

CAREER GUIDE

FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS, GRADUATES AND DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN THE ECONOMIC REGION BONN / RHEIN-SIEG

Hochschule
Bonn-Rhein-Sieg
University of Applied Sciences

Imprint

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University of Applied Sciences

UNIVERSITÄT BONN

Bundesagentur für Arbeit
Agentur für Arbeit Bonn
bringt weiter.

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:wissenschaftsregion bonn

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1. Introduction

Dear international students,
graduates and doctoral students,

Around 70% of international students plan to stay in Germany once they have finished their degree.

The German job market offers many opportunities for well-qualified international graduates like you. As a business and science hub, the Bonn / Rhein-Sieg district is constantly endeavouring to become still more attractive for international graduates and doctoral students; as a home to small, medium-sized and globally active companies, it offers excellent career opportunities.



Despite the numerous possibilities open to them, international students and graduates often find themselves facing various challenges when planning or starting a career in Germany. There is for example a lack of experience and a shortage of networks which could make starting work for a German company easier. Questions relating to residence permits, insurance and opportunities for family members are also vitally important.

This guide was created for students and doctoral candidates and provides information about the services you can make use of when you are starting out on a career as well as the opportunities available to you after you graduate. It will also help you orient yourself when planning your career.

The following pages contain tips and links to institutions and services that can help students plan their careers in Germany. You will also find helpful sources and important information about tax and immigration legislation in Germany along with valuable information about looking for a job, the application process, residence permits, starting doctoral studies and setting up a company.



2. Career planning during your studies

As an international student, it is vital that you start preparing for your career while you are still at university. We advise you to get plenty of information well in advance and to focus on planning your future career so that you can transition into working life as smoothly and seamlessly as possible.

You will find starting work much easier if you know what your strengths and core competences are, what German employers expect, how your application documents should be structured, how to prepare for coming interviews and how to find the right job.

Even if your curriculum doesn't specify a work placement while you are still studying, it is advisable to try and get work experience, perhaps during the holidays. Being able to provide evidence that you have gained experience of this kind will significantly improve your prospects on the German job market.

Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences (H-BRS), the University of Bonn and other stakeholders offer a large number of services which you can use while you are still a student to help you get started on your career. These will assist you as you prepare for the job market and strategically plan your career.

COLOUR GUIDE

- Services for students of the Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University
- Services for students of the University of Bonn
- Services for students of the economic region Bonn/Rhein-Sieg

2.1 Career advice

Advice, coaching sessions and workshops that teach you for example how to prepare for an interview and make the best possible impression can make starting your career much easier.



Our services for you:

STARK – CAREER FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The STARK project helps international students **start work** and **plan their careers** in Germany by facilitating workshops, giving advice and initiating contact with companies.

STARK
KARRIERE FÜR INTERNATIONALS

https://www.h-brs.de/en/STARK_English

COSTARK – COACHING FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Peer coaching by students for international students. This **career coaching** service aims to help international students with specific career-related **concerns** and make the start of their **working lives easier**.

coSTARK
KARRIERECOACHING FÜR INTERNATIONALS

https://www.h-brs.de/en/coSTARK_ENG



CAREER CENTRE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BONN

The career centre is a service facility for students at the University of Bonn. It offers assistance with professional orientation and career planning advice and seminars on professional orientation and application strategies career events.

UNIVERSITÄT BONN

https://www.uni-bonn.de/institutions/careercenter?set_language=en

CAREER SERVICE AT BONN-RHEIN-SIEG UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

The career service is the point of contact for students and graduates seeking jobs and for companies who would like to get to know potential new recruits at an early stage. Personal advice, regular workshops and a job portal form the basis of the career service's work.

Hochschule
Bonn-Rhein-Sieg
University of Applied Sciences

https://www.h-brs.de/en/careerservice

INTERNATIONAL OFFICE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BONN

The international office offers talks and workshops on starting a career aimed at international students and doctoral candidates at the University of Bonn.

UNIVERSITÄT BONN

https://www.uni-bonn.de/studying/international-students/counceling-and-service?set_language=en

THE FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT AGENCY'S VIRTUAL WELCOME CENTRE

Do you want to work, study or complete a course of training in Germany? The Federal Employment Agency's Virtual Welcome Center (VWC) is your main port of call for information on living and working in Germany.

Bundesagentur für Arbeit
Agentur für Arbeit Bonn
bringt weiter.

https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/en/welcome



2.2 Career fairs

Career fairs are one way in which you can contact potential employers in person if you are seeking permanent employment or a placement for a semester's practical work. In many cases, the staff at the stands can tell you exactly what the company expects from their employees and what their corporate philosophy is. This puts you in a better position to decide whether you would consider the company as a potential employer and whether you would like to apply to them.

2.2.1 PREPARING FOR CAREER FAIRS

Preparing for a career fair is important, and it is advisable to get started a few weeks beforehand.

You should give some thought to the following three steps:

1. Preparation → 2. During the fair → 3. Follow-up

Before going to a career fair, you should find out which companies will be attending and decide which ones you would like to speak to.

H-BRS offers an online course on the LEA learning platform which will help you prepare for a career fair. If you use this online course, you will find out how to get ready for a career fair, what you should consider during the event and what you need to do when following up.



LINKS

Summary of the content of the online course "Career Fair Etiquette"
https://www.h-brs.de/files/related/career-fair-etiquette_in-brief.pdf

LEA online course "Career Fair Etiquette":
https://lea.hochschule-bonn-rhein-sieg.de/ilias.php?ref_id=569517&cmdClass=ilrepositorygui&cmdNode=t3&baseClass=ilrepositorygui
(registration required)

Here you will find information on the career fairs held internally by universities in the Bonn/Rhein-Sieg region:

DER UNTERNEHMENSTAG: CAREER FAIR FOR STUDENTS AND CAREER STARTERS

"Unternehmenstag" (Company Day) is a **career fair** that takes place every year. It gives international students the opportunity to make contact with a select number of companies which are particularly welcoming of foreign applicants.

https://unternehmenstag.de/international

DER KARRIERETAG – THE JOB FAIR IN YOUR REGION

Are you seeking to broaden your professional horizons or get your career off to a flying start? If so, come to Karrieretag (Careers Day) and take the opportunity to introduce yourself to **reputable employers in your region**. The extensive **supporting programme** offered at this job fair is **free of charge** for all visitors.

https://www.karrieretag.org



Information about other career fairs for students and graduates, such as Absolventa and Connecticum, is available on the internet.



2.3 Visiting companies to orient yourself and get ready to start work

Since 2015, university students and graduates have been meeting potential employers in the Bonn / Rhein-Sieg / Ahrweiler region at “Next Stop: Job” events. Here you can find out about future areas of work and possible opportunities for work placements, student research projects and final dissertations.

English is also spoken in some cases.

Presentations and workshops are offered to help anyone interested prepare for work placements and visits to employers. Example offered during the winter semester 2019/2020: “Next stop: job – presenting yourself to companies and making a good impression”.



NEXT STOP: JOB

:wissenschaftsregion bonn

https://www.wissenschaftsregion-bonn.de/news-termine/next-stop-job1

2.4 Using virtual social networks for your career

Efficient use of social networks can help you draw attention to yourself and make sure that recruiters can find you. Here an appealing profile is essential. Always view your profile through the eyes of the companies you are interested in. The best way to present yourself is by compiling a brief, informative biography in which you state your qualifications and experience. Be precise about what you are looking for (work placement, entry-level job, permanent employment).

Use the social business networks to find alumni, i.e. graduates of your university. Be brave! Don’t be afraid to make contact. Having a university background in common is a good point of connection. Alumni might be able to give you inside information about the companies you are interested in.

Make a habit of contacting people you meet, e.g. at events, through professional social networks. It goes without saying that the usual rules of conduct and politeness apply when communicating through business networks (“netiquette”).



Use social networks for strategic career planning and identify people who could serve you as role models. What education, what experience, what positions have they had during their training and careers? What can you learn from their career paths?

The differentiated search options offered by the business networks can also help you identify companies which could be of interest as potential employers.



2.4.1 XING

XING is particularly well-known in the German-speaking countries and enables its users to find new professional contacts, manage existing ones and exchange messages.

Each user presents themselves in a personal profile. Companies and universities are also "members" of XING and use the platform to look for new employees or review applicant profiles. This is why we recommend putting together a professional profile on XING.

Members of the network can also join various groups to take part in discussions or publicise their interest and expertise in the subject which the group focuses on. People who join the alumni group of their university or universities can meet people with the same education and see what career steps took them to their current position.

2.4.2 LINKEDIN

Unlike XING, LinkedIn attracts larger numbers of international and foreign concerns. If you are seeking to start an international career, you should therefore use LinkedIn. Just like XING, you can use LinkedIn to maintain existing business contacts and make new ones. LinkedIn also offers its users the opportunity to create a profile and CV in several languages.

LINKS

https://www.xing.com

https://www.linkedin.com



2.5 Language courses

As an international student, it is strongly recommended that you use the language courses offered by your university to improve your language skills. A sound knowledge of German will make it considerably easier for you to find a job since most companies require graduates to have a good command of German (at least B2 level).

The language centres at H-BRS and the University of Bonn also have a writing centre and writing lab respectively which offer workshops and individual advice on writing. Their goal is to teach basic techniques for compiling various types of text and provide individual help with problems encountered when writing assignments and dissertations.

The universities also promote tandem language learning, in which students with different native languages work together in pairs.

LANGUAGE CENTRE AT BONN-RHEIN-SIEG UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

The Language Centre offers German language courses, a writing workshop in the German language (consisting of workshops and individual advice on writing) and a tandem language learning programme.

Sprachenzentrum
Language Centre
H-BRS

https://www.h-brs.de/de/spz/deutsch
https://www.h-brs.de/en/spz/writing-centre
https://www.h-brs.de/en/spz/tandem-language-learning



LANGUAGE LEARNING CENTRE (SLZ) AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BONN

At the SLZ, students at the University of Bonn can make use of an extensive range of foreign language courses in blended learning format supplemented by a wide variety of self-learning resources.

https://www.ikm.uni-bonn.de/sprachlernzentrum

https://www.schreiblabor.uni-bonn.de

INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

The "**German as a Foreign Language**" department at the University of Bonn's international office is responsible for German language instruction and advice on all associated matters.

https://www.uni-bonn.de/studying/international-students/german?set_language=en

2.6 Additional services for refugee students

On its website, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees offers displaced persons detailed information in the form of an information sheet, an explanatory video and an app.

Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences and the University of Bonn also actively help displaced persons integrate into their studies. There are numerous voluntary refugee initiatives and a central coordination unit at the international office which offer advice, help with integration and funding for language courses. The NRWege ins Studium programme is funded by the Ministry of Culture and Science of the State of NRW and coordinated through the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

You are welcome to come and get advice about language integration, integration into your studies and funding programmes.



FDIS PROGRAMME OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BONN

The FdIS programme offers refugees who are interested in studying the opportunity – free of charge and with very little bureaucracy – to take a "preliminary" course which will prepare them if they decide to study at the University of Bonn later on. This will also help them integrate into everyday student life.

UNIVERSITÄT BONN

https://www.uni-bonn.de/studium/studium-in-bonn-fuer-internationale-studierende/betreuung-auslaendischer-studierender/foerderung-der-integration-in-das-studium-fdis-en?set_language=en

LINKS

Here you will find information about applying for asylum and the protection offered to refugees:
https://www.bamf.de/EN/Themen/AsylFluechtlingsschutz/asylfluechtlingsschutz-node.html

Hier finden Sie die Angebote der H-BRS für geflüchtete Menschen:
https://www.h-brs.de/en/program-wege-ins-studium-refugees-interested-studying-bonn-rhein-sieg-university-applied-sciences

3. After your studies – the next steps

3.1 Starting a career in Bonn and the Rhein-Sieg district

If you decide to take up permanent employment after you finish your degree, the first step is to look for a job. If you are interested in a specific company, it is a good idea to search the company's website for job vacancies. However, if you are open and flexible with regard to potential employers, your best option is to search online job portals for advertised job vacancies that match your qualifications and the job you are looking for.

Websites such as the "Stellenwerk" job portal offered by Bonn-Rhein-Sieg, the "Berufsstart" job portal offered by the University of Bonn and the job boards of the "Studierendenwerk" student support association and the Federal Employment Agency can help you on your search for a job. You can also search for a job and actively approach companies at the **career fairs** mentioned above (see 2.2).

LINKS

Overview of numerous German job portals with their areas of focus
https://berufszentrum.de/artikel_0804.html

Detailed information about careers, admission requirements, descriptions of work and job prospects
https://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufenet

You can use the JOBBÖRSE to make targeted searches for jobs in Germany and abroad, look for training vacancies, create and maintain an applicant profile, put together an entire application folder and apply for jobs online:
https://jobboerse.arbeitsagentur.de

STELLENWERK

H-BRS job portal

stellenwerk
jobportal hochschule bonn-rhein-sieg

https://www.stellenwerk-bonn-rhein-sieg.de/en

BERUFSSTART

Job portal of the University of Bonn

Berufsstart

https://jobportale-bonn.de/ubcc/



3.1.1 YOUR APPLICATION

Once you have found a job advertisement or a company which you could see yourself working for, the first step is to prepare your application documents and submit them to the company.

The PDF file linked below contains information on the best way to create a good set of application documents.

In Germany, written applications are sent digitally by e-mail or uploaded to the company's website in PDF format. Nowadays, application folders are only rarely sent by post. Get all the information you need about the application process in advance from the website of the company you would like to apply to.



In general, you should consider the following in your application and CV:

CHECKLISTE

- ✓ Cover letter including your reason for applying and your signature
- ✓ CV including your education and career path to date, a photo, your signature and the date
- ✓ Certificates and references (copies only); copies must be certified and translated into German if necessary
- ✓ Correct name of the company and contact
- ✓ No typing errors
- ✓ Professional-sounding e-mail address (forename.surname@...)



3.1.2 THE INTERVIEW

If the potential employer likes your application, the custom in Germany is to invite you to an interview. Being invited to an interview means that you have a good chance of being appointed and that the company is seriously interested in you as a potential employee. Good, thorough preparation is therefore essential. Take plenty of time to prepare yourself and find out about the company. The PDF file linked below contains a few tips on how best to get ready for your interview.

3.1.3 ASSESSMENT CENTER

In some cases, companies may use assessment centres when recruiting staff. Assessment centres often last a whole day or even several consecutive days.

The company's main goal when holding assessment centres is to find out more about your personality and expertise by having you perform various exercises and tasks. They also want to find out how you behave towards other people and how you deal with stressful, challenging situations.



LINKS

Application tips for the German job market:
https://berufsstart.de/personalsuche/medien/Berufsstart-Bewerbung.pdf

Here you will find a PDF file which tells you what you need to consider in your application, interview and assessment centre if you are to be successful:
https://www.h-brs.de/files/related/leitfaden_fuer_eine_erfolgreiche_bewerbung_deutsch.pdf

3.2 Doctoral studies

The doctorate is the highest academic degree that a university can confer. In Germany, there is a wide range of excellent opportunities to study for a doctoral degree. Doctoral studies require intensive focus on a specific topic or research project. In principle, a distinction is made between individual doctorates and structured doctorates.

Before applying for a doctoral post, you should therefore consider which of these suits you best: an individual doctorate guided by a doctoral supervisor or a post as a doctoral student in a structured doctoral programme.

You should also contact the university of your choice in good time to find out about the application process, how your doctoral project will proceed, and the formal **requirements** for obtaining a doctorate. Besides receiving supervision at a traditional university, it is also possible to work on a doctoral project at Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg or other universities of applied sciences. As well as cooperating with a university partner on your doctoral project, it will also be possible to obtain a doctorate through the doctoral college for applied research in NRW, in which H-BRS will also be involved.

If you are interested in doctoral studies, you can contact the Dean's offices, the doctoral offices, the international office or the graduate centres at the universities for advice.

Doctoral studies are usually funded by grants, subsidy programmes or employment opportunities at the university.



LINKS

Bonn Graduate Center:
https://www.uni-bonn.de/research/argelander-program/about-the-bonn-graduate-center?set_language=en

Graduate Institute of Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences:
https://www.h-brs.de/en/gi

Graduate Institute NRW:
http://www.gi-nrw.de

Research in Germany:
https://www.research-in-germany.org/de/karriere-in-der-forschung/infos-fuer-doktoranden.html

DAAD
https://www.daad.de/en/study-and-research-in-germany/phd-studies-and-research/

3.3 Starting a company

In Germany, EU citizens, Swiss citizens and people from countries in the European Economic Area enjoy so-called “freedom of establishment” and “freedom of trade”. If you are a citizen of a non-EU country and want to become self-employed and start up your own company, you can obtain a special residence permit for this purpose. In order to obtain this residence permit, you have to fulfil certain criteria, e.g. by presenting a business plan, providing proof of your language skills and insurance cover, and undergoing a plausibility check to determine whether your business idea is viable.

You are required to submit an application to commence gainful self-employment at the immigration office responsible for your place of residence. If your application is successful, you can put your idea into practice and take the next step of starting your own business. Getting support can be very helpful during the early stages. H-BRS helps its students take their first steps towards becoming self-employed.

The following services will help you start up your own company:

BUSINESSCAMPUS RHEIN-SIEG

BusinessCampus Rhein-Sieg is a centre promoting the start-up, settlement and growth of new companies in the Rhein-Sieg district and the science region of Bonn.It offers business support services for all phases of company development and puts users in touch with regional business contacts. The BusinessCampus also provides access to offices, laboratories and conference rooms.

Business Campus Rhein-Sieg GmbH

https://www.businesscampus-rhein-sieg.de/portraet





CENTIM – CENTRE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP, INNOVATION AND SME

CENTIM is your knowledge partner for questions relating to starting a company, innovation management and managing SME. CENTIM offers activities for developing practice-oriented academic teaching, research, continuing education and consulting.

https://www.centim.org/centim.html

CITY OF BONN – BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, BUSINESS SERVICE CENTRE

Individual advice for new entrepreneurs, contact Gertrud Hennen

https://www.bonn.de/vv/produkte/Individuelle_Beratungen_fuer_Existenzgruender_und_Existenzgruenderinnen_.php

BONNPROFITS

BonnProfits helps people with skills, knowledge and ideas take their first steps towards becoming self-employed. It offers information, advice and events which focus specifically on start-up entrepreneurs in Bonn who are active in knowledge-intensive areas such as IT and the communications and technology industries. Besides providing individual advice, they also organise events for start-ups or new companies in the development phase, presentations, workshops and network meetings. Offered by the City of Bonn's business development office and Sparkasse KölnBonn.

https://www.bonnprofits.de

GRÜNDUNGSAKADEMIE RHEIN-SIEG

Gründungsakademie (Start-Up Academy) Rhein-Sieg aims to encourage people interested in starting their own business, new companies and people who have been self-employed for years to realise their start-up ideas or develop their companies and make them competitive.

https://www.rhein-sieg-kreis.de/wirtschaft-bildung/wirtschaftsfoerdeung/gruendungsakademie.php





ENACOM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BONN

enaCom is the central service unit which subsidises all transfer activities at the University of Bonn and fosters a transfer culture in all areas university-wide. The "Knowledge Transfer and Property Rights" unit of the Research and Transfer department offers personal initial consultations for staff and students at the University of Bonn.

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https://www.uni-bonn.de/research/office-for-research/7.2-knowledge-transfer-and-intellectual-property-rights/options-for-entrepreneurs-at-the-university-of-bonn?set_language=en

LINKS

This internet platform provides support for international students, academics and professionals who wish to start a business in Germany:
https://www.wir-gruenden-in-deutschland.de

Information on joining the German job market as a self-employed person for people from non-EU countries

http://docplayer.org/72667174-Selbstaendigkeit-aufenthg-weg-weiser-durch-den-dschungel-des-aufenthaltsrechtes.html

Information from the City of Bonn on starting a company
https://www.bonn.de/themen-entdecken/wirtschaft-wissenschaft/existenzgruendung.php

Female entrepreneurs and women in top management positions give advice on starting a company
https://beraterinnennetzwerk.de

4. Legal matters after graduation

4.1 Residence permit

Once you have successfully completed your studies in Germany, you may be able to obtain a residence title on submitting the appropriate application.

RESIDENCE PERMIT FOR SEEKING EMPLOYMENT AFTER COMPLETING YOUR STUDIES (SECTION 16 PAR. 5 RESIDENCE ACT (AUFENTHG))

A residence permit of this type can only be issued for up to 18 months immediately following your studies.

Requirements:

- ✓ You must have evidence that you have completed your studies successfully
- ✓ Your subsistence must be secure
- ✓ You may accept any employment in order to cover the cost of living

If you have received a suitable job offer, contact the competent immigration office and an application for a residence permit for employment purposes will be issued.



RESIDENCE PERMIT FOR COMMENCING DOCTORAL STUDIES

Your residence permit will be extended when you present your enrolment certificate. You may also pursue doctoral studies in a company, and you are permitted to take up employment (for example as a research assistant) while doing so.

RESIDENCE PERMIT FOR RESEARCHERS (SECTION 20 AUFENTHG)

Requirements:

✓ The research institution has issued an admission agreement

Once the research project is complete, your residence permit can be extended for up to nine months so that you can seek employment.

RESIDENCE PERMIT FOR EMPLOYMENT PURPOSES (SECTION 18 PAR. 4 S. 1 AUFENTHG)

In order to obtain a residence permit, your employment must be commensurate with your degree. If you have a degree in economics, for example, you cannot take up employment in another field. However, no minimum salary is required and your residence permit will be valid for the duration of your employment contract or a maximum of 3 years.



EU BLUE CARD – SECTION 19A AUFENTHG

Requirements:

✓ Your salary must be at least **EUR 55,200 gross per annum** (in 2020)

✓ This minimum salary must come from **one** job (may be part-time)

All academics with a recognised university degree can obtain a residence title known as a "Blue Card". The minimum salary increases every year; however, it is the time at which the Blue Card was issued or extended that is decisive. Current holders of an EU Blue Card are exempt from the minimum salary requirement. The new salary threshold must only be reached if you are renewing your Blue Card or if you intend to change your job and require approval to do so.

The Blue Card is valid for four years or until the date on which the holder's employment contract expires plus three months. If you wish to change jobs during this period, you will have to obtain permission from the immigration office.

Exception: shortage occupations

If you start work in one of the **STEM professions**, your minimum salary must be at least **EUR 43,056 per annum**. The STEM professions encompass mathematics, engineering, natural sciences, computer science/IT and medicine.

Advantages of holding a Blue Card in the EU

The Blue Card is valid for four years or until the date on which your employment contract expires plus three months. After notifying the immigration office, it is also possible to spend up to twelve months abroad without your Blue Card becoming invalid.

Once you have had a Blue Card for at least 18 months, you are free to travel to any other EU member state without a visa.

ISSUE OF A PERMANENT SETTLEMENT PERMIT (UNLIMITED RESIDENCE TITLE) (SEC. 18 B AUFENTHG)

In order to acquire a permanent settlement permit, you must have held a residence permit of the type described in sections 18, 19a or 21 AufenthG for a minimum of two years. Your subsistence must be guaranteed, and you must have paid pension insurance contributions for 24 months. You are also required to have an adequate **knowledge of German** (at least level B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages – CEFR) and your job must be commensurate with your qualifications. You will then receive a permanent settlement permit, which is a residence title that is valid indefinitely.



LINKS

Use this "online quick check" to review your options if you wish to live and work in Germany
https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/visa/quick-check/

The "Hotline Working and Living in Germany" answers your questions on matters such as immigration, looking for a job, getting your qualifications recognised and much more in German and English
https://www.bamf.de/EN/Service/ServiceCenter/ThemenHotlines/ArbeitenUndLeben/arbeitenundleben.html

4.2 Employment contract

Your interview went well and you've been offered the job? Congratulations! All you have to do now is sign your employment contract. Here there are a few important points to note:



An employment contract usually includes the following; occasionally, reference may merely be made to the corresponding regulations:

- ✓ Your name and address and those of the company
- ✓ Date on which the contract comes into force
- ✓ Term of employment
- ✓ Duration of trial period
- ✓ Place of work and description of tasks
- ✓ Salary and bonuses
- ✓ Working hours and holiday entitlement
- ✓ Periods of notice
- ✓ Existence of collective wage agreements and works agreements

The contract should always be concluded in writing. Read the contract through carefully and ask your company's HR department if there is anything you do not understand.

LINK

Here you will find basic legal information on employment contracts and labour law:
https://www.arbeitsrechte.de/arbeitsvertrag

4.3 The German tax system

As a worker in Germany, you are required to pay income tax. However, if you are employed by a company, you do not have to deal with tax payments yourself; instead, they will be paid automatically every month by your employer.

Income tax, known as Einkommenssteuer or Lohnsteuer, is automatically deducted from your gross salary and forwarded to the tax office every month. Income tax is charged at rates varying from 14 to 45 % depending on how much you earn. The higher your income, the higher the rate of taxation; however, there is a basic tax-free allowance. No tax is charged on any taxable income up to this amount.

After the end of the calendar year, some of the taxes you have paid may be refunded. For this, you have to submit a tax return to the tax office; this usually pays off. You can download tax return forms from your tax office's website, collect them in person or ask an expert (tax consultant) for help.

TAX CLASSES

The amount of income tax you have to pay depends not only on your income but also on other factors such as whether or not you are married. Tax payers are therefore assigned to various tax classes.



LINK

You will find information about current income tax rates and classes here
https://einkommenssteuertabelle.de

4.4 Social and pension insurance in Germany

In Germany, you benefit from a well-developed insurance system which covers employees against risks such as illness, unemployment and accidents at work. When you start a job, you will receive a **social insurance card** with a number which you are required to give to your employer. You will need this number for the rest of your life and should therefore keep it carefully.



As an employee, you will be a member of **five statutory insurance schemes**:

- **Statutory health insurance**: Your statutory health insurance provider will pay the costs of visits to the doctor, (some) medication and other forms of treatment if you fall ill. If you are married and your spouse is not in gainful employment, you can have him/her covered by your health insurance at no extra cost. The same applies to your children.
- **Statutory long-term care insurance**: This provides you with basic security should you become dependent on long-term nursing care, for example due to illness.
- **Statutory unemployment insurance**: Provided you were insured for at least one year during the last two years, the unemployment insurance scheme will safeguard your livelihood by providing an income for certain periods should you become unemployed and be looking for another job. The Federal Employment Agency also helps people find work and offers advice and placements.
- **Statutory accident insurance**: The statutory accidence insurance scheme covers the costs of any medical treatment you may require after a work accident or if you are suffering from an occupational disease.
- **Statutory pension insurance**: If you retire at an advanced age, the statutory pension insurance scheme will pay you a monthly pension. The amount of pension you receive is calculated on the basis of your income and the number of years you worked in Germany.

LINK

You will find information about current social insurance contribution rates here
https://www.imacc.de/sozialversicherungsbeitraege/

4.5 Opportunities for family members

As an international skilled worker or executive, you can bring your spouse and children to Germany provided certain conditions are met. Whether or not they require a special residence permit depends on your nationality. Citizens of EU or EEA member states do not require a special residence permit. If your partner and children are citizens of a country outside the EU, you can apply for a visa for purposes of family reunion.



LINK

Here you will find everything you need to know about bringing your family to Germany – (for EU citizens only)
https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/living-in-germany/family-reunification/spouses-eu-citizens/

We wish you all the best for your career in Germany!