



Information for  
students

English version

# Job regulations for international students in Germany

GEFÖRDERT VOM



Bundesministerium  
für Bildung  
und Forschung

## Working in Germany

A part-time job provides you with the opportunity to gain experience, get to know Germany, make contacts and supplement the financing of your studies. It is very difficult to finance your studies and life in Germany with a part-time job alone, and if you have a part-time job that takes up a lot of time, your academic performance will suffer. This may prolong your studies and, in the worst case, jeopardise your residence title.

**IMPORTANT** For many student jobs, knowledge of German is necessary.

## Students from the EU/EEA/Switzerland

If you are a student with citizenship in a member state of the European Union (EU), the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland you may take up any type of work in Germany under the same conditions as German students.

**IMPORTANT** If you are a student with citizenship in the EU/EEA countries/Switzerland and have a part-time student job or a paid internship in Germany, you must take out health insurance in Germany. Your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) is then no longer valid. There are rare exceptions to this – more information is available from the health insurance company.

## Students from third countries

with residence according to §16b Residence Act

**The following regulations apply as of March 1, 2024**

International students from third countries are allowed to work in Germany for 140 full or 280 half working days per year. This is noted in the (supplementary sheet to your) residence title. Alternatively, employment of up to 20 hours per week is also permitted. Additional approval from the foreigners' registration office is not necessary in these two cases. More precisely:

- Only the working days that are actually worked are counted. This means holidays, public holidays and sick days are not counted.
- Half working days are working days with up to 4 working hours.
- These are calculated for each calendar year. For example: if the employment contract starts on 1 July, the complete 140 full/

280 half working days can be worked until the end of this calendar year on 31 December.

- Days on which a **voluntary internship** is undertaken also count towards these 140 full or 280 half working days. However, **compulsory internships** as part of a degree programme do not count.
- If you wish to work more than the permitted number of days you need prior and written approval from the foreigners' registration office.

International students from third countries (§16b Residence Act) are only allowed to work **as fee-based workers** or **self-employed** persons with the permission of the foreigners' registration office. As a rule, self-employed persons are those who invoice the employer for work performed (fee-based).

During a **preparatory language course/internship placement** or a **preparatory college course**, as of March 1, 2024, international students from third countries (§16b Residence Act) may work in the same way as during their studies.

**IMPORTANT** In addition to the 140 full or 280 half working days, the following jobs are permitted: academic or student assistant at the university, in the Studierendenwerk (Student Service Organisation, STW) or in the students' union (AStA/STURA), or jobs with a very close connection to your studies, e. g. at an institute. As long as this does not affect academic performance, this activity can be carried out for an unlimited period of time. Permission from the foreigners' registration office is required for fee-based work.

## Salary

The statutory minimum wage also applies to all students. It does not apply to compulsory internship placements and internship placements lasting less than three months.

**IMPORTANT** Employees receive a monthly pay slip from their employer. Hours worked, social security contributions, holidays and sick days are listed here. The pay slip holds important information: please keep it as proof of your monthly employment details and check whether the information given here is correct.

## Taxes and social security contributions

- Anyone working in Germany needs a tax identification number (“Steuer-ID”). You will automatically receive this by post a few weeks after registering your residence. Please keep this important information for further reference.
- You only have to pay income tax in Germany if the tax exemption limit (also called the tax-free allowance) is exceeded.
- An income tax return must be filed by anyone who is self-employed or who exceeds the tax exemption limit. The “Elster” internet portal is available for this purpose: [www.elster.de](http://www.elster.de)
- For individual advice, students must contact a tax advisor (subject to a fee).

**IMPORTANT** Different types of jobs are also subject to different social security contributions. Further information can be found in the flyer “Jobbing” (“Working in Germany”) from Deutsches Studierendenwerk (German National Association for Student Affairs).



## Social insurance

If you take up a job, your employer needs to register you with the social security system. You will then automatically receive a social security certificate via post, which also contains your pension insurance number (Important: keep this document for further reference). If you do not receive this certificate, you need to contact the German Pension Insurance (Deutsche Rentenversicherung). Mini-jobbers (income up to 520 euros per month) can ask their employer to exempt them from the pension insurance obligation, which slightly increases their net income each month.

## Health insurance

Anyone who works more than 20 hours per week is covered by health insurance through work and is no longer covered by student health insurance or family health insurance. Private health insurance can be terminated by the student. Please note: This does not apply to temporary jobs of up to three months. (Students covered by EHIC, ➡ please refer to the info box under section “Students from the EU/EEA/Switzerland”.) Further information

can be found in the flyer “Jobbing” (“Working in Germany”) from Deutsches Studierendenwerk, see QR code on the previous page.

**IMPORTANT** Those with family insurance should seek advice from their health insurance company before starting work in order to clarify their insurance cover.

## Additional financing options

**Scholarships** ... are hardly ever awarded by higher education institutions in Germany, unlike in other countries. Important scholarship providers are the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) ([www.funding-guide.de](http://www.funding-guide.de)), Begabtenförderungswerke (scholarships for talented individuals) ([www.stipendiumplus.de](http://www.stipendiumplus.de)) and foundations ([www.stiftungssuche.de/stipendien](http://www.stiftungssuche.de/stipendien)).

**German federal financial aid (BAföG)** ... is available to international students only in very rare exceptions. Information is available at [www.bafög.de](http://www.bafög.de) and from the social welfare advisory services of your local Studierendenwerk and from the BAföG financial support agencies.

**Student loans** ... are often awarded according to the same access requirements as BAföG and are thus rarely accessible to international students. However, some loan associations and education funds are also available to international students. Caution: Rising interest rates on student loans can harbour a debt risk.

**Emergency and hardship grants** ... in different forms are available in the event of financial hardship through no fault of the student:

- Financial support for students in emergency situations by means of emergency or hardship grants of your local Studierendenwerk
- Emergency grants of the local Protestant or Catholic religious communities and centres on your campus

**NOTE** If you consider applying for public social welfare benefits (e. g. housing benefit, citizen’s income, etc.), please seek advice beforehand, as this may seriously affect your residence title!



## Further advice and information for international students

**Studierendenwerke (social welfare advisory service, student finance advisory service, international affairs)**  
<https://www.studierendenwerke.de/deutsches-studentenwerk/studentenwerke/studierendenwerke-a-z/landkarte>

**DSW website on student jobs**  
[www.studierendenwerke.de/themen/finanzierungsmoeglichkeiten/uebersicht-jobben](http://www.studierendenwerke.de/themen/finanzierungsmoeglichkeiten/uebersicht-jobben)

**International Offices of the universities**  
<https://www.daad.de/deutschland/in-deutschland/hochschule/en/9147-the-first-port-of-call/>

[www.daad.de](http://www.daad.de) | [www.study-in.de](http://www.study-in.de)  
[www.internationale-studierende.de](http://www.internationale-studierende.de)

## STWs – Student Service Organisations

Germany's 57 Studierendenwerke (Student Service Organisations, STWs) are responsible for the economic, social, health and cultural life of students:

- Dining halls and cafeterias
- Student residence halls
- Student financial aid
- Day care centres
- Psychological and social counselling
- Counselling for students with disabilities or chronic diseases
- Cultural activities

Deutsches Studierendenwerk  
(German National Association for Student Affairs)  
Service Point for Intercultural Competence  
[www.studierendenwerke.de](http://www.studierendenwerke.de)