



M O B I L I T Y G U I D E

G E R M A N Y






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Part I: General country information

Official name:	Bundesrepublik Deutschland
Capital:	Berlin
Flag:	
Language:	German
Government:	Parliamentary democracy. Head of state: President Horst Köhler Head of government: Chancellor Angela Merkel. She sets the political guidelines which are implemented by the federal ministers and their departments independently and on their own authority. Elections to the Bundestag (the Lower House of Parliament) take place every 4 years.
Inhabitants:	82.400.996 (2007)
Unemployment quota:	8,9% (2007), partly significant differences between East and West
EU-Membership:	Since 1952 (founding member)
National holiday:	3. October, Reunion Day (Tag der Wiedervereinigung)
Currency:	Euro
Time:	MEZ 0
Prefix:	++49
Internet:	.de

Part II: General information to prepare for mobility

In preparation for a working stay in Germany it is advisable that you familiarize yourself with the country, its people and customs. This will help you to find your way in your new living and working environment, especially in the beginning of your stay.

Labour market information

Even if the German economy has now slowly started to show an upward trend, the unemployment figures of the largest

economy in Europe are high. A number of businesses have moved to “cheaper” countries due to the comparatively low non-wage labour costs.

Despite this, the lack of skilled workers is also making itself felt in Germany where high technology and research are by far at the top of the list of priorities. Well-trained skilled workers have good prospects of finding a job in many sectors. The culture of a “period of work experience” is also widespread in small businesses.



Electricians and fitters are in the TOP 10 of the employment agency for vacancies in 2007. In addition, the logistics sector is seeking skilled workers that are urgently required.

The regions are responsible for the recognition of (foreign) vocational and educational qualifications. In the case of a craft trade, apply to the chambers of handicrafts that are responsible for the administrative district in which you wish to work. The German Confederation of Skilled Crafts and Small Business (ZDH) offers an overview at <http://www.zdh.de/handwerksorganisationen/handwerkskammern.html>

Money earning and living costs

The level of pricing in Germany is average. Especially food-stuffs are comparatively cheaper than in France or Belgium. Average prices for products are:

- ▶ Cigarettes: 4 €
- ▶ Loaf of bread: 23 €
- ▶ Sandwich: 1–2 €
- ▶ Cup of Coffee: 2 €
- ▶ Pint of beer in pub: 2–3 €
- ▶ Chocolate bar: 1,50 €
- ▶ Cinema Ticket: 7 €
- ▶ Petrol: 1,30–1,40 €
- ▶ 2 course meal in an average restaurant: 15 € per person

Looking for a job: where to start?

In addition to the well-known routes such as newspapers, the internet or employment agencies, it is worth making enquiries at the chambers, membership of which is compulsory for almost all businesses in the various sectors.

Many chambers of skilled crafts run exchange programmes for trainees with other countries. They often have good connections with businesses which are willing to accept a foreign trainee. A “subdivision” is the “district craftsmen associations” (Kreishandwerkerschaft) which is a way of bringing

together various “trade guilds” (trade associations). There you will more than likely obtain contacts which are confined to smaller areas.

Agencies

The Federal Agency for Employment has local area offices to which you can apply in order to obtain information on trades, vacancies and, if need be, a work permit:

http://www.arbeitsagentur.de/nn_29892/Navigation/Dienststellen/Dienststellen-Nav.html

Agencies for Temporary Work

Many of the large agencies work through international subsidiaries. Have a look in your home country to see which ones there are and make enquiries there with regard to the corresponding contacts in Germany. Examples:

- ▶ <http://www.randstad.de>
- ▶ <http://www.adecco.de>
- ▶ <http://www.zag.de>

The Federal Association for Temporary Work offers a database in which you can search by postcode for the providers in the immediate area:

<http://www.bza.de>

Almost every town has its own daily newspaper or at least there is a local section on an area by area basis. The biggest newspapers with job offers:

- ▶ Süddeutsche Zeitung (SZ): <http://stellenmarkt.sueddeutsche.de/>
- ▶ Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ): <http://fazjob.net/>
- ▶ Die Welt: <http://www.welt.de/> -> jobmarket (Stellenmarkt)
- ▶ Berliner Zeitung: <http://www.bz-berlin.de/BZ/anzeigen/stellenmarkt/stellenmarkt.html>



- ▶ Frankfurter Rundschau: <http://www.fr-online.de/anzeigenmarkt/stellenmarkt/stellenangebote/>
- ▶ Der Tagesspiegel: <http://anzeigen.tagesspiegel.de/stellenindex.php>

Job portals:

- ▶ www.monster.de
- ▶ www.StepStone.de
- ▶ www.JobScout24.de

Working conditions

The maximum number of working hours is regulated at the level of specific trades in accordance with collective bargaining agreements and is, on average, 38–40 hours.

Entitlement to (paid) leave is regulated according to a scale and is mainly dependent on age and the number of years in service. On average, it is 30 days per year.

In the event of illness, you must inform your employer immediately and, for an absence of more than 3 days, you are obliged to hand in a medical certificate.

The working day starts at 9am and finishes by 5pm, for 5 days a week (on average). However, many companies today operate so-called “flexitime patterns”. All employees must be present within the company for a fixed “time corridor” (core time). Beyond this, the employees can decide for themselves, with an eye on the work coming up, whether, and for how long, to work. At the end of the month or the year intermediate totals are drawn up and the agreed number of hours does not actually require to be reached until the end of the employment relationship. Extra hours (overtime) can, to a limited extent, be accumulated and taken as days off.

As to salary, at the present time, there is a lot of movement with regard to the demand for a minimum wage set by the government. In the case of many trade groups this is likely

to be introduced in 2008. Otherwise, the wage or income is in line with the collective wage bargaining agreements and the separate agreements reached. On the one hand, there is the possibility that you will receive a fixed amount in payment and you will have to manage to do your work within the agreed time or will be credited with overtime. In the construction trade, however, the number of hours worked are settled individually.

As a rule, periods of practical training are unpaid. It is up to the companies whether to pay you a little something.

Social security system

In most cases, wages and salaries are paid for the whole month at the end of the month or in the middle of the month. Payment in cash is rather unusual, so the best thing to do is to use a current account. Your employer will pay over your contributions for income tax on your earnings, solidarity surtax and, if applicable, church tax as well as the contributions for social security (health, pension and care insurance) and for unemployment insurance to the appropriate authorities. On your wage/salary slip you will receive an exact breakdown of the contributions paid. Keep these in a safe place and present them, if need be, in your home country, if you would like to assert any claims.

As a trainee, you are insured via the insurance scheme in your home country. Upon signing a contract of employment you are liable for insurance in Germany. Your employer will register you with the health insurance scheme and the latter will, in turn, register you with the unemployment, pension and care insurance scheme.

Depending on your income (or, for example, as a self-employed person), you have the option of signing up for a statutory or a private health insurance scheme. The benefits vary, but even in the statutory health insurance scheme



there is no undertaking to pay for all services in full and, in some cases, additional payments must be made.

Medicines are obtained exclusively from pharmacies, and most of them are available only on prescription, i.e. you go and see a general practitioner or family doctor who makes a diagnosis or refers you to a specialist (“referral”). Following the issue of the diagnosis, you will be given a prescription for the medication, and you can obtain this from any pharmacy you like. The cost of many medicines is not met in full by the health insurance scheme and you will pay a surcharge.

Looking for accommodation

Depending on the length of your stay and your financial resources, you have different options to find accommodation.

1. Room/Flat

Look for local classifieds, contact real estate agents or ask in Cafes and supermarkets. Or ask your employer in advance if he has any tips. Perhaps he, or a colleague, has a room for the duration of your stay. Living in private accommodation has the advantage that you have a so-called “family connection”, you settle in more quickly and are able to learn the language more quickly.

Also, on the notice boards of the universities you can often find offers of cheap accommodation or a room within a flat-sharing community – not just for students – a widespread option for obtaining cheap accommodation for a couple of months. You pay a proportion of the ground rent and the heating/energy costs. In addition, these offer a good opportunity to make contact quickly since the other tenants have also often travelled in from other towns or regions and thus find themselves in the same situation as you.

2. Youth hostels

Youth hostels (Jugendherbergen) are probably the cheapest accommodation you can find (from €8/night up to €20/night). Therefore, stay in youth hostel may be a good option for the time you look for “real” accommodation.

To stay in a youth hostel, you need to be a member of the International Youth Hostel Federation. By contrast, access doesn’t depend on your age, but you do get a discount if under 26. For more information go to:

<http://www.hihostels.com/dba/continent-EU.de.htm>

To be checked before leaving or after arriving

Before moving to your new country of residence make sure you have:

- ▶ (Temporary) accommodation.
- ▶ Sufficient financial resources for the first month.
- ▶ The right documents:
 - A valid EU passport/ID card;
 - A European Health Insurance Card;
 - An E301 or 303 form.
- ▶ General knowledge of your new country of residence.

As soon as you arrive in Germany:

- ▶ Register with the municipality in which you will be living (“Einwohnermeldeamt”).



Part III: Golden rules for intercultural understanding

A society's hidden rules form the basis of smooth everyday interaction – at home as well as abroad. Any host will certainly be lenient towards a guest who – despite good manners – behaves differently from a fellow countryman. For instance, think of a guest smoking at table, something quite natural in that person's home country, but unthinkable in others, and this not only for legal reasons. Or think of the visitor from Paris, who barely knowing you, gives you a kiss on the cheek.

There is no written law on how to behave correctly in another country, and even within a country, rules will vary from one region to another. Any foreign visitor may therefore unconsciously drop a clanger.

Only living in a country for some time, being attentive and interested, will help you to learn the unwritten rules and see the clangers. However, if you as a guest stick to some basic rules, your stay will run smoothly.

- ▶ Don't be afraid of the unknown. Remember that in your home country you also meet strangers and usually you manage the situation without problems.

- ▶ Let situations sink in. Note the common ground as well as differences, and try to not immediately assess everything in terms of good and bad, better and worse. Things are just different!
- ▶ Confronted with new situations: wait and observe. You may be surrounded by cooperative people, however, be aware that they might never have thought about why things are done this or that way.
- ▶ Get into contact! Nobody expects you to be perfect in the foreign language. So make an effort. Even a few words can open doors.
- ▶ For conversation at your workplace, reflect on your job, your future plans and train the relevant vocabulary before you leave. Also: Read about your home as well as about your target country and region. A country guide of your home region in the hosts' language might make a nice present.

Part IV: Everyday-life

Getting into contact

When you first get to know someone, use "Sie" to older people and in the business sphere until you are invited to use "Du". The change to "Du", in most cases, signifies a change to a more amicable level. (In parts of the new federal states people switch more rapidly to "Du", or even start off using it. (In this case, this does not inevitably mean that you are already regarded as a friend).

Sometimes, an older person of high rank will also perhaps address you as "Du", but expects you to stick to "Sie". Apprentices were formerly very young and the habit of using

"Sie" to address apprentices as adults, in principle, is still to be found sometimes. This, however, does not mean that you are not respected.

Normally, people greet each other to begin with a handshake. Only when people get to know one another better does a "Hello" in passing suffice. In this case, too, a somewhat different rule applies in the case of the new federal states, where the handshake is more widespread.

Use academic titles (Dr., Prof.) when addressing people, especially in correspondence. Even unmarried women are still only ever addressed as "Frau". The old-fashioned



“Fräulein” has a condescending effect and should not be used.

Language:

In addition to German, of course, a number of people speak a second language. English is learned, at the latest, from primary 4 onwards. Since Germany borders on many European countries it is mainly the case that additional languages are spoken in the regions in question (Danish, Russian, Polish, Italian, French, Dutch). Sorbian and Frisian are the languages of ethnic minorities.

Do not be surprised if you do not understand what is supposed to be German straightaway. Just as in other countries, some regional dialects coin new words of their own. They will certainly make an effort to comply with your request for “Hochdeutsch” (High German) spoken slowly.

Some vocabulary to start with

Guten Morgen ► Good Morning!

Guten Tag ► How do you do?

Guten Abend ► Good Evening!

Gute Nacht ► Good Night!

Auf Wiedersehen/Tschüss ► (Good) bye!

Mein Name ist .../Ich bin... ► My name is .../I am ...

Ich komme aus... ► I come from

Danke (sehr) ► Thank you/Thanks

Bitte ► Please

Bitte sehr ► You`re welcome

Entschuldigung ► Sorry/Excuse me

Ja ► Yes

Nein ► No

Das gefällt mir (gut) ► That`s fine/That`s nice

Working environment

Every business “ticks” differently. Therefore, the following recommendations are only to be understood as providing food for thought.

In general, Germans have a reputation for working in a very focussed and uninterrupted manner until a solution has been found. Often they are known for being “pernickety”. A famous proverbial saying goes “Ordnung ist das halbe Leben” (order is half of life).

Despite this, people will certainly take the time to explain everything to you and introduce you to local conditions.

There is, in most cases, a sharp division between work and private life. People tend to look for friends elsewhere. There are many rules, especially with regard to giving instructions and making complaints. The best thing for you to do is to ask who the first point of contact is for you (“the service route”) and go “one level up” only if you cannot get any further with the latter.

Be punctual and stick to agreements and timetables – these are taken very seriously in Germany. People expect you to ask questions if you have not understood something or you are unable to complete a job in the time set. That is better than having to apologise in the end. Criticism is often expressed in a very open way. However, in most cases it does not refer to you as a person but merely to your work and/or results.

Manners/Etiquette

Depending on the firm in which you work, dress is rather casual. Germans are often more smartly dressed for private invitations than at the business level. The best thing to do is to ask which clothes are appropriate. Dropping in on people unannounced is, except in the case of good friends, inappropriate. Germans may often give the impression of being somewhat stern until you get to know one another,



and exaggerated small talk has a disconcerting effect on many people.

Always greet people in a friendly way, even if you are entering a (small) shop. Do not push your way forward in queues. However, if a new till is opened, everyone tries to be first. In small shops (baker's, butcher's) there are often no queues and you have to speak up when the sales assistant asks: "Whose turn is it now?"

For car drivers it is a case of: watch out! There are lots of checks: speed, parking in areas where there are "no parking" signs or at red lights. If you are caught, it can prove to be costly. The "nation of car drivers" also often acts in an inconsiderate way towards other road users. Watch out for pedestrians or cyclists at all times in moving traffic.

Invitations

People like planning invitations and appointments on a fairly long-term basis. Be on time if you are invited for a meal. You can also show up later at parties. However, it is polite to briefly announce this beforehand. You should also let people know if you are bringing a partner. Flowers, for the lady of the house (remove the wrapping in advance), good wine and chocolate/pralines or products that are typical of your home country are welcome as presents for your hosts.

When invited to a restaurant, it is often the host who pays. Allow yourself to be treated, without making a fuss. No-one expects a feigned "That's not right – I'd like to pay!"

If invited for a beer you should promptly get your own back. If you are travelling in a group, each person orders and often pays for everyone in turn (buy a round of drinks/It's my round!). When eating a meal together in a restaurant, for which an invitation has NOT been extended, the meal is frequently paid by each person present himself. As a rule, waiters are accustomed to working out the total bill separately.

Topics for conversation

Many Germans like going away on holiday, and at frequent intervals. Due to their central position within Europe, they have travelled most of the countries in Europe, and you will actually find lots of the gastronomic culture of these countries recurring in restaurants as well as when cooking at home. The dishes that are typical of your country, your special handicrafts and regional tourist attractions are suitable topics of conversation. Wages and salaries as topics of conversation are taboo.

Thus, in the case of many Germans, there is great interest in other ways of living and working. Do not be surprised if the person opposite immediately starts talking of HIS experiences. This does not signify a lack of respect but is, rather, an attempt to understand things and/or put them in order. Once again, the love of order comes high up on the list of priorities.

Deutschland or Ost- and Westdeutschland

It is already more than 17 year since the reunification of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) (it was actually a case of the GDR being admitted to the FRG), but in the use of language and also in many different senses you can detect that we are still not quite there.

Since the 3rd of October 1990 Germany has, once again, a common territory. Rhetorically, a distinction is often still made between the two areas. In any case, it is better not to speak of West and East Germany but of the "old federal states" and the "5 new federal states".

Spare time

Many Germans like going out, and often – for a meal, to the cinema or for a drink in the pub. Pubs are a mixture of a café, a bar, a bistro and a living room. Mostly furnished in a



Here, by way of an example, is some information about Martinmas in Germany:

Martinmas (just like the start of the carnival period on the 11.11) is a fixture of the pre-Christmas period in Germany. The story goes back to St. Martin of Tours who, on a bitterly cold day, split his cloak using his sword and presented one piece to a beggar. There are many processions at which bands play, children carry brightly-coloured lanterns and sing traditional songs along with the grown-ups. A knight (in most cases a policeman in disguise) rides out in front in memory of St. Martin. Subsequently, in many places, the children go from house to house with their lanterns, sing Martinmas songs and, along with them, ask for alms (sweets, fruit, small gifts). The grown-ups meet up in November for Martinmas meal of goose – a roast goose with dumplings, red cabbage and marzipan roast apple.

rather cosy style, people meet up there in a relaxed atmosphere and in casual clothes to chat with friends or other customers at the bar. There it is often easier to make contact than in smart, trendy bars or discotheques. If a member of the opposite sex speaks to you or arranges to meet you, this does not inevitably mean that it involves a date. People like striking up new friendships, even between women and men.

Sport, and football or handball, in particular, are top leisure time topics. There is a saying “If two Germans meet, they will establish a club” – people even like organising private interests, where there are no limits to the imagination: rambling clubs, model railway clubs, handicrafts clubs, singles clubs and countless sports or political clubs.

Germans are very sociable, even if it does not appear so to strangers at first glance. In most cases, the mood lifts in the course of the evening. Once things have “heated up”, you have perhaps found friends for life.

Public holidays

Difference in habits in European countries often exist where you wouldn't expect them. The way people celebrate holidays tells us a lot about the countries' culture. Therefore, to inform yourself about holiday traditions is a good way to get to know more about the country.

Festivals and Public Holidays

The 1st of January (New Year's Day), Good Friday and Easter Monday, the 1st of May (Labour Day), Ascension Day, Whit Monday, the 3rd of October (Day of German Unity), the 25th and 26th of December (Christmas), plus various church holidays in the federal states.

In the Rhineland and Southern Germany “Fasching”, or carnival, is celebrated. The carnival period begins on the 11.11 at 11.11 a.m. and ends with great celebrations and a carnival parade on the Monday before Lent (January/February) – thus at the start of Lent there are still wild celebrations and feasting going on.

If you are lucky enough to be staying in these areas, you should experience the carnival once, in any case. There are many colourful and imaginative costumes, and the street and pub carnivals are celebrated in a very exuberant way.

In addition, there are many different regional festivals and events (wine festivals, fishing festivals, beer gardens etc.) – good opportunities to make connections. There is information about these in the local newspapers and in the town magazines.

Eating & drinking

Breakfast and supper mostly turn out to be lighter meals, and many people use their lunchbreak to have “a good feed”, in



other words to treat themselves to a hot meal. This is also where the lunchtime greeting “Mahlzeit”, which is usual in many companies, has its origin. You can come across it as early as 10 o'clock in the morning or even at 3 o'clock in the afternoon – but it is, at that time, usually accompanied by a wink. Colleagues often spend their breaks together, even if all that is consumed are the sandwiches which they have brought with them. In many companies there are canteens or, at the very least, rooms in which workers can take their breaks.

Even although German wine is famous and popular throughout the world, German beer is at least just as famous and is a popular drink.

Here is an overview of various kinds of beer. However, on a regional basis, sometimes only specific kinds are available: Pils, Kölsch, Alt (pale ale), Weißbier (wheat beer), Schwarzbier (dark lager beer), Dunkel/Malzbier (dark/malt beer) (alcohol-free).

Known formerly as “ladies' beer”, but also popular since then with lots of men, the beers are partially mixed with fizzy orangeade, lemonade, and raspberryyade (Alster, Radler, Potsdamer), with coke or malt beer (Krefelder, Diesel, Cola-bier, Pils, Alt-Schuss, Schmutziges, Drecksack). By way of “mixed beer drinks/alcopops”, for a couple of years there have also been ready-made, mostly very sweet mixtures which then contain tequilla, sekt or energy drinks, for example.

A “nice” breakfast is hard to imagine where there are no bread rolls, also called “Semmeln” or “Schrippen”, and by other names depending on the region. In baker's shops foreigners can easily lose track of things as there are so many

different types of bread roll and bread. People spread butter, cream cheese or jam on them, or they are filled with sausage, cheese or egg. As an alternative, many Germans eat muesli with milk, yoghurt or fruit juice, to which fresh chopped fruit is added.

To drink, there is coffee, tea or cocoa. German coffee produces a disdainful look on the face of many visitors as it is felt to be watery. This has to do with the preparation in which hot water is poured over the powder in a paper filter. However, in the meantime “Italian” coffee machines are also becoming more and more widespread.

An every day meal in Germany consists, in most cases, of just one course which, however, by way of compensation, turns out to be all the more sumptuous. Lots of meat and large portions of side dishes leave many foreigners gasping for breath at first sight (only in Germany is there the term “saturation side dish” in cooking parlance).

Typical dishes in Germany are roast meats, veal or pork cutlets, hearty vegetable stews with meat and/or pieces of bacon (green cabbage) and a wide variety of sausages. Potatoes, prepared in many different ways, are popular, even if noodles and rice are not a rarity. In the meantime, many people have adjusted to new eating habits and are eating lighter dishes, often characterised by Mediterranean cooking. Organic food and health foods are also socially acceptable and have become commonplace – quality always triumphs over quantity, refined cuisine has become a lifestyle issue and cookery programmes on television are very popular with viewers.

Part V: Vocational education & training

People working abroad obviously speak often about their profession and everyday working life in their home

country. It is therefore important to realise that school, vocational education and ways to learn a trade vary distinctively



between States. In Germany, the federal states are responsible for education – all that takes place at federal level is coordination (cultural ministers' conference). Universities and colleges are an exception.

School is compulsory for 9 or 10 years from the age of 6 or 7. Pupils mostly attend school for half the day. All-day schools are rare but they are gaining ground.

Vocational training is uniformly controlled throughout the country through the Vocational Training Act- teaching for a certificate in vocational training is carried out according to the same master plan.

First level of education

► Primary school – 4 years

Leaving certificate: depending on the “performance/assessment” of the pupil, one of the three types of secondary school available is recommended by the teaching staff, with the parents, as a rule, having to accept what is recommended.

Continuing education

► Secondary modern school, secondary school leading to an intermediate certificate or grammar school (with all of them sometimes being under the one roof): comprehensive school – for 6 to 8 or 9 years (depending on the federal state).

Basics (Leaving Certificates)

a) Secondary modern school/secondary school leading to an intermediate certificate/comprehensive school

Duration: 5–6 years

Leaving certificate: secondary school leaving certificate examination taken after year 9

Intermediate leaving certificate examination (leading to the award of an intermediate leaving certificate) after year 10

which, depending on the grade obtained, entitles pupils to continue their education by attending special vocational training colleges, technical colleges or grammar school.

b) Grammar school/ grammar-school section of the comprehensive school

Duration: 8–9 years

Leaving certificate: General university entrance qualification (Abitur), which gives entitlement to study for a degree at any university

c) Grammar-school sixth form at vocational training colleges/technical colleges

Duration: 2–3 years

Leaving certificate: university entrance qualification related to a pupil's specialist field or a technical college certificate of higher education which give entitlement to study for a degree in the subjects related to the pupil's specialist field at a general university or at specialist universities

d) Vocational Training

In Germany, vocational training is much more valued than in many other European countries. It is demanding, very well organised and creates great opportunities on the labour market – even across borders. 2/3 of all school leavers who wish to obtain further qualifications, start a form of vocational training. The rest go straight on to university. You do not need any graded leaving certificate for vocational training. However, without it, it is difficult to obtain a training place in a business – businesses, of course, take their pick of the best applicants.

After compulsory education – depending on the leaving certificate – it is possible to begin vocational training or to attend (a specialist) university. Combining the two routes is provid-

ed for in many cases and is being further expanded at the present time. In times where there is a shortage of training places in business, purely academic training options have been created, in addition, whereby the practical aspects are taught in teaching workshops belonging to the schools.

Very much more widespread than vocational training in schools is “dual vocational training” – a combination of business practice and academic instruction (with, as a rule, 3.5 days spent in the business and 1.5 days at the vocational training college, also optionally available in the form of a teaching block). In addition, within the handicrafts field, there are blocks of supra-trade training available in the teaching workshops of the schools. Here the trainees are intended to learn trade practices which cannot be adequately taught in the – often specialised – handicraft businesses.

Responsibility for “dual training” lies, on the one hand, with the companies and, on the other, with the vocational schools. The trainee and the company sign a training agreement, in which the rights and obligations of both parties are laid down. The trainee is automatically registered at a vocational school and is obliged to attend the latter – it is officially “working time”. The remuneration of the trainee is settled by negotiation and is paid by the company.

The final examination is also split into two. The competent chamber of handicrafts or chamber of industry and commerce holds one examination, and the vocational school holds the other. Thus, after successfully passing both exam-

inations, students obtain a certificate of proficiency (certificate of completion of apprenticeship), on the one hand, and a leaving certificate from the vocational school, on the other.

Training in one of the approximately 350 occupations recognised as requiring training traditionally takes 3–3.5 years. In order to make it possible for less capable school leavers to enter the labour market with qualifications as well, some particularly challenging forms of training have been split into modules. The motor service mechanic can, for example, after successfully completing a 2-year apprenticeship gain further qualifications through a third year spent in related trades or specialisations (see under car mechatronic technician).

With a certificate of completion of an apprenticeship there is the possibility of:

- a) training as a master craftsman after a certain amount of experience in the trade. This qualification is comparable to an intermediate diploma or a degree at a specialist university.
- b) attending university combined with obtaining a technical college certificate of higher education or the general university entrance qualifications.
- c) completing further periods of training in subjects related to your specialism.

Part VI: Selected trades

In Germany, skilled crafts are organised independently, irrespective of the industry and trade.

Guilds: trade associations (e.g.: hairdressers’ association)

District craft associations: regional union of various guilds

Chambers of handicrafts: a body representing handicrafts interests at regional level which, inter alia, coordinate the legal and political concerns of their members. All trainees are registered there in their “apprentice role” and membership is compulsory for businesses.



Chamber of handicrafts conferences: union of the chambers of handicrafts at regional and national level.

Additional training:

Training can take place in two stages. Following completion of the 1st stage (2 years) of training to become a specialist in conversion work, in the 2nd stage (1 year) a vocational leaving certificate in carpentry is gained.

The “joinery” trade

Title: Tischler/in
Training: 3 years
Entry Requirements: none
Leaving Certificate: vocational examination; certificate of completion of apprenticeship and final examination at the technical college
Additional training: Following training, further training is possible to become, inter alia, a technician in wood technology or a restorer within the joinery trade.

Following training, additional training is possible to become, inter alia, a technician in wood technology or a polisher working in the conversion field.

Special features of the business and trade: Carpenters produce all kinds of designs and constructions in wood. In addition, they renovate and redevelop historical buildings or interior fittings made of wood.

Special features of the business and trade: Joiners produce furniture, doors and windows made of wood and timber materials or carry out interior work. This mainly involves one-off productions. Despite training being uniform nationwide, there are still many training establishments specialising in joinery and cabinet-making, window construction, interior work, trade-fair construction work, and boat and glider construction.

The “systems electronics technician” trade

Title: Systemelektroniker/in
Training: 3 ½ years
Entry Requirements: none
Leaving Certificate: vocational examination; certificate of completion of apprenticeship and final examination at the technical college
Additional training: Following training, further training is possible to become, inter alia, an electronics technician focussing on automation technology. Similar trades are working as an electronics technician in the energy and building services field and as an electronics technician working in the information field.

The “carpentry” trade

Title: Zimmerer/in
Training: 3 years
Entry Requirements: none
Leaving Certificate: vocational examination; certificate of completion of apprenticeship and final examination at the technical college

Special features of the business and trade: systems electronic technicians produce electrical and electronic components, equipment and systems, produce samples and one-off pieces, and plan and monitor series production. They maintain and service electronic equipment and systems and advise customers.

The “bricklaying” trade

Title:	Maurer/in
Training:	3 years
Entry Requirements:	none
Leaving Certificate:	vocational examination; certificate of completion of apprenticeship and final examination at the technical college
Additional training:	Training can take place in two stages. Following completion of the 1st stage (2 years) of training to become a specialist in building construction, in the 2nd stage (1 year) a vocational leaving certificate in bricklaying is gained.

Following training, further training is possible to become, inter alia, a technician working in the construction technology field or to become a polisher within the building construction field.

Special features of the business and trade: bricklayers build walls made of different materials. First of all, they concrete the foundations, build internal and external walls or put up walls made of ready-made components and install ceilings. They install insulating materials and, in some cases, also plaster walls. In addition, they lay stone floors and tiles or put up staircases. When carrying out maintenance or redevelop-

ment work, they identify instances of structural damage and what has caused them and put the latter right. In addition, they carry out demolition work.

The “painting and decorating” trade

Title:	Maler-und Lackierer/in
Training:	3 years
Entry Requirements:	none
Leaving Certificate:	vocational examination; certificate of completion of apprenticeship and final examination at the technical college
Additional training:	Training can take place in two stages. Following completion of the 1st stage (2 years) of training to become a specialist in the coating of buildings and properties, in the 2nd stage (1 year) a vocational leaving certificate in painting and decorating is gained in your chosen field of study. Training is given in the following specialist areas: design and maintenance, the painting of churches and care of monuments, and building and corrosion protection. Following training, further training is possible to become, inter alia, a colour and paint technologist or a designer working within the trade.

Special features of business and trade: Painters and decorators are employed in the specialist field of the design and maintenance of new buildings as well as the redevelop-



opment of flats or buildings. They prepare the subsurfaces, plaster walls and ceilings and lay floor coverings. They design interiors using many different painting techniques, but also using wallpaper and decorative plasterwork. By installing insulating materials or by applying heat insulation cladding systems they make an important contribution to the saving of energy, and they protect wood and timber materials, e.g. windows, doors and fences against weathering by using suitable glazes, colours or paints. They process and work plastics, proof buildings and seams and joints or prepare inscriptions and communications media such as company signs or posters.

The “car mechatronic technician” trade

Name:	Kraftfahrzeug-Mechatroniker/in
Training:	3 ½ years
Entry Requirements:	none
Leaving Certificate:	vocational examination; certificate of completion of apprenticeship and final examination at the technical college
Additional training:	Training in this trade focusses on the following points: automobile technology, commercial vehicle technology, motorcycle technology, and vehicle communications technology. Upon the successful completion of the 2-year training period to become a car service mechanic, you can become a mechatronic technician by completing a third year and passing a further examination.

Special features of the business and trade: Vehicle mechatronic technicians must be at home with all areas of vehicle technology, both in the field of “traditional” car mechanics and that of automotive electronics.

The “bakery” trade

Name:	Bäcker/in or Konditor/in
Training:	3 years in each case
Entry Requirements:	none
Leaving Certificate:	vocational examination; certificate of completion of apprenticeship and final examination at the technical college
Additional training:	Following training, further training is possible to become, inter alia, a food technologist working in the area of bakery technology or baking and confectionery technology.

Special features of the business and trade: Bakers are traditionally known for making bread and bread rolls, patisserie goods made from flaky pastry, short-crust pastry or yeast dough, gateaux and desserts, small cakes and pastries for parties, cake and pastry snacks and small dishes. Bakers work in bakeries and cake shops, in bakeries with a café or a snack business attached, in the cake and pastry industry or the supply industry as well as in the hotel and restaurant trades. They can, for example, specialise in the production of pastry and cake mixtures, the production and sale of cake and pastry snacks and small dishes within the snack business, and the management of bakery facilities or product development.

The products made by pastry cooks must not only taste good, but they should also be pleasing to the eye – whether it is gateaux or cakes, small cakes and pastries, ice cream



desserts or pralines, marzipan fruits or pies. They also produce small dishes such as savoury or sweet pastry foods, salads or soups.

The “hairdressing” trade

Name:	Friseur/in
Training:	3 years
Entry Requirements:	keine
Leaving Certificate:	vocational examination; certificate of completion of apprenticeship and final examination at the technical college
Additional training:	Following training, further training is possible to become, inter alia, a hairdresser-cum-beautician. The beautician trade has an independent training system.

Special features of the business and trade: They look after and cut hair and design hairstyles. Above all, hairdressers advise their customers when it comes to choosing a suitable and fashionable hairstyle. They then cut the hair, as desired, change the hair colour using chemical preparations, set permanent waves and, finally, shape the hairstyle using a hair drier, comb and brush. In addition, they can finish off hairstyles using hairpieces, some of which they make themselves. In addition, shaving, looking after and shaping beards all fall within the duties of the men’s department. Cosmetic treatments of the skin on the face and nail care (manicures) are also carried out by hairdressers. In addition, they advise their clients when it comes to selecting, using and looking after artificial hairpieces such as wigs and toupees.

(Source and quotes: <http://berufenet.arbeitsamt.de/berufe>)

Part VII: Links

EURES

- ▶ European Job Mobility Portal (EURES): <http://europa.eu.int/eures/main.jsp?countryId=UK&acro=living&lang=en&parentId=0>

European guidance

- ▶ Euroguidance centres in all EU-member and accession states and Switzerland inform on the advisory systems in your home country, if you intend to work or study in another EU-member state. <http://www.euroguidance.net>
- ▶ <http://www.fitforeurope.info>
- ▶ If you have difficulties regarding the recognition of diplomas you can turn to the EU directory service for citizens, which gives advice free of charge. <http://ec.europa.eu/citizensrights/>
- ▶ Further information on countries and their (business) etiquette is available on <http://www.executiveplanet.com>



Free online translation:

- ▶ <http://babel.altavista.com/tr> (All languages)

EUROPASS

- ▶ http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/preview.action?locale_id=4

Newspapers online

- ▶ Süddeutsche Zeitung (SZ): <http://stellenmarkt.sueddeutsche.de/>
- ▶ Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ): <http://fazjob.net/>
- ▶ Die Welt: <http://www.welt.de/> -> job market
- ▶ Berliner Zeitung: <http://www.bz-berlin.de/BZ/anzeigen/stellenmarkt/stellenmarkt.html>
- ▶ Frankfurter Rundschau: <http://www.fr-online.de/anzeigenmarkt/stellenmarkt/stellenangebote/>
- ▶ Der Tagesspiegel: <http://anzeigen.tagesspiegel.de/stellenindex.php>

Guides:

- ▶ <http://www.tatsachen-ueber-deutschland.de>
- ▶ Germany-portal in five languages: <http://www.deutschland.de>
- ▶ Further informationen, for instance on accommodation, sightseeing: <http://www.deutschland-tourismus.de/>

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Publisher: Westdeutscher Handwerkskammertag, Sternwartstraße 27–29, D-40223 Düsseldorf, Phone: ++49 (0) 211) 30 07-700, Fax: ++49 (0) 211) 30 07-900, E-Mail: whkt@handwerk-nrw.de

Text: Stefanie Schönrrath, europa concept | Layout: Peter Luttko

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