

3.7 Cross-border mobility in employment, entrepreneurship and vocational opportunities

- **previous page**

[< 3.6 Integration of young people in the labour market](#)

- [Up](#)
- [3.8 Development of entrepreneurship competence >](#)

On this page

1. [Programmes and schemes for cross-border mobility](#)
2. [Legal framework](#)

Programmes and schemes for cross-border mobility

A range of programmes, initiatives and schemes promote cross-border mobility in the area of vocational training.

European Union (EU) programmes

Germany contributes to the European [Your first EURES job](#) project via EURES Germany, namely the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit). The project helps young people, including Germans, aged 18 to 35 to find a job, traineeship or vocational training place in the EU, Iceland or Norway. It also gives employers greater geographical reach when searching for staff.

Young entrepreneurs from Germany can take part in the EU's [Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs](#) programme. The programme gives new or prospective entrepreneurs the chance to learn from experienced entrepreneurs who head a small company in another participating country. The amount of monthly financial aid available depends on the general cost of living in the host country.

Under the [EU's Erasmus+ programme Key Action 1](#) the mobility of individuals in Europe is funded. This includes (vocational) traineeships, training periods, continuing vocational education, youth exchanges and European Voluntary Service placements. Stays abroad for training staff are also funded where required for learning purposes (such as job shadowing) and for teaching purposes. In Germany, there are four national agencies for the EU Programme Erasmus+, each in charge of a different field:

- Vocational education and training/adult education: National Agency Education for Europe ([Nationale Agentur Bildung für Europa, NA BIBB](#))

-) at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training ([Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung, BIBB](#))
- Higher education: German Academic Exchange Service ([Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, DAAD](#))
- School education: Pedagogical Exchange Service ([Pädagogischer Austauschdienst, PAD](#)) of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs ([Kultusministerkonferenz](#))
- Youth in Action: German national agency [JUGEND für Europa](#)

The [EU programme European Solidarity Corps](#) has launched also in Germany, an opportunity for individuals to volunteer to help build a social and diverse Europe through [jobs and traineeships](#), amongst other things. JUGEND für Europa is the competent national agency here, too.

National regulations, programmes and schemes - selection

The key area Integration through exchange (Integration durch Austausch, IdA) in the ESF integration directive of the federal government ([ESF-Integrationsrichtlinie Bund](#)) gives 18- to 35-year-olds an opportunity to complete a practical placement in another European country, assisted by trained staff. The placements last between two and six months. An individual preparation and follow-up sessions in Germany are included. Measures under the integration directive are implemented by cooperation networks. In addition, companies and/or public administrative bodies work actively with regional employment organisations such as job centres (Jobcenter) or employment agencies (Arbeitsagentur). Budget: approx. 32 million euros. [List of all projects funded between 2015 and 2020](#).

PROTANDEM – the Franco-German agency for vocational training exchanges ([Deutsch-Französische Agentur für den Austausch in der beruflichen Bildung](#)) supports bilateral exchanges between apprentices and students of vocational colleges and technical colleges from Germany and France. The [exchange programme](#) is publicly funded (in Germany, by the Ministry of Education and Research ([Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung](#)) or the ministry of education of the respective federal state; in France various ministries are involved: European and Foreign Affairs, Education, Labour).

The Czech-German Youth Exchange Coordination Centre TANDEM ([Koordinierungszentrum deutsch-tschechischer Jugendaustausch TANDEM](#)) runs a voluntary vocational traineeship programme ([Freiwillige Berufliche Praktika](#)) under which it provides funding for vocational college students, apprentices and young people just starting out in employment aged 16 and over. This enables them to complete a vocational traineeship of at least two weeks in length in the other country. The programme is funded by the German-Czech future fund (Deutsch-Tschechischer Zukunftsfonds) and the EU's Erasmus+ programme Key Action 1.

The German-Polish Youth Office ([Deutsch-Polnisches Jugendwerk](#), DPJW) funds [vocational training-related traineeships](#). They include traineeships for individuals but also training visits for larger groups of young people and apprentices from Poland and Germany, regardless of their profession.

Under the Parliamentary Scholarship Programme ([Parlamentarisches Patenschaftsprogramm](#), PPP) of the Federal Parliament (Bundestag), apprentices and young employees aged 24 or under in virtually all professions can spend a year in the United States to gain initial work and study experience.

The [xchange programme](#) of the International Lake Constance Conference (Internationale Bodenseekonferenz, IBK) and the Working Group of the Alpine Regions (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Alpenländer, Arge Alp) gives apprentices from Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Austria and Liechtenstein an opportunity to spend three to four weeks of their practical training in a company in another country. In return, a trainee from the host firm spends

time in the other company. Young participating Germans are funded under Erasmus+.

The German-Israeli collaborative vocational education programme ([Deutsch-Israelisches Programm zur Zusammenarbeit in der Berufsbildung](#)) is a bilateral cooperation and funding initiative between Germany's BMBF and the Israeli Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. It is coordinated in Germany by the National Agency Education for Europe at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training ([Nationale Agentur Bildung für Europa, c/o Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung](#)). The National Agency implements the programme on behalf of the BMBF. The programme gives apprentices, teachers and vocational training experts an opportunity to share experiences and learn from one another.

The [ASA programme](#) of ENGAGEMENT GLOBAL gGmbH - Service für Entwicklungsinitiativen funds work and study stays in Africa, Latin America, Asia and South-Eastern Europe for 21- to 30-year-olds. ASA includes a basic programme for students and young professionals as well as special programmes. Participants receive grants towards their expenses. On average, about 2,000 people apply for around 280 project places every year. Financial support mainly comes from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development ([Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung](#), BMZ).

The Development Cooperation Trainee Programme ([Traineeprogramm der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit](#)) is a junior development programme run by Germany's BMZ. [Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit](#) (GIZ) manages the programme on behalf of BMZ. Applicants must be university graduates. Participants complete a 17-month training programme on German and multilateral development cooperation. The programme focuses on technical cooperation. The German-American Traineeship Programme ([Deutsch-Amerikanisches Praktikantenprogramm](#)) of GIZ allows young professionals aged 26 or under to gain initial work experience in the United States. Length of stay: between two and 12 months. Objectives: To provide hands-on advanced training and language and intercultural skills; to familiarise participants with other cultures and lifestyles; and to enable them to develop personally and form networks. Trainees are paid a monthly stipend of 600 euros (the traineeship itself is unpaid) plus a contribution towards travel expenses and language training.

Young professionals and volunteers aged 23 to 45 can apply for the [CrossCulture programme](#) (CCP). Through the CCP, the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations ([Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen](#), ifa), a partner of the Germany's Federal Foreign Office ([Auswärtiges Amt](#)) works to strengthen the intercultural dialogue and the relations between Germany and Islamic countries.

Activities of the federal states (Länder)

The European Greater Region (Europäische Großregion) covering Saarland, Rhineland-Palatinate, Luxembourg, Wallonia, the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, the German-speaking Community of Belgium, and Lorraine in France gives apprentices an opportunity to complete the theoretical part of their training in their home country before joining a company in a neighbouring country for the practical part (for France to Alsace and for Germany to Baden-Württemberg or Rhineland-Palatinate) on the basis of a 2014 framework agreement on cross-border vocational activity ([Rahmenabkommen zur grenzüberschreitenden Berufsbildung](#)). This cross-border vocational training is designed for young people in the dual system of vocational education and training (duale Ausbildung) or on dual study courses (duales Studium).

To promote mobility among apprentices in neighbouring border regions, EU funding is also available from the [European Regional Development Fund INTERREG](#) such as [INTERREG](#) Großregion. In Saarland, a specialist unit for cross-border vocational training ([Fachstelle für grenzüberschreitende Ausbildung](#)) is financed by the EU INTERREG programme, state funding and other partners. This unit helps young people from Saarland, Lorraine and Rhineland-Palatinate to complete a traineeship with a company across the border, including language

support.

The states of Rhineland-Palatinate and Baden-Württemberg jointly fund the [EUREGIO certificate for apprentices](#). Under this project, during their training apprentices or vocational college students can spend at least four weeks with a company in one of the countries in the German-Franco-Swiss Upper Rhine region. Amongst other things, the young participants receive a stipend of 300 euros and a EUREGIO certificate at the end of the traineeship.

In January 2017, the state of Bremen signed a partnership agreement ([Partnerschaftsvertrag Bremen – Besançon](#)) with the French city of Besançon concerning cooperation in the field of vocational training and intern exchange.

Information and counselling for young people

The Information and Support Center for vocational training abroad ([Informations- und Beratungsstelle für Auslandsaufenthalte in der beruflichen Bildung](#), IBS) at NA BIBB advises and informs young people of options and opportunities regarding vocational stays abroad. NA BIBB also runs the [website offering information about completing a period abroad during vocational training](#).

International Placement Services ([Zentrale Auslands- und Fachvermittlung](#), ZAV) of the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) advises school pupils, students and employees interested in vocational training, university studies or work abroad. ZAV and other agencies contribute to the working group [Arbeitskreis Wege ins Ausland](#), in which nine institutions including schools, universities, vocational training providers, labour services and youth work agencies provide information and advice for school pupils, apprentices, trainees and employees as well as any other interested parties about ways to spend a period abroad.

[Eurodesk Germany](#) compiles information for young people all about going abroad and participating in international Eurodesk exchanges. It works with approx. 50 partners across the country. Eurodesk provides neutral and free advice to all interested young people.

Each of the national agencies for the Erasmus+ programme in Germany informs and advises young people on their respective field.

The advisory network ([Beraternetzwerk](#)) of the chambers of trade and crafts, and chambers of commerce and industry advises apprentices, young skilled workers and others on stays abroad during their vocational training.

The [German Committee \(Deutsches Komitee\) of the International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience \(IAESTE\)](#) at the German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, DAAD) helps students at German universities to find traineeships with companies and in research and university institutes abroad.

Databases with information about stays abroad relevant to vocational training

- Database of the Information and Support Center for vocational training abroad ([Informations- und Beratungsstelle für Auslandsaufenthalte in der beruflichen Bildung](#), IBS) with information for apprentices
- [Database of NA BIBB with information about traineeships abroad](#)
- [Database of the European information network Eurodesk with information about internships](#)
- [rausvonzuhause.de](#) website run by IJAB – the International Youth Service of the Federal Republic of

Germany (Fachstelle für Internationale Jugendarbeit der Bundesrepublik Deutschland e.V. with [information about traineeships abroad and about initial and continuing vocational training abroad](#)).

For information relevant to Germany about international mobility as part of vocational training, see also the document “Prototyping the Mobility Scoreboard for Initial Vocational Education and Training” published by the [European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training](#) (Cedefop) (from page 301).

For more information on learning mobility programmes in Germany, see also [Youth Wiki chapter on Education and Training, specifically the section on cross-border learning mobility](#).

Legal framework

Incoming

Social security regime

Trainees who are citizens of EU/EFTA member states can also use their European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), provided their stay is temporary. Young people from outside Germany who start work in Germany are covered by the relevant German laws and regulations regarding healthcare and insurance laws and regulations. Persons who accept employment that is subject to social security contributions also pay contributions towards the statutory pension, long-term care, healthcare and unemployment schemes.

Information for trainees and young employees on health insurance and the insurance systems in Germany is available here:

- Website of the [Deutsche Verbindungsstelle Krankenversicherung – Ausland](#) (DVKA) with information for students and trainees about health insurance in Germany
- The [EURES Job Mobility Portal](#) has information on living and working in Germany
- Official multi-language [web portal for qualified professionals from abroad](#) with information about immigration procedures and visa requirements, finding a job, social insurance and everyday life in Germany

Guide to your social security rights in Germany ([Ihre Rechte der sozialen Sicherheit in Deutschland](#)) from the European Commission. European Union, 2013.

Rights and obligations

Under the Act on the General Freedom of Movement for EU Citizens ([Gesetz über die allgemeine Freizügigkeit von Unionsbürgern](#)), young people who are citizens of EU and EFTA member states do not need a work permit to work in Germany. Citizens of all other states may be granted a work permit under certain circumstances. For details, please refer to the [Migration-Check tool of the Federal Employment Agency](#) (Bundesagentur für Arbeit).

Young people from non-EU countries need a residence permit in order to start work in Germany. Young people from outside Germany who start work in Germany are covered by the relevant German laws and regulations regarding healthcare and insurance as well as labour market laws and regulations. Access to the German labour market is determined by the provisions of the Residence Act ([Aufenthaltsgesetz](#)).

The federal government's portal Recognition in Germany ([Anerkennung in Deutschland](#)) offers information about the recognition of foreign professional qualifications in Germany .

The [website of the Federal Employment Agency \(Bundesagentur für Arbeit\)](#) offers information about admission to the German labour market.

Tax arrangement

Young people who start work in Germany are covered by the relevant German laws and tax regulations.

Outgoing

The legal basis for completing practical vocational training abroad is Sections 2 and 76 B of the Vocational Training Act ([Berufsbildungsgesetz, BBiG](#)). Under Section 2, part of one's vocational training can be completed abroad if it serves the training objective and provided the total duration of such training abroad does not exceed one quarter of the entire duration specified in the training regulations. Section 76 reads: "Initial training undergone abroad pursuant to section 2 subsection (3) shall be supervised and supported by the competent body in an appropriate manner. If the duration of a period of initial training abroad exceeds four weeks, a plan must be agreed with the competent body."

The agreement between the federal and state governments ([Bund-Länder-Vereinbarung](#)) of 12 March 2015 says that vocational college students can be granted leave or released from their part-time studies or intensive study periods for up to four weeks to complete training abroad. Under certain circumstances, students can be granted longer periods of leave or released from studies for longer periods.

The legal basis for the funding of training stays abroad is Sections 5 and 16 of the Federal Training Assistance Act ([Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz, BAföG](#)).

Social security scheme

Whether or not a trainee or temporary employee is obliged to pay into the statutory healthcare scheme is generally determined by the legislation in the country in which the traineeship or job is being performed. Provided they only stay temporarily, young Germans working in an EU/EFTA member state can also use their European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

Information for trainees and young workers on health insurance and insurance schemes abroad is available here:

- [Website of the Deutsche Verbindungsstelle Krankenversicherung – Ausland](#) (DVKA) with information for students and trainees about health insurance in Germany
- The [EURES Job Mobility Portal](#) has information on insurance schemes abroad
- [Website of the Information and Support Center for vocational training abroad](#) (Informations- und

Beratungsstelle für Auslandsaufenthalte in der beruflichen Bildung, IBS) with information about insurance cover for young people staying abroad

- [Website of German Pension Insurance](#) (Deutsche Rentenversicherung) with information about pension insurance contributions while working abroad

Rights and obligations

Young people from Germany who start work in any foreign country are covered by the relevant laws and tax regulations in these countries. Under the Act on the General Freedom of Movement for EU Citizens ([Gesetz über die allgemeine Freizügigkeit von Unionsbürgern](#)), they do not need a work permit for EU/EFTA member states.

Tax arrangements

Young people from Germany who go abroad to work are covered by the relevant laws and tax regulations in the host country.

The website of the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) provides [information for young people who are interested in working abroad](#).