

Jurisdiction

- If you already have a residence permit to live in Germany, you can obtain your EU Blue Card from the relevant Aliens Office in the area where you are currently residing.
- If you do not yet live in the EU, you will normally first of all need to apply for a working visa from the German embassy or consulate in your home country. Once you have entered the country, you will then need to apply for an EU Blue Card from the Aliens Office in the area where you are residing before your visa expires.
- If you are a national of Australia, Israel, Japan, Canada, South Korea, New Zealand or the United States, you may enter the country without a visa, but you must apply for the EU Blue Card from the relevant Aliens Office in the area where you are residing within three months of entering the country.
- If you have been in possession of an EU Blue Card from another EU Member State for at least 18 months, you are also entitled to obtain an EU Blue Card in Germany. In this case, you must submit an application to the relevant Aliens Office in the area where you are residing within one month of entering the country.

Validity

The EU Blue Card is a residence permit with an initial time limit of up to four years if your employment contract is valid for an equivalent or longer period. It is possible for the time limit to be extended. If the employment contract is for less than four years, the EU Blue Card will be issued for the duration of the employment contract plus three months. During the first two years, written permission must be obtained from the relevant Aliens Office before changing jobs.

The advantages of holding an EU Blue Card

- As the holder of an EU Blue Card in Germany you have the possibility of obtaining a permanent residence permit if you have worked in a highly skilled occupation for a period of 33 months and have paid contributions into a pension scheme. If you can demonstrate at an early stage that you have proficiency in the German language to level B1 (see Chapter II, pages 12–17 of this brochure), then it is possible to obtain the permit after 21 months.
- If you have been in possession of an EU Blue Card for 18 months you may enter another EU Member State for the purposes of working in a highly skilled occupation without a visa, so long as you apply for the EU Blue Card for that country within one month of entering the country. The same applies to family members.
- Your family members are entitled to obtain a residence permit without having any proficiency in the German language before entering the country. Spouses will immediately receive an unrestricted work permit.
- As the holder of an EU Blue Card, you – along with your family members – are entitled to live for up to 12 consecutive months in a non-EU country without your residence permit expiring.

IMPORTANT NOTE

All rules pertaining to the EU Blue Card do not apply to Great Britain, Ireland and Denmark.