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Blue Card EU — Visa for Highly Skilled Specialists

The Blue Card EU is a residence permit for highly qualified professionals from outside the EU working in Germany. It offers a fast track to permanent residence and mobility across the EU.

Deutsche Begriffe: Blaue Karte EU | Blue Card | Hochqualifizierte | Fachkräfte

What is the Blue Card EU?

Blue Card EU (blue card) is a special type of residence permit for highly qualified workers from outside the EU.

Requirements

1. Higher Education

- Diploma recognized in Germany
- OR comparable foreign diploma (check: anabin.kmk.org)

2. Job Offer / Employment Contract

- Contract for min. 6 months (from 2024: may be shorter)
- Work in line with your education

3. Minimum Salary (2024)

Category	Annual Gross
Standard	€50,700
Shortage occupations*	€45,934

*Shortage occupations: IT, engineering, medicine, natural sciences

Benefits of Blue Card EU

- **Fast track to permanent residence** — after 21 months (with B1) or 27 months
- **Family reunification** — spouse can work immediately
- **EU mobility** — after 18 months, you can move to another EU country
- **No labor market test** — employer doesn't need to prove lack of EU candidates

How to Obtain?

If you are abroad:

1. Find a job in Germany
2. Apply for a visa at the embassy
3. Move to Germany
4. Apply for Blue Card at Ausländerbehörde

If you are in Germany:

1. Already have a visa/residence → apply at Ausländerbehörde
2. Bring: passport, photo, employment contract, diploma, diploma recognition

Documents

- Passport (valid for min. 6 months)
- Biometric photo
- Employment contract
- Diploma + certified translation
- Diploma recognition (if required)
- Health insurance proof

Permanent Residence (Niederlassungserlaubnis)

With Blue Card, you can obtain permanent residence after:

- **21 months** — if you have B1 level German
- **27 months** — without language requirement

Changing Employer

- **First 2 years:** requires Ausländerbehörde approval
- **After 2 years:** free to change jobs

Who is Blue Card NOT for?

- EU citizens (don't need it)
- People without higher education
- Freelancers / self-employed
- Seasonal workers

Alternatives

- **Fachkräftevisum** — for skilled workers without degree
- **ICT-Karte** — intra-company transfer
- **Jobseeker Visa** — job search