



Important information for You as a prospective nurse in Germany

Nursing field -1.1

Everything you need to know about the nursing profession is described in the following sections which can help you with your decisions on your way to Germany. Read them carefully and feel free to ask us any questions you may have.

Nursing is a vital profession, it is about helping people and is therefore accompanied by great responsibility. You will find all information about how nursing is regulated in Germany and how authorities and institutes manage the compliance of standards and represent the rights of nurses in the first part of the compliance brochure.

The relevant authority has prepared a brochure for nurses who wish to work in Germany. It contains all basic information about your rights and opportunities. For German-speaking nurses, [this brochure can be downloaded here.](#)

The English version will follow soon.

- 1.1.1. The nursing profession and its regulations
- 1.1.2. The current situation in Germany
- 1.1.3. Tasks, fields und responsibilities of a nurse
- 1.1.4. Organizations and associations



Healthcare in Germany

Criterion 1.1: Nursing field

1.1.1 a. regulated professions

As in many countries, certain professions and their licensing are regulated by law. This means that holding the title and practicing the profession requires state licensure. For nurses and registered nurses, the state licensure process corresponds to the state examination known as the "PRC Board Exam" in the Philippines. In Germany, the federal state governments are responsible for the respective licensing procedures as the legislative power is distributed among the state governments (the so-called federal system). Thus, every skilled worker from abroad must first apply for a professional license from the concerned government and receive certification as a licensed professional upon successful recognition in Germany.

Source:

<https://www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/themen/gesundheitswesen/gesundheitsberufe/gesundheitsberufe-allgemein.html>

1.1.1 b. opportunities for vocational training

Generalistic nurse training

A kind of basic course of study in a nursing facility or hospital and a nursing school. Hence, it is also called dual training which includes theoretical instruction in a nursing school and practical training in a facility.

Vocational training takes a total of three years and ends with the graduation as a nurse. The first two years of training are of generalistic nature.

After completing two years of training, the nurse trainee must decide how to continue. They either specialize as a geriatric nurse, general nurse or pediatric nurse. The profession of



general nurse ("Pflegefachmann/frau") is officially recognized throughout Europe and offers many opportunities for employment and development.

1.1.1 c. nursing training/nursing degree

In 2020, a new law for nursing training was enacted. The "Pflegerberufe-Ausbildungs- und -Prüfungsverordnung - PflAPrV" (ordinance on the training and examination of nurses) has come into force. Since then, several nursing career pathways have been available. This starts with a generalistic training, a kind of basic training from which you can then choose your preferred pathway later. Completing a degree course at university is also a possible pathway. Available options are as follows:

The nursing degree course (integrated degree program)

Alongside vocational training, there is the option of completing an integrated nursing degree program. What is so special about this program is that students acquire extended social, technical, methodological and personal skills in order to be able to master the increasing complexity of nursing care based on findings in the nursing science.

The study period during the program is 7 semesters and it combines school-based (university lectures and seminars) and work-based (practical training) education. Practical training is organized by the university and implemented with the cooperating facilities. Around 2,300 hours of practical training are prescribed during the seven semesters. In addition, the students are required to attend consolidation seminars and regular skills and simulation training to practice nursing (and nursing science) skills.

Nowadays, it is also possible to obtain a bachelor's degree in Nursing Management in Germany via distance learning. As a nurse manager, you must be able to marry economic thinking, medical expertise, legal knowledge and organizational talent with a keen interest in people and their needs.

Everybody who has the following qualifications can complete the nursing degree course:

- a secondary school completion and university qualification
- a subject-specific university entrance qualification
- general or subject-specific professional credentials for the vocationally qualified (two years of vocational training and three years of work experience are required)
- good physical condition to practice their profession
- requested and received a copy of their police certificate (criminal record)
- A few more documents are required from foreign applicants



- An assessment of the university transcripts - this is carried out by certain state or semi-state institutes. Mostly called "Zeugnisanerkennungsstellen".
- Birth certificate
- All documents translated by a sworn translator

Admission requirements for the nursing degree course

International students can check whether they meet the requirements for their desired degree course in Germany by looking in the admissions database.

Further information on admission requirements:

<https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/de/studium-ausbildung/studieren-in-deutschland/absolvieren/abschluesse-nachweisen>

and further information to 1.1. Nursing field:

<https://anabin.kmk.org/anabin.html>

<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/service/fragenkatalog-node/04-auslandssemesterdeutschland/606212>

<https://www.pflegestudium.de/weiterbildungen-uebersicht/>

<https://www.study-in-germany.de>

<https://studieren.de/auslaendische-studierende.0.html>

<https://www.der-weiterbildungsratgeber.de/>

<https://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/>

Financial funding for the degree course

Unfortunately, university students don't receive compensation, but many facilities offer remuneration for work-based practical training. Further funding can be obtained by applying for a scholarship from a corresponding foundation. Another possibility could be special state funding available in Germany. If you meet all the requirements, you are eligible to receive the funding in question which is the:

“Bundesausbildungsförderung (BAföG)“

The “Bundesausbildungsförderung“(federal student grants and loans) provides financial support during your vocational training or studies. This kind of financial grant is called



“BAföG“. The “BAföG“ is financial funding provided by the German government. The “**Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung**“ (Federal Ministry of Education and Research) is responsible for issuing the BAföG.

For further information visit <https://www.xn--bafg-7qa.de/de/das-bafoeg-372.php>

You must apply directly at the universities for a place to study. You can find more information about this on the corresponding websites of all universities in Germany offering the course.

A central information platform can be found here: <https://www.uni-assist.de/>

Career and development opportunities in nursing

The nursing profession offers a wide range of career paths and specializations, such as clinical instructor, dialysis nurse, wound care nurse, hygiene officer in nursing, quality manager in nursing, pediatric ICU nurse, intensive care and anesthesia nurse, palliative care nurse, geropsychiatric nurse, etc. You can also choose to take on managerial positions, including charge nurse, nursing home manager and nurse manager up to medical director.

There is no other field with so many opportunities for further education; you can choose between degrees at bachelor's and master's level. This paves the way for careers in nursing management, nursing education, nursing practice or nursing science, all the way to a doctorate and a university career.

For more information about education, training and further education please visit:

[BAMF - Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge - Träger oder Lehr- und Fachkräfte](#)

[Für Menschen aus dem Ausland - Bundesagentur für Arbeit \(arbeitsagentur.de\)](#)



1.1.2. The current labor market situation regarding nursing professions in Germany.

The skilled labor shortage

Every new nursing home or hospital needs a legally defined quota of skilled workers which currently leads to considerable problems in 95% of all facilities. For every 13 residents of a retirement home or patients in a hospital, 3 to 5 skilled workers must be available around the clock.

But many facilities are far below that quota and therefore have problems with the "Heimaufsicht" (regulatory authority for nursing and retirement homes in Germany). The media have already reported that facilities, homes and hospital wings have been forcibly shut down. The reason, besides budget and management errors, is the extreme shortage of skilled labor. It's a tightrope walk for HR managers who can barely withstand the pressure from their job for more than two years. At the moment, the greatest fluctuation in the healthcare industry occurs among HR managers.

By 2025, there will be a shortage of well over 200,000 nurses (according to statistics gathered by 6 institutes).



Fachkräftemangel in Gesundheits- und Pflegeberufen

Fachkräfte
Deutschland nach Ländern
Sep 2012

Humanmedizin (Experten)



■ = **Fachkräftemangel** (Vakanzeit liegt mind. 40% über dem Bundesdurchschnitt aller Berufe und es gibt weniger als 150 Arbeitslose je 100 gemeldete Stellen oder es gibt weniger Arbeitslose als gemeldete Stellen)

Gesundheits- und Krankenpflege



■ = **Anzeichen für Fachkräfteengpässe** (Vakanzeit ist über dem Bundesdurchschnitt aller Berufe und es gibt weniger als 300 Arbeitslose je 100 gemeldeten Stellen)

Altenpflege



■ = **keine Engpässe** (Vakanzeit ist unter dem Bundesdurchschnitt aller Berufe oder es gibt mehr als 300 Arbeitslose je 100 gemeldete Stellen)
□ = Keine Daten aufgrund kleiner Größenordnungen

Datenquelle: Statistik der Bundesagentur für Arbeit

<https://statistik.arbeitsagentur.de/DE/Statischer-Content/Statistiken/Themen-im-Fokus/Berufe/Generische-Publikationen/Altenpflege.pdf?blob=publicationFile>

1.1.3. Tasks and fields of work of nurses.



Nurses possess knowledge and skills in caring for people of all ages, from newborns to the elderly.

The fields of work of nurses are divided into different professional fields that share a lot of elements, but require additional training or further education for the individual areas.

In nursing, you take care of sick, disabled, old or dying people and work in very diverse fields.

Nursing fields are as follows:

- Nursing (in medical or nursing facilities)
- Pediatric nursing (mostly in medical facilities)
- Geriatric nursing (in retirement homes and nursing homes for patients with dementia and other geriatric diseases)
- Intensive care nursing (ICU, Intensive Care Units, ventilated or paralyzed patients or patients in palliative care)
- Operating Room nursing (in hospitals and clinics)
- Intellectual and developmental disability nursing (in dedicated therapy facilities)
- Rehabilitation nursing (dedicated facilities for patients recovering from surgery or a stroke)

The nursing fields stated above are established in inpatient as well as outpatient care facilities.

This includes the following skills among many areas:

- Personal hygiene (washing, showering, toileting)
- Changing bandages
- Wound care
- Monitoring and measuring blood pressure, body temperature, pulse and respiration.
- Monitoring medication and therapy.
- Observing patients for toileting frequency, sleep patterns, or medically relevant abnormal behavior
- Documenting all of the collected data in electronic or manual form.
- Assisting with feeding and food distribution.
- Documentation and evaluation of nursing interventions
- Carrying out physician's orders
- Assisting with medical procedures

What is handled differently in Germany than in many other countries is the area of basic care which involves personal hygiene and intimate care. In Germany, not only nursing assistants, but especially in homes, general nurses must also provide intimate care. Intimate care issues are known in many homes but you can attend training courses to deal with these issues professionally.

Furthermore, the promotion of the patients' autonomy, i.e. the mobility of the patient, is an important principle in Germany. This also includes assisting patients with eating and taking preventive measures (prophylaxis). For this reason, many facilities very often offer a continuing education program with courses and additional vocational training.



Nursing tasks represent the most qualified competencies in the health care system. In order to really meet the demands and also the requirements of the training in all areas, qualifications and knowledge must always be kept up to date. You can assess the status of your qualifications by asking very simple questions. In our assessment we use a small test that contains the following questions:

1. In nursing, preventive measures, so-called prophylactics, are absolutely necessary for the patient in order to avoid late sequelae.
2. Which prophylactics do you know to avoid late sequelae or illnesses?
3. Which prophylactics do you have to apply urgently on a freshly operated patient who is not yet mobile?
4. Which nursing measures do you employ to prevent pneumonia?
5. Name 3 symptoms that indicate thrombosis.
6. Which symptom can you first observe in a patient with an incipient pressure sore?
7. Name the stages of a pressure sore.
8. Name the areas of the body that are most prone to pressure sores.
9. What life-threatening disease can result from thrombosis?
10. Which patients are most likely to develop thrombosis?
11. Name 5 symptoms of dementia.
12. It is often difficult to distinguish the onset of dementia from depression in old age. Do you know the differences of the symptoms? Name them.
13. Mrs. S. ,85 years old, is immobile, incontinent and eats and drinks poorly. She also suffers from arterial circulatory problems and is diabetic. What prophylactics do you think is appropriate for this patient? Explain.

If you can answer all these questions, you are already very well trained. If you have doubts about some of your answers, you might need further training. But do not worry, we have the appropriate training and continuing education programs in Germany. Your training during the time of recognition will also offer many opportunities to improve your knowledge.

For Further information on the nursing profession please visit:

<https://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufenet/faces/index?path=null/kurzbeschreibung&dkz=132173&such=Pflegefachmann%2F-frau>

[BERUFENET - Berufsinformationen einfach finden \(arbeitsagentur.de\)](https://berufenet.arbeitsagentur.de/berufenet/faces/index?path=null/kurzbeschreibung&dkz=132173&such=Pflegefachmann%2F-frau)

<https://www.ausbildung.de/berufe/pflegefachmann/>

<https://www.bibb.de/de/82236.php>

<http://www.kompetenzen-gesundheitsberufe.de/>



1.1.4. What are professional and trade associations, what do they do?

There is a saying in Germany stating that when more than three experts come together, a club is formed. And when more than three clubs come together, an association is formed.

Associations of nurses have also become increasingly important. Numerous associations work to address the interests of these professions.

They are also called advocacy groups because they are the first place to go if something goes wrong in the workplace, if there are illegal incidents or if something is ethically or morally unacceptable.

Members are mostly given the opportunity for receiving:

- Regular information
- Advice on everyday work issues
- Support with problems concerning labor law and collective bargaining

Only legal advice can unfortunately not be provided, as this is regulated in Germany and can only be done by lawyers.

You can find the list below via:

<https://www.pflegemarkt.com/2015/06/24/ein-ueberblick-ueber-verbaende-fuer-pflegedienste-und-pflegeheime/>

Professional associations

Name:	Members:
“Deutscher Berufsverband für Pflegeberufe e.V. (DBfK)” (The German Nurses Association)	20,000
“Verband der Schwesternschaft vom DRK e.V.” (Nurses’ organisation of the German Red Cross)	20,000
“Deutscher HebammenVerband e.V.” (German Midwifery Association)	19,862
“Bundesverband privater Anbieter sozialer Dienste e.V. (bpa)” (The Federal Association of Private Social Service Providers)	11,000
Arbeitgeber- und Berufsverband Privater Pflege e.V (ABVP)	5,000
“Deutscher Pflegeverband e.V. (DPV)” (The German Nurses Association)	5,000
“katholischer Berufsverband für Pflegeberufe e.V.” (Catholic Nursing Association)	5,000
“Deutscher Berufsverband für Altenpflege e.V.” (German Geriatric Nursing Association)	2,000
“Berufsverband Kinderkrankenpflege Deutschland e.V.” (German Pediatric Nursing Association)	1,500
“Bundesverband Pflegemanagment“ (Federal Nursing Management Association)	1,000



Bundesverband Ambulante Dienste und Stationäre Einrichtungen e.V. (Federal Association for home care services and inpatient facilities)	1,000
“Landesverband freie ambulante Krankenpflege NRW e.V.“ (Regional Mobile Care Service Association NRW)	1,000
“Deutsche Gesellschaft für Fachkrankenpflege und Funktionsdienste e.V.“ (German Association for Professional Nursing and Nursing Duty in Functional Units)	800
“Arbeits- und Bildungsgemeinschaft Gesundheits- und Pflegekooperation Deutschland e.V.“ (German Healthcare and Nursing Work and Education Association)	572
“Evangelischer Fach- und Berufsverband für Pflege e.V.“ (Evangelical Professional Association)	390

“Bundesfachvereinigung Leitender Krankenpflegekräfte in der Psychiatrie e.V.“ (Federal Professional Association for Psychiatric Nurses in Managing Positions)	340
“AnbieterVerband qualitäts-orientierter Gesundheits-pflegeeinrichtungen e.V. (AVG)“ (Provider Association for quality-oriented Nursing Facilities)	100
“Aktionsbündnis Seelische Gesundheit“ (Mental Health Coalition)	100

The list of associations is even longer, here are only the most important ones listed. But associations cooperate to form and organize even bigger associations yet again.

“Deutscher Pflegerat e.V. (DPR)“ (German Nursing Council)	15	Associations
“DPO Dachverband der Pflegeorganisationen Rheinland-Pfalz e.V.“ (Umbrella Organization for Nursing in Rheinland-Pfalz)	8	Union

Down below are the most important associations and their field of responsibility:

DBfK: Deutscher Berufsverband für Pflegeberufe (The German Nurses Association)

The German Nurses Association is also the most famous and independent representative of the nursing professions in Germany. It represents the professional interests of nursing, geriatric nursing and pediatric nursing. The association is concerned with the professionalization of the nursing profession, the further development of nursing care and with ensuring appropriate, good and motivating working conditions for skilled workers.

<https://www.dbfk.de/>



DRK-Schwwesternschaften (Nurses' organisation of the German Red Cross)

As an umbrella organization, the association represents around 20,000 Red Cross nurses and skilled workers of the DRK Nurses' organization nationwide. Its main tasks are professionalizing nursing professions through highly qualified vocational training and continuing education as well as advancing the academization of the nursing profession. They advise members on professional, economic and legal issues.

Deutschen Berufsverband für Altenpflege, DBVA (German Geriatric Nursing Association)

They are the only professional association that exclusively represents state-recognized geriatric nurses. The association seeks to promote the interests of skilled workers working in geriatric care in Germany primarily through political work.

The DBVA demands:

- better working conditions and a fair wage in geriatric nursing,
- better training conditions and free training,
- the recognition of the geriatric nursing profession,
- specialized vocational training and continued education of employees in the geriatric care and much more.

The DBVA organizes:

- the representation of geriatric nursing in political bodies, such as state nursing conferences,
- informing the media and the public about the situation in geriatric nursing,
- participation in the development of new concepts for care of the elderly,
- specialized vocational training and continued education, and much more.

BIVA-Pflegeschutzbund, BIVA (Association for the protection of nurses) The BIVA has represented the interests of people who need help or care and therefore live in assisted living facilities since 1974.

It also promotes the treatment and payment of nurses.

<https://www.biva.de/>

Below you can find further sources on the „Deutscher Pflegerat e.V.“



<https://deutscher-pflegerat.de/>

or the „Deutsche Gesellschaft für Fachkrankenpflege und Funktionsdienste e. V.“

<https://www.dgf-online.de/>

The next part of the compliance brochure is about employment in Germany, i.e., everything you need to know about contracts, standards, obligations, but also rights in the German workplace.