from the European economic area Norway, Lichtenstein, Iceland, Switzerland. They can come to Germany and look for a job. They do not need any work permit or residents permit.

- People who are married to persons from **EU-countries** (Exceptions see below)
People from countries of the European Union EU (except people from **Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovenia**, Special regulations exist for them, See below 1.2

They can come to Germany and look for a job. They do not need any work permit or residents permit. They only need a registration at the residents' registration office. This office will send them a written confirmation concerning your right of abode (Law of freedom of movement/EU).

1.2. To be allowed to work with a work permit issued by the Federal Employment Office

- People from EU countries: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovenia. They are allowed to work in Germany only if the Federal Employment Office provides them with a work permit. They do not need any residents permit. This regulation is to be reviewed in 2006.

1.3. To be allowed to complete practical training

People from countries which have a bilateral agreement with Germany. Practical training can last between one and six months. You can apply via the German Embassy in your country of origin. Further information:

Zentralstelle für Arbeitsvermittlung (ZAV)

Tel: 02 28 / 7 13-13 22

Fax: 02 28 / 713-270-13 81

E-Mail: Bonn-ZAV.regierungsstipendiaten@arbeitsagentur.de

Addresses of embassies: www.auswaertiges-amt.de

Countries with bilateral agreements are:

Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Cameroon, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mosambique, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Zambia, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Chad, Uganda

Asia: Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia, Nepal, East Timor, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam

Latin America: Bolivia, Brasil, Costa Rica, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador,



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El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Columbia, Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru

North Africa and the Middle East: Egypt, Algeria, Yemen, Jordan, Morocco, Mauritania, Palestine, Turkey, Tunisia

Eastern Europe, CIS: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania, Uzbekistan

1.4. Students with a successful final degree

are allowed to stay in Germany to seek work, for one year (§16 para. 4 and § 39 AufenthG (residence permit law). After a successful search for a job, however, the Agency for Work will check if so-called "priority employees" (e.g. Germans) are available for the planned employment. If this is not the case only then a grant of a further permit of abode will be possible.

1.5. People from all other countries

- need a confirmation letter from the employer in Germany
- need to apply for a visa where necessary. You apply for a work permit via the German Embassy in the country of origin. You will find a directory of the German Embassies here: www.auswaertes-amt.de.
Information about the new immigration law you can find on the Internet under www.aufenthaltstitel.de/stichwort/zuwg.html
Once work permit is obtained you have to get a residents permit with the Aliens Department
- People from the USA, Canada, Andorra, Australia, Israel, Japan, Monaco, New Zealand, and San Marino are allowed to enter the country without visa and to apply for everything in Germany (§ 34 of the occupation bylaw).

1.6. Further information about starting work in Germany

www.arbeitsagentur.de, Startseite Arbeitnehmer Information Internationales Arbeiten in Deutschland Ausländerbeschäftigung.

2. Kindergartens and schools in Germany

The pre-school area is called Kindergarten, Kita, Kindertageseinrichtung or similar. Children attend a Kita usually at the age of three, in some organisations from the age of one. Most children start school at the age of six. Attending a Kita is voluntary. The

opening times are very different. There are various Kita-agencies, for example, a community, a company or charity organisations like the AWO Arbeiterwohlfahrt, the German Red Cross, the churches, the agency of the free youth welfare like EducCare, a parents' initiative. Educators and social pedagogic assistants working in Kindergartens have a different education than teachers in schools. The requirements differ greatly



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between the federal states or the agencies. In some federal states it is possible to work in Kindergartens without the German educator education. You can find the addresses of bilingual Kitas here: www.fmks-online.de.

The so-called three tier school system consists of primary school (usually 4 years); Secondary School (5 years), or another type of Secondary School (6 years), or Grammar school (8 or 9 years it differs between the Federal States). There are also Comprehensive Schools which unify all the school types under one roof. So the school system is strictly speaking a four tier system. You can find the addresses of bilingual schools here: www.fmks-online.de

3 Who is allowed to become a teacher in Germany?

Foreign applicants may become a teacher in Germany as needed. Foremost, the foreign diploma or degree must always be awarded recognition in Germany.

The federal states (Bundesländer) hire teachers. There are 16 German federal states. The requirements are very diverse. Which teachers are being sought after depends on the teaching subjects. Some states post job vacancies, others don't. In some states "*quer einsteigen*"¹, entering through the side door, that is, entering the teaching profession without a teaching degree, is only possible for particular types of schools. In other states is not possible at all. In a few states there are age restrictions. In some states your university studies must have been completed no longer than five years ago. In some states only particular teaching subject combinations are permitted (Bavaria), which tends to hinder bilingual education. For example, the subject combination math and English is not allowed there... . In a few states it is possible to "enter through the side door".

For state-funded schools the requirements are different than those for private schools.

"Normal" Teacher Education

Classically, German teacher education consists of Teacher Education Studies (1st State Exam) and preparatory service (2nd State Exam).

Candidates with a completed Teacher Education degree

may find information about the various federal states here:

<http://www.bildungsserver.de/zeigen.html?seite=518>

¹ "Side door entry" describes those applicants who have completed a three-year degree at an academic institute of higher education, but whose degree is not in Teacher Education. It does not matter if your studies were completed in Germany or internationally (for example, PhD in physics, chemistry, music, art or similar subjects). Side door entry candidates either complete Preparatory service, two years of additional training while employed, or similar training to enable them to be able to teach two subjects.



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The Alternative: Side door entry (Quereinsteiger- see footnote 1)

The candidates have completed a three-year degree at an academic institution of higher education, but have not completed the 2nd State Exam. Therefore, they have not completed any preparatory service or internship. These candidates may also become teachers if there is a specific need. Side door entry candidates will find information about the various federal states here:

<http://www.bildungsserver.de/zeigen.html?seite=1573>

3.1 Teaching in state-funded schools:

Applicants who are from foreign countries have not completed the 2nd State Exam there. They have either a completed Teacher Education degree from their native country or another degree.

Differences exist for:

- applicants from a country within the EU
- applicants who have not completed preparatory service (2nd State Exam). This is called "side door entry".

Applicants who are from foreign countries may teach in state-funded schools if there is a specific need. Foremost, they must **always** have their foreign degree or diploma evaluated and recognized. This is done at the respective Ministry for Education or Culture (*Bildungs- oder Kultusministerien*).

3.1.1. Addresses of the Ministry for Education, Culture, or School

for the each federal state are shown in table.

Addresses of bilingual schools are found here: www.fmks-online.de xxx

Table: Addresses of the Ministry for Education, Culture, or School for each federal state

Federal State	Address	Telephone	E-mail	Internet	Other
Baden-Württemberg	Ministerium für Kultus, Jugend und Sport Postfach 10 34 42 70029 Stuttgart	++49 / 711/ 279-0	Poststelle@km.kv.bwl.de	http://www.km-bw.de/	
Bayern (Bavaria)	Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Unterricht und Kultus Salvatorstraße 2 80333 München	++49 / 89/2186-0 Fax: ++49 / 89/2186-2800	Contact through website	http://www.stmuk.bayern.de/km/ministerium/	"side door entry" doesn't seem possible
Berlin	Senatsverwaltung für Schule, Bildung und Sport Zentrale Bewerberstelle Beuthstr. 6-8 10117 Berlin	++49 / 30/ 9026-6443/ oder 6536/ oder 6535/ oder 6452/ oder 6430	briefkasten@sensjs.verwalt-berlin.de	http://www.bildungsserver.de/db/m lesen.html? Id=19949	
Brandenburg	Ministerium für Bildung, Jugend und	++49/	poststelle@m bjs.brandenbu	http://www.mbjs.brande	



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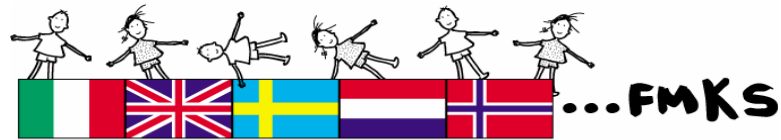
	Sport Steinstraße 104 bis 106 in 14480 Potsdam	331/8660 Fax ++49/ 331/8663595	rg.de	nburg.de	
Bremen	Der Senator für Bildung und Wissenschaft Rembertiring 8-12 28195 Bremen	++49/ 0421/ 361 2732 Fax: ++49/421/ 361 15996	guenter.bart sch@bildung .bremen.de	www.bremen.de/bildungs-senator	<i>Is "side door entry" at all possible???</i>
Hamburg	Behörde für Bildung und Sport Hamburger Straße 31 22083 Hamburg	++49/ 40/ 428 63- 0 Fax ++49/ 40/ 428 63-34 96 Frau Dr. Knebel- Pasinski ++49/ 40/428 63-20 83	Contact through website	http://fhh.hamburg.de/stadt/Aktuell/behoerden/bildung-sport/start.html	
Hessen (Hesse)	Hessisches Kultusministerium Luisenplatz 10 65185 Wiesbaden Staatliches Schulamt für den Landkreis Darmstadt- Dieburg und die Stadt Darmstadt - ZPM - Rheinstr. 95 64295 Darmstadt	++49/ 6 11/- 368 - 0 Fax:++49/ 6 11/ - 368 2096 ++49/ 06151/3682-2	poststelle@h km.hessen.d e poststelle@d a.ssa.hesse n.de	http://www.kultusministerium.hessen.de/default.asp?URL=http%3A//www.kultusministerium.hessen.de/cms/broker.asp%3FseitenID%3D%7B85E46579-A044-11D4-A736-0050045687AB%7D	
Mecklenburg- Vorpommern	Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur Mecklenburg- Vorpommern Werderstraße 124 19055 Schwerin	++49 385 588-0 Fax ++49/ 385 588- 7082 Jürgen Schröder ++49/ 385- 76-01-727 Fax ++49/ 385-71-11- 88	poststelle@k ultus-mv.de	http://www.kultus-mv.de/ http://www.kultus-mv.de/sites/aktuell/ausschreiber_schulen.htm	
Niedersachsen (Lower Saxony)	Niedersächsisches Kultusministerium Schiffgraben 12 Postfach 161 30159 Hannover	++49/ 511 / 120 0, Fax ++49 / 511- 120 7450	poststelle@ mk.niedersa chsen.de	http://www.mk.niedersachsen.de/master/C580_L20_D0.html http://www.mk.niedersachsen.de/master/0_C901529_N741203_L20_D0_I579,0	



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				0.html	
Nordrhein-Westfalen (North Rhine-Westphalia)	Ministerium für Schule, Jugend und Kinder des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen Völklinger Straße 49 40221 Düsseldorf	++49/ 211/ 8 96 - 03 Fax ++49/ 211/ 8 96 - 32 20	poststelle@msjk.nrw.de	http://www.bildungsportal.nrw.de https://www.bildungsportal.nrw.de/BP/LEO/index.html	April 05: es werden viele Fächer gesucht, zum Beispiel Englisch, Kunst, Mathematik, Musik, Physik, Französisch
Rheinland-Pfalz (Rhineland-Palantinate)	Ministerium für Bildung, Frauen und Jugend Hauptgebäude Wallstraße 3 55 122 Mainz	++49/ 6131-16-0 Fax ++49/ 6131-162878	poststelle@mbfj.rlp.de	http://www.mbfj.rlp.de/	
Saarland	Ministerium für Bildung, Kultur und Wissenschaft Abteilung Allgemein bildende Schulen Hohenzollernstraße 60 66117 Saarbrücken Rolf Specht (Prüfungsamt für das Lehramt an Schulen)	++49/ 681/ 9271412	r.specht@bildung.saarland.de	http://www.bildung.saarland.de/	
Sachsen (Saxony)	Sächsisches Staatsministerium für Kultus Carolaplatz 1 01097 Dresden	++49 / 3 51/ 5 64-0	info@smk.sachsen.de	http://www.sachsen-macht-schule.de/stellen/	
Sachsen-Anhalt (Saxony-Anhalt)	Kultusministerium des Landes Sachsen-Anhalt Turmschanzenstraße 32 39114 Magdeburg	++49/391 567 3710	presse@mk.sachsen-anhalt.de	http://www.sachsen-anhalt.de/rcs/LSA/pub/Ch4/flid4dtdatzfyc/flddf7vzoc24z/pgdf/eofw2zl9/index.jsp	
Schleswig-Holstein	Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kultur des Landes Schleswig-Holstein Brunswiker Str. 16-22 24105 Kiel	++49/ 431/988-0 Fax ++49/ 431/988-2439	Gabriela.Sell@kumi.lands.h.de Ingrid.Sievers@kumi.lands.h.de	http://landesregierung.schleswig-holstein.de/cormedia/generator/Aktueller_20Bestand/MBWFK/Information/Bewerberlotse.html	
Thüringen (Thuringia)	Thüringer Kultusministerium Werner-Seelenbinder-Str. 7 99096 Erfurt	++49 / 3 61 / 3 79 00 Fax ++49 / 3 61/ 3 79 46 90	tkm@thueringen.de	http://www.thueringen.de/de/tkm/index.html	

3.1.2 Requirements for being a teacher in state-funded schools are:



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- three-year degree from an academic institute of higher education (not a technical school for higher education) ending with a University Diploma (Diplom) or Masters (Magister) in two teaching subjects + education.

- If you only had one major, two teaching subjects could potentially be created from it. For example, if your Physics degree also had a large component of chemistry coursework, additional training in chemistry as a second teaching subject could be worked on during your preparatory service.

- Usually, an internship (see below)

- There are exceptions (see below)

3.1.3. Each application is examined on an individual basis

3.1.3.1. For applicants from the EU the following applies

- The degree is recognized
- In the best-case scenario, everything is recognized and the applicant doesn't need anything else to work in the teaching profession
- Possibly, it may only be necessary to pass a basic equivalency exam
- Possibly, it may be necessary to complete additional training (*Anpassungslehrgang*). The training period is short, similar to the preparatory service, but shorter, for example, one year long.

3.1.3.2 For applicants who are not from the EU, the following applies:

- The foreign university degree is evaluated according to the German school system requirements. This is done at the Ministry of Culture.
- If the applicant is given partial credit for their degree, the missing parts must be made up for. This could mean needing to do coursework in an additional subject or in education.
- If the subjects are recognized, either the preparatory service must be made up (1-2 years) for, or possibly a basic equivalency exam must be passed.

3.1.4 Do you always need two teaching subjects?

As a rule you need two teaching subjects + education. Under certain conditions you can also become a teacher with only one teaching subject. This depends on whether or not the subject is highly sought after and if other applicants can be found. In this



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case you are an employee and not an appointed teacher. Appointed teachers must complete the 2nd State Exam (preparatory service).

3.1.5 What is an internship or preparatory service?

The internship or preparatory service directly follows the completion of the university studies. It usually lasts two years and ends with the so-called 2nd State Exam. Being hired as a public servant (appointed teacher) is possible after the preparatory service. It depends on many things like grades, age, teaching subject need, ect..

3.1.6 Must the preparatory service always be completed or made up for?

Applicants who are not from the EU must always complete preparatory service. Otherwise it is not mandatory. It depends on whether or not the subjects are very sought after. Applicants who have completed the preparatory service (2nd State Exam) are preferred, as their training counts more. If there are absolutely no applicants who have completed preparatory service, than applicants without Pre-Service-Training also have the opportunity to be hired. You are than not a public servant, but an employee.

3.1.7 Are only German citizens allowed to be appointed?

No, even non-German citizens may be appointed in cases in which a German citizen cannot fill the position. The age at which one may be appointed to public service is different in each federal state.

3.1.8 What is the difference between an appointed teacher and an employed teacher?

Public servants earn more per year in net pay because they pay fewer taxes.

3.2 Teaching in private schools

The school (not the applicant) obtains a Teacher's Licence for the applicant from the Ministry for Culture or Education. The Ministry decides if the applicant is suitable to teach. The applicant needn't have multiple teaching subjects or preparatory service. The working conditions, including salary, are more or less negotiated with the school.

3.3 Teachers at Adult Education Centers (*Volkshochschule*) and Family Centers

Teachers can also work at educational institutions such as adult education centers and family education centers. The conditions are negotiated and usually a German teaching degree is not necessary.

4. Formal preconditions for employers of foreign employees:



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The employer must register the employee with the national insurance (british) / social security (american).

If the employee does not earn more than 400 € monthly, he has to contact [www. Bundesknappschaft.de](http://www.Bundesknappschaft.de), see “spezial für Arbeitgeber“.

If the employee earns more than 400 € monthly the employer must register him with a health insurance company (Krankenkasse) , with the private nursing insurance (Pflegeversicherung), with the pension scheme (british) / retirement insurance (american), and as well with the unemployment insurance.

5. Glossary

Referendariat, Internship

The second part of traditional teacher education in Germany. The internship usually lasts for two years and directly follows university studies

Vorbereitungsdienst, preparatory service

another term for Referendariat (internship)

Erste Staatsprüfung, 1st State Exam

Exam following the university component of teacher education

Zweite Staatsprüfung, 2nd State Exam

Exam following the internship

Quereinstieg, Seiteneinstieg, Side door entry

Entry into the profession of teaching without preparatory service. "Side door entry" applicants have completed a three-year degree at an academic institution of higher education, but have not completed a teacher education program. It does not matter if studies were completed in Germany or internationally (for example, PhD in physics, chemistry, music, art or similar subjects). Side door entry candidates complete preparatory service, or two years of additional training while employed, or similar training to enable them to be able to teach two subjects.

Bundesland, Bundesländer- Federal States

Germany has a federal system and consists of 16 Federal States. Education and school politics are federal state matters in Germany.

Useful URL

www.Aufenthaltstitel.de

Here the latest and full information about the alien laws can be found (in German).

www.info4alien.de

Besides law information above all here you can find an open forum for debate for everyone concerning the alien laws and a “guided/ accompanied” chat room on Tuesdays starting from 9 p.m.

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