

Job Hunting in Germany – Hints for International Students

Important notes and legal regulations

Anyone entering Germany on a visa for study purposes must comply with certain labor regulations:

Students from non-EU¹ or non-EFTA countries are usually only allowed to work 140 full days (approx. 8h/day) or 280 half days (up to 4h/day) per year. Jobs within the university and internships required as part of your studies are not included in this rule, but must be reported to the Foreigners' Office.

Because of these restrictions on working hours, it is virtually impossible to finance a full study program in Germany with a part-time job. In addition, studies often suffer and are prolonged when students have to work a lot.

Further information about the labor law for international students in Germany can be found at: www.daad.de/en/ > search field entry: Infoblatt Erwerbstätigkeit in Deutschland EN > download PDF

As soon as EU or EEA students start a student job or a paid internship in Germany, they have to get health insurance in Germany². Health insurance from their home country is then no longer sufficient!

Germany has had a legal minimum wage since 2015. This is currently 12.00€/h³. However, the actual wage varies depending on personal (specialized) knowledge, the sector of activity and the region in which the job is performed.

Anyone who regularly earns more than €450 will need a tax identification number (ID). As a certain amount of tax is deducted from your monthly salary, students can get a refund at the end of the year by filing an income tax return. For more information, contact your local tax office.

Please note: Working more than 20 hours per week⁴ may increase your social security contributions and taxes. The mandatory internship period (according to internship regulations) is not factored in.

International students in particular often find it difficult to find a job in Germany because of the language barrier. In order to increase your chances on the job market, you should take advantage of the German courses offered by the Language Center: www.hshl.de/en/en-language-center/

HSHL's Career Service offers consultations and workshops where you can get information and support for preparing application documents and job interviews. Further details at studyassist.hshl.de/serviceeinheiten/career-service-en/

Where to look for job offers?

At **HSHL** you will find:

- Job offers posted on the notice board (in Hamm, building H1.1-E00 or in the dining hall; in Lippstadt, building L2.1-E00) or in the departments' display cases.
- University-internal student (SHK) and academic (WHK) assistantship offers announced via email or on the [study assist blog](#).

¹ AND Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway & Switzerland

² Further information at www.daad.de/en/study-and-research-in-germany/plan-your-studies/health-insurance/

³ [The Federal Government](#)

⁴ Further information at www.daad.de/en/study-and-research-in-germany/first-steps-germany/side-jobs/

- A small job portal with current local job offers at <http://www.hshl.de/jobportal>.
- An annual career fair where you can make direct, personal contact with regional companies and discuss possible job prospects. You can also get a general idea of local employers and make a positive first impression in addition to your application documents.

Outside of HSHL you can:

- Find many major online job boards where you can search for a job, such as *Jobvalley*, *indeed*, *StepStone*, *Monster*, *Jobware*, *ebayKleinanzeigen*.
- Check the job section of local newspapers e. g. in *Der Patriot*, *Westfälischer Anzeiger* or *Stadtanzeiger*. Here, mostly small companies or private individuals publish job offers. Or visit <https://nrw-jobs.de>.
- Ask the [German Job Agency \(Agentur für Arbeit\)](#) for help.
- ☞ Also watch out for job offers in the windows of shops or bars.

Note: Jobs that often only require low German language skills are e. g.: cleaner, courier driver, harvest helper, cook, kitchen helper, newspaper and post deliverer.

How to look for job offers.

- While searching for a job, you should always keep in mind that job offers in Germany are usually not created for applicants who do not speak German fluently. Therefore, look for job offers that fit your abilities first and then contact the company to ask whether or not the job actually requires a certain level of language knowledge.
- As a student, you must devote most of your time to your studies and can only work part-time. To narrow down your job search, you can use the following keywords: Nebenjob, Werkstudent, geringfügige Beschäftigung, Minijob, Helfer, Aushilfe, Teilzeitkraft.
- You could also advertise your availability in a want ad on a job portal or in a local newspaper.
- Ask friends and family members to keep their eyes and ears open for you.
- Alternatively, you can consider to work in a full-time job during the semester break, instead of part-time during the semester.

How to apply for a job.

- Since most companies expect an official cover letter and resume in German, you should prepare your documents carefully and according to German standards. Take advantage of the services of HSHL's [Career Service](#) at an early stage.
- Ask a German-speaking friend to proof-read your application before sending.
- Make good use of career fairs and open days in companies to introduce yourself in person.
- If your application has been rejected, it is ok to politely ask about the reasons. This feedback can help improve your next application and maybe adjust your search accordingly.

Our final advice: Be patient, stay positive and do not give up. Good Luck! 😊