

Apply for recognition as a nurse with a professional qualification from the EU/EEA/Switzerland

Would you like to work as a nurse in Germany? Then you need a state permit. To obtain a state permit, you must submit an application and have your foreign professional qualification recognized.

Competent Department

- [Die Senatorin für Gesundheit, Frauen und Verbraucherschutz | Referat 20 - Berufe im Gesundheitswesen](#)

Basic information

The nursing profession is regulated in Germany. This means that in order to work as a nurse in Germany, you need a state license. With the permit, you can use the professional title "Pflegefachperson", "Pflegefachfrau" or "Pflegefachmann" and work in the profession.

If you have a professional qualification from the European Union (EU), the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland, you can also obtain a state permit from the competent authority in Germany. In order to obtain the permit, you must have your foreign professional qualification recognized. In the recognition procedure, the competent authority compares your professional qualification from abroad with the German professional qualification and checks the equivalence. The equivalence of the professional qualification is an important prerequisite for the granting of a state permit.

A professional qualification from the EU, the EEA or Switzerland is usually automatically recognized when you apply for recognition. This means that no equivalence check is carried out. It is assumed that the training is equivalent. However, there may be exceptions to this rule. This depends on the country in which you completed your training and when. If you started your vocational training after your country of training joined the EU/EEA, your professional qualification will generally be recognized automatically.

If your professional qualification does not originate from the EU, EEA or Switzerland, other regulations apply.

In addition to the equivalence of the professional qualification, you must also meet other requirements for the permit to be issued. Further requirements are, for example, sufficient German language skills and health suitability.

You can also apply for the procedure from abroad.

Requirements

- You have a comparable professional qualification as a nurse from the EU, the EEA or Switzerland.
- You want to work as a nurse in Germany.
- Personal suitability: You are reliable to work as a nurse and have no criminal record.
- Health suitability: You are mentally and physically fit to work as a nurse.
- You have German language skills at the required level. This is normally language level B2 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

What documents do I need?

- The responsible office will tell you which documents you need to submit. Important documents are generally
 - Proof of identity (identity card or passport)
 - Marriage certificate (if your name has changed due to marriage)
 - Curriculum vitae
 - Proof of your professional qualifications (e.g. certificates, professional certificate)
 - Proof of training
 - Proof of your relevant professional experience in a profession that is comparable to the nursing profession
 - Proof of other relevant knowledge for working as a nursing specialist
 - Do you still live or work in a third country, i.e. not in the EU, EEA or Switzerland? Then you may need to prove that you have received a commitment from a health and care facility to work as a nursing specialist in Germany.
- You only need to submit the following documents if your professional qualification was completed before a certain date (cut-off date). The responsible office will inform you:
 - Certificate of conformity
 - If no certificate of conformity is available: Proof of the content and duration of your training (e.g. list of subjects and grades, study book, diploma supplement, transcript of records)
 - Certificate: You must have worked legally and continuously in the profession for at least 3 years during the last 5 years before the certificate is issued.
- You usually hand in these documents later. The responsible office will inform you when you should hand in the documents:
 - Proof of your personal suitability: criminal record extract or certificate of good conduct from your country of origin. The certificate must not be older than 3 months at the time of application.
 - Proof of your health suitability: Medical certificate. The certificate must not be older than 3 months at the time of application.
 - Proof of your German language skills: Language certificate

The responsible office will tell you which documents you need to submit as a simple copy, a certified copy or the original.

Procedure

Application

You apply to the competent authority for permission to use the professional title "Pflegefachfrau" or "Pflegefachmann". Or you can apply for the professional title "Pflegefachperson". You can submit the application with the documents to the competent authority or send it by post. Do not send any originals. Sometimes you can also send the application electronically. The competent office will inform you.

You can submit an application if you do not yet live in Germany.

Examination of the application by the authority

The competent authority will check whether you meet all the requirements for being granted permission to use the professional title "Pflegefachperson", "Pflegefachfrau" or "Pflegefachmann". One requirement is that your professional qualification is recognized.

Automatic recognition

As a rule, the automatic recognition procedure applies if you began your professional training after your country of training joined the EU/EEA. There are other cases in which your professional qualification can be automatically recognized. The competent authority will inform you.

In the case of automatic recognition, the equivalence of your professional qualification is not checked individually. This means that if you meet all other requirements, you will receive permission to use the professional title "Pflegefachperson", "Pflegefachfrau" or "Pflegefachmann". The other requirements include your health suitability, reliability and German language skills.

Certificate of conformity for professional qualifications acquired before the EU/EEA accession of the country of training

Professional qualifications can also be automatically recognized if they were started before the EU/EEA accession of your country of training (or do not correspond to the legal designations). To do this, you must submit a certificate from the competent authority in your country of training stating that your professional qualification meets the minimum EU standards ("certificate of conformity"). If your professional qualification does not meet the minimum standards, you must provide proof of your professional experience. You must have worked as a nurse responsible for general care in your country of origin for 3

consecutive years in the 5 years prior to submitting your application. This must be confirmed by the authorities in your country of origin.

Checking equivalence

If your professional qualification is not automatically recognized, the competent authority will check the equivalence of your professional qualification. The competent authority will compare your professional qualification with the German professional qualification as a nursing specialist. The professional qualification is equivalent if there are no significant differences between your professional qualification and the German professional qualification.

Possible results of the equivalence test

If your professional qualification is equivalent, your foreign professional qualification will be recognized. The competent authority can confirm the result in writing. You must still meet the other requirements. You will then receive permission to use the professional title "Pflegefachperson", "Pflegefachfrau" or "Pflegefachmann".

Are there any significant differences between your professional qualification and the German professional qualification? You may be able to compensate for the differences through your professional experience, other knowledge, skills or competencies (lifelong learning). Knowledge, skills and competences must be certified by an authority in the country in which you acquired the knowledge, skills or competences.

However, it may be that the significant differences cannot be compensated for by your professional experience, knowledge, skills or competences. In this case, the competent authority will inform you of the significant differences between your professional qualification and the German professional qualification and why you cannot compensate for these significant differences.

The competent authority will also tell you what compensatory measures you can take to offset the significant differences.

If you decide not to take compensatory measures, your professional qualification will not be recognized and you will not be allowed to work as a nurse in Germany.

Compensatory measures

There are various compensatory measures:

- Adaptation course: The adaptation course lasts a maximum of 3 years.
- Aptitude test: In the aptitude test, only those areas in which significant differences have been identified are tested. The aptitude test consists of a practical examination combined with an interview.
- As a rule, you can choose between an adaptation period or an aptitude test.

If you successfully complete the compensation measure and meet all other requirements, you will receive permission to use the professional title "Pflegefachperson", "Pflegefachfrau" or "Pflegefachmann".

Legal bases

- [§§ 1 Absatz 1, 41, 42, 43 Gesetz über die Pflegeberufe \(Pflegeberufegesetz - PflBG\)](#)
- [§§ 43, 46, 47, 48 Ausbildungs- und Prüfungsverordnung für die Pflegeberufe \(Pflegeberufe-Ausbildungs- und -Prüfungsverordnung - PflAPrV\)](#)

More information

Legal remedy

You can take legal action against the decision of the competent authority within a certain period of time (for example, by lodging an objection). The decision will then be reviewed. Details can be found in the information on legal remedies at the end of your decision. We recommend that you first speak to the responsible office before taking legal action against the decision.

What deadlines must be paid attention to?

There is no deadline.

Sometimes documents are still missing from the procedure. The responsible office will then inform you by when you must submit the documents.

How long does it take to process

The processing time varies from case to case. The responsible office will inform you if any documents are missing.

What are the costs?

The responsible office will inform you of the costs. The costs generally depend on the time and effort required for processing.

Additional costs may also be incurred (e.g. for translations, certifications or compensatory measures such as an adaptation period or an aptitude test). These costs vary from person to person.