



Hello!

# Welcome to Leipzig

Guidelines for Hiring Foreign Staff  
in the Public Service

These guidelines cover the hiring of foreign staff in public service, in other words people who have come from a country other than Germany and who are to receive a limited (for longer than 3 months) or unlimited employment contract with a public sector employer. The statements made herein do not apply, or apply only partially, if you are paid via another contractual relationship (for example freelance teaching or a fee-based contract) or financed via a scholarship or bursary. Other regulations also apply in some cases where you are to be employed in Germany for less than 3 months.

You should therefore firstly find out what your future employment status is to be, as this will indicate specific conditions and the advice contained within these guidelines may not be at all or only partly relevant to you.

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## How are these guidelines laid out?

The list of documents that are to be completed or presented is compiled using the example of Leipzig University or the State of Saxony as public employer. For each document on the list there are notes regarding its content and purpose and how to complete the forms.

The time frame of the hiring process is also described briefly, so that you are able to plan accordingly and allow sufficient time to clarify all formalities before or directly following your arrival. Because it is important to note here that you will only be able to work and subsequently receive salary after the employment contract has been signed.

So how will the hiring process proceed? What time frame do you need to plan with?

You have successfully applied for a position or received an offer, which you have subsequently accepted. Congratulations! Now the hiring process needs to be initiated by your Human Resources department (for example the Human Resources Department at the university in close co-operation with the respective faculty). This takes time and requires some preparation. As your new employer is a public employer, this process is sometimes a highly complex one. It is necessary to observe all of the rules and regulations that apply to all employees of the state, for example all teachers, policemen, judges and soldiers. Nearly 200,000 people are employed in the public sector in the Free State of Saxony alone. In Germany as a whole there are over 4 million people working for the state in a wide range of professions, and you can undoubtedly imagine that there are many points to be taken into consideration.

As a consequence, there are sometimes questions or requests that may seem exaggerated or inapplicable for your specific new employment. And the amount of forms seems overwhelming at first.

But don't you worry. In these guidelines we explain the meaning of all these documents, what they are for, what you need to fill in and what the consequences of these will be.

## Step by step to the employment contract

What procedure does the hiring process follow, specifically? What steps need to be taken before an offer becomes an employment contract and you can finally begin your work?

Let us begin by taking a look back to the moment in which you accepted the job offer.

It would be nice if an employment contract arrived in the post and you merely had to sign it in order to begin your work. Unfortunately, things are not that simple. In order to prepare the employment contract and specify the right salary bracket, many documents have to first be compiled. A great many. After all, this is Germany.

**Please note:** You can only begin working once the employment contract has been signed. You should therefore start addressing these issues at least 2–3 months prior to your intended starting date. The more you can clarify in advance, the faster you will be able to commence your work after arriving in Germany.

First of all, the Human Resources department will send you a **declaration of intent (Absichtserklärung)**, stating that your future employer (e.g. Leipzig University) intends to hire you. This is not yet an employment contract, but more a kind of invitation. In this invitation it should be stated where and from when or for how long you are to be hired for what activity, and how much salary you are expected to receive. Alternatively, a **hosting agreement (Aufnahmevereinbarung)** ([www.uni-leipzig.de/+1a](http://www.uni-leipzig.de/+1a)) may be concluded if you are to be hired as a **researcher according to section 18 d Residence Act (Aufenthaltsgesetz)**.

With this declaration of intent or hosting agreement you can then apply for all those documents that you require before the actual employment contract can be signed. For example, this also concerns the visa/residence permit, which must be presented before a public employer is able to hire you (also refer to [7 8. Residence permit/visa, where applicable](#) on page 14).

Some of the preparations can or must be already undertaken in your home country. Some you will be required to undertake in the first days following your arrival.

## Prior to arrival

Should you require a visa, this will have to be applied for in your home country.

**Hint:** *Even though you can travel to Germany as a tourist without a visa from some countries or apply for the visa at the border, these visas do not typically entitle you to work in Germany; it is therefore **better to arrive already in possession of a Type D visa (national visa), which expressly permits the commencement of employment.** See also the separate reference regarding 8. Residence permit/visa on page 14.*

At home you should also **collate specific documents** that you require in order to verify your **marital status** (marriage certificate, birth certificates of children, divorce ruling where applicable), **training and education** (proof of school and vocational education as well as academic degree including state examinations) and **previous employment relationships** (employment contracts, references). The individual documents required will be explained in more detail in the following pages. However, please note that originals or certified copies are required of some documents, which you should carry in your hand luggage on your arrival.

If you still have time, it is best to inform yourself about the subject of **health insurance** before coming to Germany, and **choose your health insurer**. Then you can initiate the necessary formalities directly after your arrival and will have health insurance cover right from the start. After all, with the stress of a move it is not unlikely that people need to visit a doctor. You should therefore make your decision beforehand to ensure that your employer can register you with the health insurer of your choice on the first day and that you have adequate cover right from the beginning.

## First steps in Germany

The visa has been issued, the flight booked, you have finally arrived in Germany and found (temporary) accommodation. What happens next?

The **Human Resources department** will first provide you with a long list of forms and documents that you are required to submit. For some of these you will be given a **form to fill in**. For some you will have to **bring the original documents with you from home**. Some of these will need to be translated if they have not been issued in German or English. Some documents will be drawn up on site by the Human Resources department, with your signature confirming your instruction. Other documents will first have to be obtained/applied for from another authority. Some should be attended to as quickly as possible (such as the registration at the resident services office (Bürgerbüro), registration with a health insurer, the opening of a bank account, application for a residence permit), others can wait a few weeks (for example the choice of contract for the company pension, the application for child benefits). Not all documents are required for every new employee, as each person and case is individual.

That sounds like a lot of work. But don't worry. With the right preparation everything is quickly sorted out and you can soon begin your work. Nevertheless, if you are coming from abroad you should arrive a little earlier if possible and allow a few days for visiting all authorities and completing all the paperwork.

Just how much time this will require depends on your personal prerequisites. For example, someone travelling from a state outside of the EU will need to allow time to apply for a visa and/or a residence permit, which an EU citizen will not have to do.

In any case, you will require accommodation, with the address of which you can register yourself in Germany. This is the prerequisite for a number of other procedures (for example the issuing of a tax ID, the granting of a residence permit or opening of a bank account). So, before leaving for Germany you should arrange for temporary accommodation where you can live for the initial period. Your new colleagues and the Welcome Centre or International Office of your research establishment will assist you in finding an **apartment** and conclude a **lease/rental agreement**.

Once you have moved into the apartment and your name is on the letterbox, one of your first trips will be to the [↗ resident services office \(Bürgerbüro\)](#) ([www.english.leipzig.de/services-and-administration/bureaus-offices-and-other-facilities/resident-services-offices/](http://www.english.leipzig.de/services-and-administration/bureaus-offices-and-other-facilities/resident-services-offices/)), where you officially register yourself and your family as Leipzig residents. As proof of this you will receive a **registration certificate (Anmeldebescheinigung)**.

And as you are at the resident services office anyway, you should also apply for a [↗ certificate of conduct \(Führungszeugnis\)](#), as this will save you a further trip to the resident services office. Registration will also see you granted a [↗ tax ID](#) ([www.uni-leipzig.de/+1e](http://www.uni-leipzig.de/+1e)), which will be mailed to you within the first two weeks, if you have not lived in Germany before. If you have lived in Germany before and no longer know your tax ID, please enquire about this at the resident services office. The staff there will be able to notify you of your tax ID.

Your next step should be to go to a **bank or savings bank (Sparkasse)**, where you can use your newly-acquired registration certificate, your passport and your employment contract or declaration of intent to **open a bank account**. It is best to make an appointment in advance with a member of staff who speaks English, as opening an account takes about an hour and the bank employee will have to plan this time. You can, of course, open an [↗ online bank account](#), too.

If you are one of those who require a visa or **residence permit**, the next step will be getting in touch with the **Foreigners' Authority**. Please contact the [↗ Welcome Centre](#) at your research institution to contact the AKZESS department of the Foreigners' Authority. Your contact person at the Foreigners' Authority will email you a list of documents that you need to submit. Please assemble your documents in a single PDF file, which will be sent to the Foreigners' Authority via the Welcome Centre. On the website of the [↗ Foreigners' Authority](#) ([www.english.leipzig.de/youth-family-and-community/foreign-nationals-and-migrants/foreigners-authority%23c69178](http://www.english.leipzig.de/youth-family-and-community/foreign-nationals-and-migrants/foreigners-authority%23c69178)) you will also find an overview of the required documents. After the Foreigners' Authority in Leipzig has received and checked all of your documents, you will be asked to come to the Foreigners' Authority for an appointment to have your biometric data (fingerprint) stored and to hand in your biometric passport photo. You will be informed as soon as the residence permit is ready and you can pick it up at the Foreigners' Authority.

But now it is time to begin with the specific preparations for **completing the documents for the employment contract**. Are you ready? Then head off to the Human Resources department of your research establishment. As we are not familiar with your specific case, we have listed everything that you may need. In many cases not all of the documents are required. Your Human Resources department will tell you what is required for hiring you in your specific case.

So what does this list of necessary documents look like?

## Documents required for hiring

(the *underlined* documents are given to you by the HR department as leaflets or forms to be filled in). The sequence and number of documents listed on the cover sheet may vary depending on your HR administrator.

1.  Personnel form with photo
2.  Tabular CV with signature
3.  Marriage certificate, birth certificates of children, divorce ruling where applicable (as a rule in German, in exceptional cases in English) as **originals or certified copies**
4.  Proof of school and vocational education as well as academic degree including state examinations as **originals or certified copies**, (original in English, otherwise German translation)
5.  Verification of previous employment relationships (original in English, otherwise German translation)
6.  Where applicable, proof of service in the German military or alternative civilian service
7.  Where applicable, certificate of leave issued by the previous employer
8.  Where applicable, residence permit/visa
9.  Where applicable, severe disability card
10.  Social security number
11.  Certification of membership of a statutory health insurance fund/substitute fund (German health insurer is obligatory)
12.  Questionnaire on the examination of duty to insure with the federal and state retirement fund (VBL)
13.  Application for exemption from compulsory VBL insurance (including notice of receipt)
14.  Payment transactions declaration
15.  Personnel form for the ascertainment of data for payroll accounting
16.  Application for recognition of periods of work
17.  Notification of collective agreement cut-off periods
18.  Application for payment of capital-forming payments (following conclusion of banking contract)
19.  Where applicable, application for child benefit (where entitlement exists you will receive the form at Familienkasse or as online form)
20.  Instruction on the degree of unlawfulness of corruption and its consequences under public sector employment law and criminal law (corruption prevention administrative directive and the instructions of the Saxon State Ministry of the Interior on the prohibition of accepting rewards and gifts and confirmations of receipt enclosed)
21.  Instruction regarding loyalty to the constitution
22.  Record of the formal obligation of individuals who are non-tenured civil servants
23.  Declaration of obligation pursuant to § 6 Saxon Data Protection Act (Sächsisches Datenschutzgesetz)
24.  Police certificate of conduct, document type O (application at resident services office, sent directly to the respective clerk at Human Resources office) or receipt for the application for a police certificate of conduct
25.  Form for the pre-employment medical examination (please make appointment for the examination with the company medical service)
26.  Where applicable, Information leaflet for fixed-term employment in accordance with Section 14 Paragraph 2 of the Part-time and Temporary Employment Act

Sounds complicated, doesn't it? Let us take a closer look at the list here.

Some documents are thematically linked. If the content is compiled in accordance with these subject groups, the list no longer looks so intimidating. There are four different categories. Some of them can be completed very quickly from home with the right preparation.

Sorting through these aspects, we come up with four smaller “stacks”. (the underlined documents are given to you by the HR department as leaflets or forms to be filled in)

## Document block A General information regarding personal details, family circumstances and your career

Easy to fill in, because you are familiar with your life thus far and have all of the documents at home. Some of the verifying documents have to be brought with you from abroad!

1.  Personnel form with photo
2.  Tabular CV with signature
3.  Marriage certificate, birth certificates of children, divorce ruling where applicable (as a rule in German, in exceptional cases in English) as **originals or certified copies**
4.  Proof of school and vocational education as well as academic degree including state examinations as **originals or certified copies** (original in English, otherwise German translation)
5.  Verification of previous employment relationships (original in English, otherwise German translation)
6.  Where applicable, proof of service in the German military or alternative civilian service
7.  Where applicable, certificate of leave issued by the previous employer
8.  Where applicable, residence permit/visa
9.  Where applicable, severe disability card

## Document block B Documents relating to integration into the German social security system

These documents take longer to prepare, as you have freedom of action here and you have to make decisions that require preparation. Some documents need to be applied for if you are in Germany for the first time.

10.  Social security number
11.  Certification of membership of a statutory health insurance fund /substitute fund (German health insurer is obligatory)
12.  Questionnaire on the examination of duty to insure with the federal and state retirement fund (VBL)
13.  Application for exemption from compulsory VBL insurance (including notice of receipt)

## Document block C Documents of relevance for the amount or payment of the salary

These documents are quickly filled in as soon as you have opened a bank account.

14.  Payment transactions declaration
15.  Personnel form for the ascertainment of data for payroll accounting
16.  Application for recognition of periods of work
17.  Notification of collective agreement cut-off periods
18.  Application for payment of capital-forming payments (following conclusion of banking contract)
19.  Where applicable, application for child benefit (where entitlement exists you will receive the form at the Human Resources office)

## Document block D General documents and legal instructions relating to the fact that you will be working for a public employer

Once you have informed yourself on the relevant subjects, these documents can be signed quickly.

20.  Instruction on the degree of unlawfulness of corruption and its consequences under public sector employment law and criminal law (corruption prevention administrative directive and the instructions of the Saxon State Ministry of the Interior on the prohibition of accepting rewards and gifts and confirmations of receipt enclosed)
21.  Instruction regarding loyalty to the constitution
22.  Record of the formal obligation of individuals who are non-tenured civil servants
23.  Declaration of obligation pursuant to § 6 Saxon Data Protection Act (Sächsisches Datenschutzgesetz)
24.  Police certificate of conduct, document type O (application at resident services office, sent directly to the respective clerk at Human Resources office) or receipt for the application for a police certificate of conduct
25.  Form for the pre-employment medical examination (please make appointment for the examination with the company medical service)
26.  Where applicable, Information leaflet for fixed-term employment in accordance with Section 14 Paragraph 2 of the Part-time and Temporary Employment Act

**Hint:** Make copies before submitting the forms. The same questions will be asked again in the case of amendments or contract extensions. This will save you having to look up the information again.

➤ At **Speicherwolke** of Leipzig University you can find translated versions into English of many of the documents. Please note that they serve only as a help for **filling in the German forms**.

Let us take a closer look at each of those different groups of documents.





# Document block A: **General information regarding personal details, family circumstances and your career**

Personnel form (Personalbogen) with photo .....	10
Tabular CV with signature .....	11
Marriage certificate, birth certificates of children, divorce ruling .....	11
Proof of school and vocational education as well as academic degree including state examinations .....	12
Verification of previous employment relationships .....	12
Proof of service in the German military or alternative civilian service .....	13
Certificate of leave from the previous employer .....	13
Residence permit/visa, where applicable .....	14
Severe disability card .....	18

# General information regarding personal details, family circumstances and your career

This block can be completed quickly if you have the necessary personal data on hand. Don't forget to bring the specified certificates or other forms of verification (such as former employment contracts) with you from abroad.

This group of documents includes:

## 1. Personnel form (Personalbogen) with photo

The personnel form is the key element of this document block. This form provides your future employer with all relevant personal information about you. Your employer would like to get the full picture of who you are, which is why you should also include a photo with the form. Question block I enquires about name, address, contact details and nationality. A number of questions concern your marital status and children and spouse, where relevant. These details are relevant for the residence permit, for example, or when applying for child benefit. When choosing the right health insurer it may also be of relevance whether you are bringing family members with you to Germany.

**Hint:** On the following pages it is explained once again in detail which important personal documents you need to bring with you from home as verification for this. Please refer to sections 3, 4 and 5.

Question block II of the questionnaire concerns your schooling and professional training, as well as particular skills and capabilities that you have acquired at further training events or elsewhere.

The "Former Employment" section is very important. Here you should enter all previous employers and employment relationships, including periods that you have spent with other **public employers**. These details are **relevant for the amount of your future salary**. Please therefore bring corresponding verification and documentation of this employment with you from home (this could be previous employment contracts or references, see also [5. Verification of previous employment relationships](#) on page 12).

If you have performed military service or alternative civilian service or are severely disabled, please also enter this. Here, too, please enclose the necessary verification where applicable (see also [6. Proof of service in the German military or alternative civilian service, where applicable](#) on page 13 and [9. Severe disability card, where applicable](#) on page 18)

Finally, in the "Comments" section you will be asked if you wish to continue further secondary employment, receive pay from elsewhere or pension payments.

By signing the form you declare that the details you have entered are complete and correct and that you will notify the Human Resources office in writing of any changes. Details provided that you know to be false may constitute grounds for dismissal.

**Hint:** The information refers specifically to the personnel form of Leipzig University. Personnel forms from other public employers have a similar layout. In the case of other public employers, additional details such as bank account details and residence permit may also be requested on the personnel form. In the case of Leipzig University and the State of Saxony as employer these details may be contained in separate forms.

## 2. Tabular CV with signature

You know your life best and are surely able to list your educational and vocational career quickly. Naturally, the details should match those given in the personnel form. Please do not forget to sign the CV.

**Please note:** Some public employers ask that academic/scientific staff provide a separate list of publications.

## 3. Marriage certificate, birth certificates of children, divorce ruling, where applicable

These must be **original documents** with [legalisation or apostille](#) that you **bring with you from home**. These certify your marital status (marriage certificate, divorce ruling) and the relations to your family members (birth certificates of the children). For more information on legalisation and apostille, see our [information flyer](#).

Generally speaking, a **translation into German** is required. Only in exceptional cases are documents issued in English accepted. Documents issued in other languages need to be translated into German by a translator who has been sworn in Germany. Contact addresses can be found in the [list of official translators](#) ([www.justiz-dolmetscher.de/Recherche/en/](http://www.justiz-dolmetscher.de/Recherche/en/)) or in the [“Welcome to Leipzig – Guidelines for Public Authorities”](#) ([www.uni-leipzig.de/a-z](http://www.uni-leipzig.de/a-z)) that lists useful information about what to arrange for before departing to Leipzig on page 4 and the following pages.

**Hint:** Further important documents that you should bring in original form are listed in section 4 and 5. If you are bringing original documents, it is best to carry these in your hand luggage.

If you do not wish to take original documents with you when travelling, then you should bring copies officially attested in your home country (you can ask where and how to do this at the Germany embassy where you apply for your visa). Some documents, such as **marriage certificates**, must always be provided **as originals**. In addition, it is often necessary to have their authenticity certified in your home country. You should therefore enquire at the German embassy in your home country if confirmation of the authenticity of the documents is required via **legalisation or apostille**, as these processes may require additional time.

**Hint:** If you wish to use documents/certificates abroad, in many cases these will only be recognised if their authenticity is determined in the form of an attestation. There are two internationally-recognised procedures for this:

The **legalisation of documents** and the **apostille**. Legalisation is the confirmation of authenticity of a foreign document by the consular officials of the state in which the document is to be used. For documents from many states legalisation is not required due to international law treaties, or is replaced with the “Hague Apostille”.

Like legalisation, the “Hague Apostille” confirms the authenticity of a document. However, in contrast to legalisation, it is issued by a designated authority of the state issuing the document. The involvement of the consular officials of the state in which the document is to be used is then no longer necessary.

For additional information please refer to: [Legalisation and Apostille](#) ([www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Laenderinformationen/01-Laender/Konsularisches/UrkundenverkehrTeilA.html](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Laenderinformationen/01-Laender/Konsularisches/UrkundenverkehrTeilA.html))

## 4. Proof of school and vocational education as well as academic degree including state examinations

This includes school-leaving or graduation certificates (e.g. A-level certificates or High School Diploma), vocational training certificates and all graduation certificates from universities and colleges, such as diplomas, bachelor's or master's degrees, PhDs etc.

**Originals in English** are recognised for these purposes; **otherwise a translation into the German language done by a translator sworn in Germany** is required.

If you are unsure which certificates need to be translated, send a scan to the Human Resources department in advance and ask them if a translation is needed. In the case of certificates dating back further (e.g. A-level certificates) it is possible that a translation is not required, for the most recent qualification (e.g. the master's certificate or the PhD certificate) a translation is generally required. That sounds complicated, but unfortunately it is necessary, as the official language in Germany is German. In addition, not all staff in the HR or pay office speak foreign languages and they must be able to understand and assess these documents. We appreciate your understanding in this.

The Human Resources department will then check if the qualifications that you have obtained abroad are equal to German university qualifications. To do this, they make use of the [ANABIN](#) database, for example. You can also check this before you leave for Leipzig. If your educational institution and your exact qualification are not listed there, you can expect delays, because then it will have to be checked on a case-by-case basis by another authority ([Zentralstelle für ausländisches Bildungswesen – ZAB](#)) whether your qualification can be equated with a German qualification. **You must then arrange for this equivalence assessment, which is subject to a fee.** Until your degree has been checked, you can initially be employed at a lower salary level (E12 - as a research assistant without a (scientific) university degree). If the ZAB certifies equivalence, you can be retroactively upgraded to pay group 13 at the time of employment. The difference will then be paid to you retrospectively for the months of your employment to date upon request.

**Please submit your objection to the classification in a lower salary grade in [writing to the HR Department](#). Until your qualification has been checked by ZAB, you will be put into a lower salary bracket.**

**Hint:** Don't forget to pack the original qualification documents in your (hand) luggage!

## 5. Verification of previous employment relationships

These documents are also extremely important, as the collective pay agreements of public employers determine [the classification in salary brackets](#) and therefore the amount of salary partially on the basis of the duration of comparable employment in the past. It is therefore important to verify as precisely as possible how long you have worked for a comparable employer in Germany or abroad.

It is best if you bring your previous employment contracts or references with you to Germany (but please note that **this only applies for employment with an employment contract, not for scholarships or freelance work**). In these verification documents it should be stated precisely what type of employment you exercised, how long this lasted and how many hours per week you worked.

**Originals in English** are also recognised for this purpose; **otherwise a translation into the German language** is required.

**Hint:** *If the documents are comprehensive ones, it is best to clarify in advance with the Human Resources department exactly what needs to be translated or if an English original or attested copy is sufficient.*

**Please note:** *Without suitable verification previous periods of employment cannot be recognised, which may result in classification in a lower salary bracket!*

## 6. Proof of service in the German military or alternative civilian service, where applicable

If you have served in the **German military or performed alternative civilian service**, please enter this in the personnel form and enclose a corresponding document.

Recognition of such service may influence the employment period and therefore your classification, if the service was performed **immediately prior** to this new employment. This may result in advantages later with regard to employment milestones or the payment of sickness benefit supplements.

If you are coming directly from abroad prior to taking up this new employment, then you are not generally required to do anything here.

**Please note:** *Time served in the military of foreign countries does not need to be verified.*

## 7. Certificate of leave from the previous employer, where applicable

If you have already worked for another **German** employer this year prior to this job, please ask this employer to issue you with a **certificate of leave** as per section 6 para. 2 of the Federal Leave Act (BUrIG) when ending the employment relationship.

This serves to inform the subsequent employer about leave granted or compensated in the current calendar year, so that he can assess how much leave should now be granted to the new employee, ruling out duplication. The reason for this is that you are only entitled to a specific number of leave days per calendar year and the new employer may only grant you the leave days that you have not yet taken with your former employer.

The certificate of leave should contain the following details:

- › Personal details of employee (name etc.)
- › The calendar year for which it is issued
- › The time period in which the employment relationship existed
- › The amount of leave entitlement in this calendar year
- › Time periods in which leave was granted and taken
- › The number of days for which payment in lieu was made

## 8. Residence permit/visa, where applicable

This is another very important issue. In order to be able to live and work in Germany, many employees from abroad require a corresponding permit. As a rule, this is an **entry visa (with a period of validity of 3-12 months)** valid for the first 90 days and issued by the German embassy in your home country, which can then be converted into a longer-term **residence permit** where required by the responsible Foreigners' Authority. For an [overview on potential residence permits](#) please refer to the download section on [welcome-to-leipzig.de](#).

**Please note:** Be careful to ensure that the visa is a Type D visa. If you are only coming to Germany **for up to one year**, ask the embassy to issue the visa **for the entire period of residence**. D visas can also be issued in your home country for up to a maximum duration of 12 months (as a sticker in your passport), so that the application for a residence permit in Germany may no longer be necessary, if the research period does not exceed this time period.

Your country of origin determines whether you need an entry visa or residence permit at all. If you are a citizen of an EU state or from Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway, you can generally skip to the next section. You can reside in Germany without special permission and also work here according to the [Freedom of Movement Act](#) (Freizügigkeitsgesetz, [http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch\\_freiz\\_gg\\_eu/index.html](http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch_freiz_gg_eu/index.html)).

**Hint:** As a citizen of certain other preferred states (Australia, USA, Canada, Israel, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, United Kingdom) you can travel to Germany without a visa as a tourist and then apply for the necessary residence permit/work permit required to begin work with the respective Foreigners' Authority in your place of residence.

However, please note that you can only work **with an employment contract after a visa or residence permit with explicit permission for employment has been granted**. It is therefore important that you clarify the status of your planned employment (employment contract, fee-based contract or scholarship/bursary) in advance and, in the case of an employment contract, procure a Type D visa (national visa) with authorisation to begin work prior to leaving your home country. This is the only way you will be able to **start working from the very first day**.

If this is too complicated for you or if the German embassy in your home country rejects the application with reference to the possibility of visa-free travel to Germany, then you should come to Leipzig at least four weeks prior to your planned work starting date, as this process requires a certain amount of time.

Note: The Ordinance on Employment (BeschV) only provides for exceptions in cases of employment that fall under § 5 BeschV (these exclude research activities according §18d) **and that are exercised for less than 90 days within 12 months**. No residence permit is required for such activities.

**Please note:** You can generally find out about the prerequisites for the granting of a visa for long-term stays or stays that entitle gainful employment on the [↗ website of the Federal Foreign Office \(www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/visa-service/visabestimmungen-node\)](#), as only here will you find legally-binding statements on the subject.

As a rule, stays of longer than three months or stays that lead to the commencement of gainful employment require visas for foreigners. Exceptions to this, as stated above, are EU citizens and citizens of the EEA (citizens from Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway). Swiss nationals enjoy special terms, but also require a residence card.

Beyond this, only citizens of Australia, Israel, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, the United States of America and the United Kingdom may obtain a required **residence permit** (including the permission to commence work) directly from the Foreigners' Authority **after having already arrived** to Germany.

**Please note:** For periods of study (without gainful employment) there are also bilateral treaties with further states providing exemption from visa requirement (e.g. Brazil); in case of doubt, it is worth enquiring at the [↗ German embassy in your country of residence \(www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/AAmt/Auslandsvertretungen/Uebersicht\\_node.html\)](#).

For all other nationals the following applies: the visa for a longer-term stay must be applied for **prior to arrival** from the diplomatic representation responsible. The agreement of the responsible Foreigners' Authority in Germany is required. This is the Foreigners' Authority of the town in which the foreigner is planning to become a resident. If the agreement of the Foreigners' Authority is required in the visa process, the process may take up to three months, sometimes even longer, as in addition to the Foreigners' Authority further authorities (such as the Federal Employment Agency) are frequently also involved. The diplomatic representation may usually only issue the requested visa when the agreement of the Foreigners' Authority has been granted. Luckily, things are easier for researchers. In the academic/scientific field in particular, section 34 Ordinance on Residence (AufenthV) contains extensive exemptions that render the agreement of the Foreigners' Authority in the visa process unnecessary, if the applicant has not previously lived in Germany, which leads to a significant reduction in the processing time for visas for researchers.

**Please note:** Without a valid residence permit public employers such as the university are unable to sign or extend employment contracts.

In addition, the residence permit must also include the condition that the planned gainful employment is authorised. For the application of the visa/residence permit the Human Resources department issues a so-called declaration of intent, in which it is clearly stated for what time period you are to be hired, for what tasks and for what salary. The same purpose is fulfilled by a so-called [↗ hosting agreement \(www.uni-leipzig.de/+1a\)](#), which is issued when the residence permit as per section 18 d Residence Act (research) is applied for.

Prior to your arrival you should therefore make sure that you apply for the **correct visa**, namely a **Type D national visa, which specifically permits the planned gainful employment or research with employment contract**.

**Please note:** With a visa or residence permit stating the condition “Gainful employment not permitted” (“Erwerbstätigkeit nicht gestattet”) you will definitely not be able to work with an employment contract!

If you aim to be in gainful employment in Germany (i.e. to be employed by a German employer for longer than 3 months with an employment contract), then you will need to apply for a Type D national visa, not a Type C Schengen visa, and not a tourist visa, as these cannot be extended within Germany.

If you are accompanied by family members (spouse, children), it is always best to apply for the visa together at the [German embassy](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/AAmt/Auslandsvertretungen/Uebersicht_node.html) (www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/AAmt/Auslandsvertretungen/Uebersicht\_node.html), even when the family only intends to follow at a later date.

As soon as you are registered with your new address at the resident services office in your new place of residence and have therefore officially relocated your permanent residence to Germany, then responsibility is transferred to the local Foreigners’ Authority at your new place of residence. The Foreigners’ Authority then takes over the procedure from the embassy in your home country and can transform the entry visa issued there during the first 90 days into a long-term residence permit. In most cases this is initially limited to the duration of your planned employment, but may be extended if your employment contract is extended or you conclude a follow-up contract with another German employer. This may be issued as an electronic residence permit (eAT) in the form of a cheque card or – in rare cases – as a sticker in your passport. The residence permit also contains (mostly on a separate green sheet) the permission to undertake a specific employment. If the consent of other authorities (such as the Central Placements Office (ZAV) of the Federal Employment Agency) is required for this work permit, the Foreigners’ Authority will deal with these enquiries internally. Your sole contact is the Foreigners’ Authority and you will receive a one-stop service there.

Conversion into an unlimited settlement permit with unrestricted access to the German labour market usually requires a period of residence of several years in Germany. In exceptional cases (e.g. in the case of proven high qualification) such a settlement permit may be applied for immediately. However, the possession of a doctorate is not in itself sufficient for this. You need to work in a truly distinguished position (e.g. as director or department leader of a research institute or as the holder of a teaching chair).

**Hint:** Please see [“Welcome to Leipzig – A-Z”](http://www.uni-leipzig.de/a-z) (www.uni-leipzig.de/a-z), page 7 ff., to find out where and how you can apply for the residence permit and which documents you will need for this.

Another tip: Before you convert the entry visa into a residence permit ask the staff at your Welcome Centre or International Office for individual advice regarding which purpose of residence is best suited for you. The German residency laws offer various options for researchers from states outside of the EU in particular to come to Germany for a limited period (for example for a PhD or a limited post-doc position) or for the long term.

Depending on the individual situation such as family circumstances, intended duration of stay, the amount of the salary etc. several types of residence permits are available, each of which take different forms and are aimed at different target groups. Due to the complexity of the German residency laws the choice of the most suitable residence permit is often difficult.



Here is an example. You intend to take up a post in the public sector and wish to conclude an employment contract for this. This would be possible, for example,

- › with **section 16 b Studies** (e.g. doctorate with employment contract for a part-time position, subject of course to the maximum working hours stated in the separate sheet not being exceeded),
- › with **section 18 b Professionals with an academic education** (e.g. for language teachers who are not involved in research) or
- › with **section 18 d Research** (subject to your research establishment additionally concluding a so-called [hosting agreement](#) ([www.uni-leipzig.de/+1a](http://www.uni-leipzig.de/+1a)) with you.
- › if specific prerequisites are fulfilled (e.g. a specific minimum income is achieved) then **section 18 g (EU Blue Card)** also comes into question or,
- › in the case of a particularly distinguished position, perhaps even **section 18 c (Settlement Permit for the Highly Qualified)**.

These are a few of the most common reasons that lead to the granting of a residence permit for the scientific target group. However, all of these sections have a specific focus and if you have the option to choose (as is often the case with researchers and sometimes with PhD students) you might also like to consider what your longer-term plans are, as each of these categories has a specific orientation and therefore advantages and disadvantages. Later it is often difficult to switch to a different purpose of residence.

**Section 16 b** relates to **studies**. This could be unfavourable, for example, to a PhD student who wishes to apply for an unlimited residence permit (settlement permit) after receiving their doctorate, as the period of residence with the section 16 b thus far only counts to a limited extent. For doctoral candidates with families section 16 b is also not the best solution, as you would also not be entitled to benefits such as child benefit or parental benefit and it is more complicated for your family to follow you to Germany than with other reasons for residence.

On the other hand, section 16 b allows you to enjoy all of the advantages of being a student enrolled at a university (e.g. reductions in prices for accommodation, meals in the canteen, the use of public transport). There are also advantages if you wish to remain in Germany after having acquired your PhD in order to search for a position. Without the requirement of immediately presenting a follow-up contract you could remain in Germany following receipt of your doctorate for a further 18 months whilst **looking for a job**, subject to proof of your own financial means, as pursuant to section 20 para. 1. Residence Act the binding of foreign graduates to Germany via transition to an employment residence is a specific goal of the legislator. (After two more years of such an employment, it is possible to apply for a settlement permit, for example if you have completed your PhD in Germany.)

If you are to be hired with an employment contract, for example as a PhD student, and you intend to bring or start a **family**, then the residence permit as per **section 18 d (Research)** would certainly offer a number of advantages, as it permits your spouse to travel to Germany immediately without German language skills and also to work in Germany immediately. With the researcher paragraph 18 d you would also be entitled to state benefits such as child benefit and parental benefit. The time period that you may remain in Germany to search for employment (**§20 jobsearch**) following the ending of your contract is limited to 18 months, as well. However, the form your PhD takes is key in deciding whether the residence permit according to section 18 d is at all possible for you. In some cases section 18 d Residence Act excludes PhD students from being granted a residence permit as per section 18 d.

In contrast, **section 18 b professionals with an academic education**, which in the academic context is only granted to those who teach exclusively, offers the best prospects if a long-term residency is planned for a later stage, as the period of residence with the section 18 b is counted in full when applying for a settlement permit and you are not required to provide proof of a minimum income.

In turn, the **EU Blue Card as per section 18 g** can only be applied for if you have a higher income, although the opportunity to apply for an unlimited settlement permit arises relatively quickly (after 27 or 21 months, depending on your level of proficiency in the German language).

**Section 18 c (Settlement Permit for the Highly Qualified)** is already an unlimited residence permit, however, you are required to overcome high obstacles to obtain it and only people in truly distinguished positions (e.g. as department leader, director of a research institute or holder of a teaching chair) may expect to be granted such a residence permit immediately.

Whichever residence permit you ultimately receive, it must be suitable for conducting the intended activity with an employment contract, which should also be explicitly documented on the separate sheet (“valid for the commencement of work at...”).

As you can see, you have a certain amount of leeway here, too. This [↗ overview](#) provides a good opportunity to find out about the various options available to you: [www.uni-leipzig.de/+11](http://www.uni-leipzig.de/+11).

Naturally, the best thing is to arrange a consultation appointment at your respective [↗ Welcome Centre/ International Office of your research institution](#).

## 9. Severe disability card, where applicable

If you are severely disabled, please enter this in the personnel form and enclose the corresponding document. If you do not have a German severe disability card, you can apply for this from the social support office (Versorgungsamt) or another authority responsible under state law.

**Hint:** A **severe disability card** is an identification card, standard throughout Germany, verifying status as a severely disabled person, the degree of disability and further health-related characteristics that are prerequisites for entitlement to rights and compensatory benefits. The identification card is issued on request by the social support office or another authority responsible under state law. An identity card is only issued above an identified degree of disability (Grad der Behinderung GdB) of at least 50.

It serves as verification of severe disability or for the claiming of rights and compensatory benefits that people with a disability are legally or otherwise entitled to, such as the specific protection against dismissal under labour law, the entitlement to additional leave, benefits with regard to taxation of income or concessions or free transportation by bus and rail.



# Document block B: **Documents relating to the integration into the German social security system**

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Questionnaire on the examination of duty to insure with the federal and state retirement fund (VBL) .....	22
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# Documents relating to integration into the German social security system

We now come to the second group of documents, which require rather more time.

Some documents, such as the **social security number**, need to be applied for if you are in Germany for the first time.

Here, too, you have a certain amount of leeway. You can choose between different providers of a service. This concerns the **choice of health insurer**, for example. In Germany health insurance is compulsory. However, the choice of insurer is up to you. Providing for old-age pensions also permits a degree of leeway. Your employment by a German employer means that you are automatically a member of the statutory German pension insurance fund. In addition, there are also voluntary payments into company pension funds. It is up to you to decide in which form you wish to do this. This requires that you first make yourself familiar with the German social security system in order to be able to make this decision at all. The Human Resources department, the Welcome Centre or International Office of your research establishment will not be able to make these decisions for you; however, they can tell you where you can obtain advice on this subject.

This block of documents includes:

## 10. Social security number

**Social security** is an insurance system in which insured risks of illness, motherhood, nursing needs, accidents at work, occupational illnesses, unemployment, incapacity to work, old age and death are borne jointly by all insured parties. In other words it is not insurance cover for material damage, but mutual cover for all employees for the event that someone is in need and requires this. This is obviously a fine thing and it may be the case that such generous social services are not available in your home country.

With the conclusion of an employment contract you receive automatic access to the German social security system, meaning that you must on the one hand pay contributions to the individual insurance schemes, and on the other hand are entitled to corresponding services wherever you are eligible. In addition to health insurance, these also include unemployment benefits, pension (state pension), nursing care and insurance against accidents at work.

Depending on state or insurance sector, social security insurance is operated by state institutions, public corporations or private corporations.

For all services regarding social security you first **pay contributions, the amount of which is determined by the state** and which your employer deducts directly from your salary and pays to the health insurer, which in turn forwards the sums to the other branches of insurance.

In the Federal Republic of Germany there is unfortunately not a single valid social security number for all social security services. This is for reasons of data protection. Consequently, different insurance numbers are used for health insurance and pension insurance. However, to a certain extent the **pension insurance number** that you are notified of by the pension fund **is used as a social security number**.

As the health insurer co-ordinates the retention of social security contributions, it also organises the issue of a new **social security number** with the **pension insurer** as soon as you commence work in Germany for the first time.

You will then receive a letter from the pension insurer, notifying you of your social security number. You can also ask the health insurer for this number as soon as you have chosen a health insurance fund.

In order to make yourself familiar with the topic pension insurance or to see a sample of a [↗ social security card](#) please refer to [https://www.deutsche-rentenversicherung.de/DRV/EN/Home/home\\_node.html](https://www.deutsche-rentenversicherung.de/DRV/EN/Home/home_node.html).

**Hint:** For data protection reasons, there is no social security number valid for all social security systems in the Federal Republic of Germany, meaning the social security number does not have the function of a generally-valid number as is the case in other states. In other areas you will require additional numbers, for example in tax matters, where a separate tax identification number is issued.

## 11. Certification of membership of a statutory health insurance fund/substitute fund (German health insurer is obligatory)

The health insurance in Germany reimburses the insured party wholly or partially for the costs of therapy in the case of illness, maternity and often also following accidents. Generally speaking, all employees in Germany **MUST** have health insurance cover. There is an **obligation** to insure yourself adequately against health risks. In the case of hiring in public service, it is generally also necessary that the health insurer is a German health insurer (or a health insurer that verifiably covers **all** services, like a German statutory health insurance provider).

As previously mentioned, the health insurer plays a particular role in the German social security system, as your employer deducts all social security contributions and pays them to the health insurer, who in turn distributes them to other state insurers.

You should therefore select a health insurance provider as quickly as possible. There is a wide range of **statutory health insurance providers**, to which you will automatically have access through the conclusion of an employment contract with a salary exceeding the marginal earnings threshold. All members of the state health insurance system have a free choice of health insurer. However, making a choice is often difficult. The right choice of insurer can depend on age, individual living circumstances and health situation. Those who are young, healthy and flexible can save a lot of money with a clever choice of insurer and the right tariff or bonus programme. Older people, the chronically ill or people with health-related limitations should pay more attention to factors such as local availability, customer service and particular ranges of treatment. The availability of service staff speaking foreign languages can for instance be a key selection criterion for foreign scientists in particular.

Under certain conditions, the statutory health insurance even offers **free of charge insurance coverage for family members**, for example for children and non-working spouses.

Nearly 90 percent of all health insurance services are regulated in standardised form by the legislative. Administrative discretion is only available for the remaining 10 percent. Similarly, all payments that you are required to make, such as those for pharmaceuticals, dressings, devices and medicaments, travel expenses, hospital and dental prostheses costs are statutorily regulated and therefore the same for all statutory health insurers.

The **amount of the contributions deducted is set by the state** and therefore theoretically comparable, too (at the moment it is 14.6 percent of your income whereof 7.3 percent is covered by the employer).

However, the different health insurance providers have the right to levy **supplemental contributions** which only have to be borne by the employee. To which extent they make use of this right is up to them (for more detailed information in German please also [↗ refer to](#) [www.abc-der-krankenkassen.de/beitragssaetze.htm](http://www.abc-der-krankenkassen.de/beitragssaetze.htm)).

**Hint:** If your **salary is above the statutorily-determined annual income threshold**, then you can choose between **voluntary insurance in the statutory health insurance system** or a **private health insurer** (this could be the case in salary bracket E14 or the last stage of E13). In the private branch of health insurance it's not the state that specifies the **extent of the contributions** but charges are **based on personal risks of illness** and the **scope of insurance coverage** required by the customer. In some cases you will have to commit to a health exam before a private health insurance provider will accept you. In addition to that, all family members will have to enter into their own contract and pay a separate fee for that contract.

There are many different tariffs for private health insurance plans. Individual charges even might go up in later years.

Please note that the private health insurers have major differences with regard to the scope of services, and therefore also in tariffs. In particular, you should also pay attention to benefit exclusions for existing illnesses/severe disability as well as pregnancy or forthcoming birth at the time of conclusion of the contract. Own deductibles also affect the amount of contributions with private health insurers. Detailed information regarding this is available from the private health insurers. You can also ask the Human Resources department or the Welcome Centre, or International Office of your research establishment about where you can obtain advice regarding this.

For more detailed information in German please [↗ refer to](#) : [www.pkv.de/themen/krankenversicherung/](http://www.pkv.de/themen/krankenversicherung/)

If you search for “comparison of health insurers” ([↗ “Krankenkassenvergleich”](#)) on the internet you can find numerous lists, ratings and comparison tools like for instance [www.krankenkassen.de/gesetzliche-kranken-kassen/gesetzliche-kranken-kassen-im-vergleich/tarife/](http://www.krankenkassen.de/gesetzliche-kranken-kassen/gesetzliche-kranken-kassen-im-vergleich/tarife/).

Your colleagues and the Welcome Centre/International Office can also tell you of their own experience with specific health insurers or provide contacts, thus making it is easier to choose an insurer. However, the decision is ultimately up to you. If you do not choose an insurer, your employer will be forced to register you with a statutory health insurer (for example the Human Resources Department at Leipzig university will pick Allgemeine Ortskrankenkasse – AOK), due to the fact that, as previously mentioned, insurance cover is compulsory in Germany.

For more detailed information in German please [↗ refer to](#) : [www.abc-der-kranken-kassen.de/kassenwahl.htm](http://www.abc-der-kranken-kassen.de/kassenwahl.htm).

## 12. Questionnaire on the examination of duty to insure with the federal and state retirement fund (VBL)

This is another key area in which you have a degree of freedom in the decision-making process: retirement pension.

With the conclusion of an employment contract with a German employer you automatically become a member of the statutory pension insurance scheme ([↗ Deutsche Rentenversicherung](#), [www.deutsche-rentenversicherung.de/Allgemein/en/Navigation/englisch\\_index\\_node.html](http://www.deutsche-rentenversicherung.de/Allgemein/en/Navigation/englisch_index_node.html)).

The contributions for this are automatically deducted from your salary in accordance with the current statutory regulations. If you fulfil the requirements for entitlement and have reached retirement age or become incapacitated for work, then you will be entitled to a state pension under this system.

In addition, your employer also offers you the opportunity to voluntarily do more for your retirement pension with both you and your employer making payments to a company pension fund. These voluntary deductions of pension contributions are managed by the **Versorgungsanstalt des Bundes und der Länder (VBL)**, the federal and state retirement fund. The name “voluntary” suggests that you yourself can decide whether to pay into a company pension fund. However, this is not entirely the case. The voluntary aspect refers not to “whether” you want to pay in, but “how”. Subject to certain conditions, here you can decide what type of contract you would like to make these supplementary payments under.

If you choose membership of the **VBL compulsory insurance scheme**, known as **VBLklassik**, then you are not required to do anything. Your employer will register you with the corresponding insurer and supplement your contributions with their own payments. In addition, the German state also supports this type of retirement pension with extra allowances. In other words, in a way you receive a gift of money each month. However, you should also note that this insurance is linked to specific requirements, for example waiting periods. In addition, once this insurance cover exists, it can no longer be discontinued. If you have already had compulsory insurance cover in Germany with another supplementary pension insurer, then you can also no longer exempt yourself from this type of company pension insurance fund. Different factors also apply depending on whether you are employed in the region East or West.

Using the details provided in this **questionnaire on the examination of duty to insure with the federal and state retirement fund (VBL)** your employer can determine whether this company pension insurance fund should be selected for you, because, for example, you have already been employed by another public employer in Germany and already have a similar insurance which can be converted, or where it is likely that you will be employed for more than 5 years.

You will also be asked if you wish to pay these contributions for the company retirement pension tax-free because in certain cases the employee can decide whether taxes are to be paid now on the contributions or later on the pension.

For more information and videos please refer to [www.vbl.de](http://www.vbl.de) and <https://www.vbl.de/en/vblvideocasts>.

## 13. Application for exemption from compulsory VBL insurance (including notice of receipt)

Employees in academic/scientific employment are typically only hired for short periods of time on limited contracts. Thus, there is frequently no possibility in the compulsory VBL insurance to fulfil the 60 months waiting period required before being entitled to draw the pension.

These employees can consequently exempt themselves from the compulsory insurance with the VBL under certain circumstances and instead pay into another, capital-funded form of the company pension fund, known as **VBLextra**. The advantage of this is that pension can be drawn from this insurance without the requirement of fulfilling a waiting period. [VBL information brochures](#) and videos in various languages can be found at <https://www.vbl.de/en/en-downloadcenter>.

Please also be sure to note here the **differences in the tariff zones West and East**.

**Hint:** Whether you choose the VBL compulsory insurance (VBLklassik) or if the VBLextra is more advantageous for you depends on various factors. Firstly, you can only choose if you have never previously been in a similar compulsory insurance scheme and if you have a limited employment contract for a period of fewer than 5 years. And then it is often sensible to think about what may happen once the current employment contract is ended, for example if it will be extended and

*therefore cross the 5-year employment threshold or if you will move from a public employer in the eastern Länder to a public employer in the western Länder, or if it is already certain that you plan to go abroad again.*

The choice is yours! Find out about it and decide on either VBLklassik or VBLextra. If you choose the latter and therefore reject the VBL compulsory insurance (because you are only set to work for a public employer in Germany for a short period, i.e. fewer than 5 years and also did not have similar insurance previously), then you can use this **form to apply for exemption from the VBL compulsory insurance**. Your employer will then register you with VBLextra. With the confirmation of receipt you confirm that you have been instructed by your employer that you have a choice and that you have been provided with relevant information material.

Sounds complicated? Don't worry. You don't have to decide straight away. You have **2 months from the beginning of employment to choose** one of the two models for a company retirement pension. For further information look at the [🔗 VBL website](http://www.vbl.de) (www.vbl.de).

**Hint:** The entire subject area of “retirement pensions” is a highly complex and at first glance confusing system. The situation soon becomes confusing, especially if claims to pension have already been acquired in different European countries. We therefore recommend that you “clarify” your pension entitlements officially. The [🔗 “Find Your Pension”](http://www.findyourpension.eu) portal (www.findyourpension.eu) offers valuable tips regarding this and also enables contact to the advisers at Deutsche Rentenversicherung and the VBL, who will be able to calculate for you individually what pension entitlements you have acquired thus far from both the state pension system and the supplementary company pension system. Entitlements from other EU states can also be clarified.





# Document block C: **Documents of relevance for the amount or payment of the salary**

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# Documents of relevance for the amount or payment of the salary

In these documents you enter a significant amount of information in a clearly laid-out form.

Our tip: Make copies before submitting the forms. The same questions will be asked again in the case of amendments or contract extensions. This will save you having to look up the information again.

## 14. Declaration regarding payment procedures

With this form you inform your employer where they should pay your salary. Your salary is paid via bank transfer and without an account there is no money.

It is therefore a very important form on the one hand, but on the other one it is very easy to complete. The only thing that you require in order to fill in this form is: a [🔗 German bank account](https://www.uni-leipzig.de/fileadmin/ul/Dokumente/Sl_Willkommen-in-Leipzig-A-Z_en.pdf#page=11) (https://www.uni-leipzig.de/fileadmin/ul/Dokumente/Sl\_Willkommen-in-Leipzig-A-Z\_en.pdf#page=11).

Therefore, as soon as you are officially registered in Germany you should open a current/checking account with a bank or savings bank of your choice as quickly as possible. The bank will then inform you of the international **IBAN** account number and the internationally-valid **BIC** sort code. In addition, you may also receive the standard account number and sort code, which are now only in use in domestic payment transactions. Some banks (such as Deutsche Bank) also issue a branch number, which is only of significance for online access to the respective bank.

**Hint:** The **BIC** (Bank Identifier Code) is an internationally-valid sort code specified by **SWIFT** (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication). As the BIC is issued by SWIFT, it is frequently also referred to as the SWIFT code. Together with the **IBAN** as standard international account number, this represents the data required for the identification of an account in the scope of the **SEPA** (Single Euro Payments Area), in order to clearly identify a recipient in both national and international payment transactions.

If the bank details change at a later date, simply complete this form again and tell your employer when the salary is to be paid to the new account.

The choice of bank is up to you. The Welcome Centre/International Office or your colleagues can detail own experience with a bank or provide a contact to English-speaking staff. There are many banks and savings banks in your area which offer similar products in the field of current/checking accounts. Some offer special conditions subject to specific prerequisites, such as free banking. Ultimately, the decision regarding which bank to choose is yours to make.

**Hint:** As soon as you have opened an account the bank will send you a number of important documents by post. There will typically be 2–4 letters, as a number of items have to be sent separately for security reasons. For example, the bankcard (which can be used to withdraw money from cash dispensers/ATMs and which is also a key form of payment in non-cash payments) and the accompanying PIN as well as a separate PIN for online banking and possibly a list with TANs (transaction numbers) will be sent to you. If you have also ordered a credit card, the card and access data will also be sent separately in this case. This typically occurs a few days after you have opened the account. You will save yourself additional effort if you ensure that your name is clearly indicated on your letter box from the first day onwards. Because if the postman is unable to locate your letter box, or if only 2 of the 4 letters arrive, then you will have to apply for the cards or PINs again, which will lose a lot of time.

## 15. Personnel form for the ascertainment of data for payroll accounting

You need this form because your employer is an entire federal state. There is therefore an office, the [State Office for Tax and Finances](#) ([www.lsf.sachsen.de/](http://www.lsf.sachsen.de/)), which undertakes payment transactions for all the various public employers such as universities and research establishments. To ensure that the so-called pay office knows what you know and what your Human Resources department also already knows, with the details on this form you provide the office that actually pays your salary with the necessary information for this. Payment is not possible without this information. So take a little time to work through this form.

Firstly you need to do your homework and choose a **health insurer**, as well as finding out your **social security number** together with **tax ID number** and **tax bracket**.

In point I you are first asked for your personal details. Easy enough so far. They need your personal details and a German address.

In part II you provide the key data of your employment contract, the time you are hired from and your job function, how many hours you work per week, what salary is agreed, whether your contract is limited.

After this you state if you have previously been employed by the same federal state or a different one, and if work periods from that time have been acknowledged.

Under III you provide information regarding your tax characteristics. Please note: you require your tax ID number for this. For a sample of this tax ID number and more detailed information please refer to [www.uni-leipzig.de/+re](http://www.uni-leipzig.de/+re) and [http://www.bzst.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Muster\\_Mitteilungsschreiben\\_deutsch](http://www.bzst.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/Muster_Mitteilungsschreiben_deutsch)

**Hint:** You are in Germany for the first time and don't have a tax ID number yet? No problem. As soon as you have an address you can register with the resident services office. Your tax ID number will be sent to you automatically by post approximately 1–2 weeks after registration. Of course, this letter will only arrive if your name is on the letter box. If you still have not received this letter, you can return to the resident services office and enquire about the tax ID number. They will be happy to tell it to you again.

You will also receive a tax ID number even if you are not in employment that requires tax contributions. So if you are not in Germany for the first time, it is possible that you have already received such a tax ID number in the past, but never needed it (for example, if you received a scholarship at the time). In this case, too, you should go back to the resident services office and ask about the tax ID number. They will be happy to notify you of it again.

You also need to state your tax bracket. Here is a brief [↗ overview of possible tax brackets](#). An accountant or the [↗ tax office](#) ([www.finanzamt.sachsen.de](http://www.finanzamt.sachsen.de)) can provide you with more detailed information:

**Tax bracket 1** is for **single and divorced employees** as well as for married employees whose spouses live abroad or who consistently live separately from their spouses. **Widowed employees** also belong in tax bracket 1 if their spouse died before 1 January of the previous year. Tax bracket 1 also includes employees with limited liability for income tax or who live in a registered partnership.

› **In brief: tax bracket 1 is for single people.**

**Tax bracket 2** is for the employees named under tax **bracket 1**, if they are entitled to **tax relief for single parents**. Prerequisite for the granting of this tax relief is that the employee is single and their household includes **at least one child**, for whom the employee is entitled to a tax exempt amount for children or child benefit.

› **In brief: tax bracket 2 is for single people with children.**

**Tax bracket 3** applies on request for **married employees** where both partners live in Germany, do not live in permanent separation and the spouse of the employee does not receive wages or receives wages and is classified in **tax bracket 5**. Widowed employees belong in tax bracket 3 if the spouse died after 31 December of the year preceding the previous year, both partners lived in Germany on the day of the death of the spouse and did not live in permanent separation.

› **In brief: tax bracket 3 is for married couples living together, for the partner who earns a lot.**

**Tax bracket 4** applies for **married employees**, where both spouses are drawing salary, live in Germany and do not live in permanent separation.

› **In brief: tax bracket 4 applies for married couples who live together, who earn approximately the same amount.**

**Tax bracket 5** is used for the **spouse** in place of **tax bracket 4** if the other spouse, at the request of both partners, is assigned to **tax bracket 3**.

› **In brief: tax bracket 5 is for married couples living together, for the partner earning a low salary.**

**Tax bracket 6** is for employees who receive **wages from multiple employers** at the same time, for the retention of wage tax from the second and further employment relationships. Wage tax deduction as per tax bracket 6 should be undertaken by the employer from whom you receive the lower wage (reduced by any allowances).

› **In brief: tax bracket 6 applies, in the case of multiple employment relationships, for the employment relationship that generates the lowest earnings.**

**Please note:** if you do not provide details of your tax bracket, your employer will automatically take tax bracket 6, the least favourable tax bracket with the highest deductions.

Under point IV enter the social security number that you have received from your health insurer, as well as the details of your health insurance (see also [↗ 10. Social security number](#) on page 20 and [↗ 11. Certification of membership of a statutory health insurance fund/substitute fund \(German health insurer is obligatory\)](#) on page 21. If you have children, provide evidence of this with copies of the birth certificates. This has an influence upon the nursing care insurance.

You will also be asked about other social security or provident benefits, for example if you perhaps already receive a pension from a civil service position, if you are entitled to unemployment insurance, if you have multiple employment relationships etc. If you are coming directly from abroad and are in Germany for the first time, you can generally answer most of these points in the negative. Otherwise, you may require the details of previous employment relationships.

In section V you are once again asked details of your education and vocational training. Your Human Resources office confirms that these details correspond to the documents submitted to them.

As previously mentioned, this additional form is necessary as you are being employed by such a large employer that the payment office – the State Office for Tax and Finances – is a unit in its own right and separately requires the same details that you may have already provided to the Human Resources office in other forms (e.g. the personnel form). As forms such as these also need to be completed again in the event of changes or follow-up employment, it is advisable to keep copies.

## 16. Application for recognition of previous periods of employment

Once again, this is a very important form, which you should pay a good deal of attention to if you have previously worked for a public employer in Germany or another member state of the European Union.

The reason for this is that in the collective pay agreements for public sector employees it is clearly specified what provisions correspond to what periods of employment. So if you completed service with the German military directly before taking up this employment or performed comparable employment in the public sector, then these years of employment may be added to your years of service, which will have a positive effect, for example, on the amount of salary or the benefits granted by the employer (e.g. in the event of illness).

You should therefore check if you have worked for a public employer in Germany or another member state of the European Union prior to this job, and **furnish details of this previous employment with another public employer**. The same also applies to similar employment (e.g. as a researcher) at a university or scientific research establishment outside the EU. Don't forget to let your former employer **verify your previous employment** detailing the kind of work you've done and the duration of employment. Having work experience in similar fields may lead to a classification in a higher salary bracket in the public service.

This verification may take the form of **employment contracts or references** or other verification such as work record books or social records. Please note that the staff at the State Office for Tax and Finances can only conduct this check if they understand the documents presented, so these should consequently have been translated into German. If the documents concerned are extensive, you may want to ask at the Human Resources office if it is necessary to have them translated.

**Please note:** *If it is not possible to provide proof of previous employment periods in suitable form, your salary may be lower than the amount expected and originally assured to you, as you will be classified in a lower salary bracket. You should therefore enquire prior to your arrival which documents you need to bring from home for such verification.*

## 17. Notification of collective agreement cut-off periods

With this form your new employer informs you which of the public collective agreements forms the basis for your employment relationship and that this regulates how much time you have to submit specific applications.

You confirm with your signature that you acknowledge this instruction.

In other words, this means that if you do not register specific claims in good time, these will lapse. This is often the case after 6 months. Therefore, after the initial period of turbulence has passed and you are feeling more at home, you should listen out for any applications that you can/need to submit in order to receive specific benefits.

Your Human Resources department will be able to advise you on this.

## 18. Application for payment of capital-forming payments (following conclusion of banking contract)

**Capital-forming payments** represent a state-sponsored form of saving in Germany, via the granting of a savings allowance. In many cases the employer grants an agreed cash payment on the basis of a collective agreement, a works agreement or the employment contract, thereby rewarding the fact that you are taking care to provide for your own financial security. The statutory basis for this is the Fifth Capital Formation Act (5. VermBG).

If you are working in Germany for a longer period of time, this form of saving could prove of interest to you. It is best if your bank advises you which options are available here (e.g. building savings agreement, equity funds or employee equity participation – all of these different products differ with regard to the prescribed ineligibility period, the maximum investment amount funded, the savings allowance rate and the upper income limit for savings allowance funding. Some may be of relevance to you, others less so).

The capital-forming payments for civil servants and public sector employees amount to 6.65 € per month, which you are “given”. Please also note here the tax aspects, as capital-forming payments are a component of the wage or salary under labour law and therefore form part of the **taxable income from employment**. The savings allowance is tax exempt.

Depending on the contract, the employee may top up the payments of the employer with his own contributions.

The capital-forming payments are transferred by the employer directly to the deposit account named by you.

**With this application you inform your employer of the account details for this specific savings account, so that they can disburse the capital-forming payments.**

For more details please [refer to](https://www.finanztip.de/vermoegenswirksame-leistungen/): <https://www.finanztip.de/vermoegenswirksame-leistungen/>.

## 19. Application for child benefit (where entitlement exists you will receive the form **online** or at the respective Familienkasse)

The German state knows that raising children costs a lot of money and therefore supports parents in the form of generous financial subsidies in the raising of their children, until these are financially capable of standing on their own two feet, or have reached a specific age.

Currently (2024) this is an amount of 250 € for every child who is eligible.

So should you move to Germany with children or your children be born here, in some circumstances you will be entitled to payment of child benefit by the German state. This depends, for example, on your aliens law status (for example, if you are a student as per section 16 b you will unfortunately receive no child benefit, if you have a residence permit as per section 18 b for employment or section 18 d as a researcher you can generally apply for child benefit, if you are a member of an EU member state you are also entitled to child benefit).

If the answer is yes, then – how else in Germany – you must submit an application. If you generally have entitlement to child benefit, you have a little time in which to submit this application. Child benefit is also paid retrospectively **for a period of 6 months** from the time at which you acquire the entitlement (i.e. the time point at which the child was born in Germany or you moved to Germany with a child). Please submit your application to the respective responsible child benefit office and do not forget to include your bank details. To find out who is in charge use the information flyer: [↗ "How to apply for Child benefit"](#).

**Hint:** Specific details in the application need to be verified via good copies of various documents or certificates. The child benefit office will tell you which these are, or if originals need to be submitted. In any case, it is essential to bring the birth certificates from home and present certified translations. Copies of your residence permit are also important, as is the registration certificate, in which it states when you moved to Germany with the child. It may prove necessary for a separate household certificate to be issued by the resident services office, in order to confirm that the children actually live with you.

More information regarding this highly complex issue is also available on the [↗ Federal Employment Agency website](#) (www.arbeitsagentur.de/en/financial-support).

Please also consult our [↗ "Guidelines for Public Authorities"](#) or use the information flyer [↗ "How to apply for Child benefit"](#).



# Document block D: **General documents and legal instructions relating to the fact that you will be working for a public employer**

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## General documents and legal instructions relating to the fact that you will be working for a public employer

In most cases this block of documents is being compiled in the Human Resources department itself. The staff there will explain to you the content of statutory regulations relevant to public service and you will confirm with your signature that you will abide by these rules and regulations.

The police certificate of conduct is the only thing that you will have to apply for separately. This verifies that you have no previous convictions.

For the pre-employment medical examination it is best to make an appointment right away, as your employer needs to be sure that you are healthy enough to undertake your employment duties.

As previously mentioned, all of these regulations apply equally to millions of employees in public service. You should therefore not be surprised if some aspects appear to have no relation to your actual employment. Everyone is treated equally in this respect.

This block of documents includes:

### **20. Instruction on the degree of unlawfulness of corruption and its consequences under public sector employment law and criminal law**

As you are probably aware, servants of the state should be loyal and incorruptible at all times. Your new employer will therefore instruct you on the corresponding statutory regulations that you are required to observe. These include areas that are especially susceptible to corruption attempts, such as the awarding of public money and funding or the granting of official permits and concessions or the setting of fees.

But even if you do not work in these areas of employment, these regulations are relevant for you, as they also cover other aspects such as the acceptance of rewards and gifts or other personal gain.

Disregarding these rules and regulations may have severe consequences under company regulations or criminal law.

You should therefore read the relevant legal texts carefully before confirming with your signature that you have received these instructions. If necessary, you should also ask if the legal texts are available in English.

You will also be told which staff member at your employer is responsible for anti-corruption matters.

## 21. Instruction regarding loyalty to the constitution

Here, once again, servants of the state are required to be loyal and show allegiance to the constitution, as well as observing the free democratic order and the German constitution itself. After all, you work directly for the state.

Your new employer will therefore instruct you about resulting duties and obligations and which actions or memberships in unconstitutional organisations and associations are not commensurate with this employment in public service and consequently may result in termination of the employment relationship.

You should therefore also read these relevant legal texts carefully before confirming with your signature that you have received these instructions.

If necessary, you should also ask if the legal texts are available in English.

## 22. Record of the formal obligation of individuals who are non-civil servants

Here, too, the premise is that servants of the state should be loyal and law abiding, and are required to observe certain regulations, as they work directly for the state.

You are obliged to carry out your duties in a conscientious manner, observing the regulations of the penal code.

Your new employer verbally obligates you to this and you confirm with your signature.

You should therefore also read these relevant legal texts very carefully before confirming this formal commitment with your signature.

If necessary, you should also ask if the extracts from the penal code are available in English.

## 23. Declaration of obligation pursuant to § 6 Saxon Data Protection Act (Sächsisches Datenschutzgesetz)

In addition to observing the general statutory provisions, **protecting data secrecy** also has a special significance in Germany.

Data protection is taken very seriously in Germany and this area is regulated with numerous laws. Employees in public service who are required to record and process often large amounts of personal data of citizens have a special degree of responsibility to treat this data with care.

As a new employee, you will therefore be expressly instructed in the statutory regulations and existing rules in your field of work, as well as being obligated to conduct your tasks in an orderly manner and active co-operation.

You will also be informed who the data protection officer is at your place of employment and who you should contact if you notice shortcomings regarding data protection.

Your new employer verbally obligates you to this and you confirm with your signature.

You should therefore also read these relevant regulations very carefully before confirming this formal commitment with your signature.

If necessary, you should also ask if the regulations or the Saxon Data Protection Act are also available in English.

## 24. Police certificate of conduct, document type O\* or receipt for the application for a police certificate of conduct

This document is the only one of this group of documents that you have to apply for in advance. A police certificate of conduct is an official certificate of convictions that a person has to date, an extract from the criminal records. In other words, it confirms that no prior convictions have been noted in the central registry that would rule out employment in public service.

Here, too, you should not be surprised by the requests of your new employer. This may have little relevance to your actual activity as a researcher and is also not the consequence of particular mistrust of you specifically. Instead, it is due to the fact that many millions of people work directly for the state, including, for example, many teachers or judges. Public employers need to ensure that no people with specific prior convictions are employed in certain areas of employment. It is therefore necessary for all public service employees to present such a certificate of conduct.

Despite what its name suggests, you do not **apply** for the police certificate of conduct from the police, **but at the resident services office. The charge for this is € 13.** When applying, bring your identity card or passport, together with the address of your employer, as this type of certificate of conduct (document type O) is sent directly to the employer.

**Hint:** It is best to apply for the certificate of conduct right away when you register with the resident services office on the first day, as it takes some time for the corresponding extract from the central registry to be issued and – in this case – sent directly to your employer.

As an alternative to a German certificate of conduct you may present a corresponding document from your home country, certifying your lack of prior convictions. If you have never lived in Germany before, such a document would in any case be more useful than one from Germany. However, you should also pay attention here to ensure that the document is issued in English or is translated into German.

\* Führungszeugnis (certificate of conduct) can be applied for at the resident services office (Bürgerbüro) during registration and will then be sent directly to the respective clerk at the Human Resources office: Universität Leipzig Goethestraße 6, 04109 Leipzig and your respective HR staff member's name

## 25. Form for the pre-employment medical examination

Finally, your employer wishes to ensure that you are physically capable of undertaking your employment duties.

Again, this request is not related to any particular suspicion of you, instead it is a requirement that every employee in public service is required to meet where the employment contract is to be concluded for longer than one year.

So, go ahead and make an appointment with your in-house doctors straight away!

Place	Contact	Opening hours	Getting there
Mitteldeutsches Institut für Arbeitsmedizin Hohe Straße 30, 6th floor, 04107 Leipzig	Phone: 0341 993848-00 Fax: 0341 993848-10 Email: info@mia-doc.de Web: www.mia-doc.de	By appointment (if desired also late afternoon or on the weekend)	Tram: 10, 11 (Stop Hohe Straße, LVB) Suburban train: S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S5X, S7 (Stop Wilhelm-Leuschner-Platz/Bayrischer Platz)

In this way they will also be able to get to know you, as the in-house doctors are also responsible for ensuring that you suffer no physical harm from your new employment, which could later lead to a professional illness.

The tasks of the in-house doctors are defined in § 3 of the Occupational Safety Act and also serve the prevention of accidents, work-related illnesses and occupational diseases, as well as health protection for the employees.

Workplace design and ergonomics are therefore also part of the areas of activity of the in-house doctors, together with the provision of advice regarding workplace-related health problems or the gradual reintroduction to the job within the scope of occupational rehabilitation management following a long period of severe illness, to name just a few of the fields of tasks.

**Hint:** The in-house doctors are your contacts and advisers on all issues of prevention and rehabilitation as well as health protection measures.

They help you to stay healthy in the workplace.

## 26. Information leaflet for fixed-term employment in accordance with Section 14 Paragraph 2 of the Part-time and Temporary Employment Act

This information sheet is only issued for some appointments. It deals with one way in which employment contracts can have a fixed term, explaining the relevant provisions of the German Part-Time and Temporary Employment Act (TzBfG). Employment contracts with a fixed term without objective grounds can only be concluded for a maximum of 2 years and only if you have not previously been employed, either for a fixed term or indefinitely, by the same employer. The conclusion of a fixed-term employment contract without objective grounds does not exclude other potential grounds for a fixed term in the future.

## Finished!

All documents that are required for your employment in public service have been compiled. Congratulations! You can now sign your employment contract and begin work. Good luck to you!

There are sure to be many questions remaining, because each person is individual and the explanations and advice listed in these guidelines cannot describe all cases comprehensively, or in a legally-binding manner.

If you still have any individual questions, feel free to contact the staff at the Welcome Centre of the university or the International Office of your research establishment.

## Links to the Welcome Centre/International Office of various research establishments

### Leipzig University

Dr. Annemone Fabricius (Annemone.Fabricius@zv.uni-leipzig.de); Linda Kaule (linda.kaule@zv.uni-leipzig.de)

[Welcome Centre](http://www.uni-leipzig.de/+welcome) (www.uni-leipzig.de/+welcome)

### Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology (MPI-EVA)

Mr Rocco Buchholz (buchholz@eva.mpg.de)

[International Office](http://www.leipzig-school.eva.mpg.de/imprs/coordination) (www.leipzig-school.eva.mpg.de/imprs/coordination)

### Max Planck Institute for Mathematics in the Sciences (MPI-MIS)

Ms Heike Rackwitz (gprog@mis.mpg.de)

[International Office](http://www.mis.mpg.de/institute/guests/international-office.html) (www.mis.mpg.de/institute/guests/international-office.html)

### Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences (MPI-CBS)

Dr. Veronika Krieghoff (international-office@cbs.mpg.de)

[International Office](http://www.cbs.mpg.de/login-international-office) (www.cbs.mpg.de/login-international-office)

### Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research (UFZ)

Ms Barbara Timmel (barbara.timmel@ufz.de)

[International Office Website](http://www.ufz.de/index.php?en=33038) (www.ufz.de/index.php?en=33038)

### Leipzig University of Applied Sciences (HTWK)

Ms Silke Mühl (internationales@htwk-leipzig.de)

[International Office](http://www.htwk-leipzig.de/en/en-international/) (www.htwk-leipzig.de/en/en-international/)

### Leipzig Graduate School of Management (HHL)

Ms Friederike Solga (friederike.solga@hhl.de)

[International Relations](http://www.hhl.de/experience/international/incomings/) (www.hhl.de/experience/international/incomings/)

### German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv) Halle-Jena-Leipzig

Ms Janine Wehrstedt (janine.wehrstedt@idiv.de)

[Welcome Centre](http://www.idiv.de/en/welcome.html) (www.idiv.de/en/welcome.html)

Many other useful addresses and tips for making yourself at home in Leipzig can be found in the

[Welcome to Leipzig – Guidelines for Public Authorities](http://www.uni-leipzig.de/+1h) (www.uni-leipzig.de/+1h).

We hope that you have a good start in Germany.

# Welcome to Leipzig!

## Legal notice and disclaimer

This flyer containing information about employment in the public sector has been compiled as part of the joint project of Leipzig University **„Willkommen in Leipzig/Welcome to Leipzig“**

Dr Annemone Fabricius; Linda Kaule (Welcome Centre, Leipzig University International Centre)

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