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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 | Mangelberufe | Engpassberufe | anabin | Arbeitsmarktprüfung | EU-Mobilität

What is the Blaue Karte EU?

Blaue Karte EU (Blue Card) is a special residence title for highly qualified workers from outside the EU. Legal basis: §18g Aufenthaltsgesetz, implementing EU Directive 2021/1883.

Requirements

1. Higher Education

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

2. Job Offer / Contract

- Employment contract for minimum 6 months
- Work consistent with qualifications

3. Minimum Gross Salary (2026)

Category	Annual	Monthly
Regelberufe (standard)	€50,700.00	€4,225.00
Engpassberufe / Berufseinsteiger*	€45,934.20	€3,827.85

*Engpassberufe (shortage occupations): IT, engineering, mathematics, natural sciences, medicine, management positions in production and logistics, academic nursing and midwifery, teachers. The lower threshold also applies to graduates starting their careers (within 3 years of diploma).

Advantages of Blaue Karte

- **Fast track to permanent residence** — Niederlassungserlaubnis after 21 months (with B1) or 27 months (with A1)
- **Family reunification** — spouse can work immediately, without A1 requirement (see familiennachzug)
- **EU mobility** — after 12 months of holding the card in one EU country, you can relocate to another and apply for a new Blaue Karte there (simplified procedure)
- **No Arbeitsmarktprüfung** (labour market test) — employer does not need to prove lack of EU candidates

How to Obtain?

If You Are Abroad:

1. Find a job in Germany
2. Submit a visa application at the embassy
3. Come to Germany and register (Anmeldung)
4. Submit a Blaue Karte application at the Ausländerbehörde

If You Are Already in Germany:

- You already have a visa or residence permit → submit the application directly at the Ausländerbehörde

Documents

- Passport (valid for minimum 6 months)
- Biometric photo
- Employment contract
- Diploma + certified translation
- Diploma recognition (if required)
- Proof of health insurance

Changing Employers

- **First 12 months:** change requires Ausländerbehörde approval
- **After 12 months:** free job change (office merely informed)

For Whom Blaue Karte is NOT:

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

Alternatives

- **Fachkräftevisum** — for qualified workers without higher education
- **Chancenkarte** — points-based card for job search
- **ICT-Karte** — intra-company transfer