Students from the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland enjoy unrestricted access to the German labour market and have the same rights as German students.

What you should know

For students from other countries, who are in Germany with a student visa, the following rules apply:

– They are allowed to work 120 full days or 240 half days per year without applying for a separate work permit. Please note, that this does not normally include self-employment or freelancing.
– Students who want to work more than that need permission from the Agentur für Arbeit (Federal Employment Agency) and the Ausländerbehörde (foreigners’ office). Whether they receive a permit depends on the labour market situation.
– If you are employed as a student assistant in a German university or public research institute then the 120 day rule does not apply.

Even after completing your course, you are entitled to look for work that is related to your qualification in Germany for a period up to 18 months.

Know your rights

Students who work have the same rights as any other employee in the company they work for. These rights include the customary working hours per week, up to six weeks wage payment in the case of illness, at least four weeks of vacation per year and extra remuneration for night work, piece work, overtime.

How much you can earn depends on the industry in which you are working, and the regional labour market. The statutory minimum wage is currently 9.35 € per hour (2020).

For high-quality education and a good life!
We are the DGB Jugend – your network for studying

As a youth trade union, we are fighting for good study conditions, fair working conditions and a just society. We provide you with information on all aspects of student finance. We advise you in labour and social law issues. We invite you to improve the situation of 1.4 million working students in Germany together with us. We accompany you on the way from university to working life. And we strengthen your back in the enforcement and expansion of your opportunities of participation at university as student.

Check if there is a counseling offices of ours at your university: www.jugend.dgb.de/studium

Social security

If you are employed in Germany, you will normally pay social security contributions proportionally from your wage. However international students must prove that they have health insurance when they enroll. If you work while you’re studying, you usually only have to pay pension contributions. Please note if you work more than 20 hours per week, you will also have to pay health, unemployment and nursing care insurance contributions from your wages.

Taxes

Income from gainful employment is taxable, but not from the first cent. The tax exempt amount is 9,408 € in 2020 (plus 1,000 € allowance for income related expenses). When starting a new job, you have to submit your tax ID to your employer. If you don’t have a tax ID yet, you can apply for it.

The different types of jobs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment status</th>
<th>different types of normal part-time employment; German labour law applies fully</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which social security insurances (health, nursing care, old age pension, unemployment) do employees have to pay?</td>
<td>Only old age pension contributions are automatically deducted from your pay by your employer**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>Choice between flat-rate taxation (2 percent) or regular wage tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working time limits</td>
<td>No time limit other than that imposed by the minimum wage – therefore maximum 88h/month (2020)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Exemption from the pension insurance obligation is possible in some circumstances. ** The general rules about breaks, shift length and so on (Arbeitszeitgesetz) apply. *** Can apply in Midi-Jobs and when you have a higher income.

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