



Professional recognition for midwives – becoming a skilled worker

Network "Integration through Qualification (IQ)"

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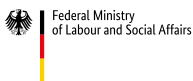
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There is a shortage of midwives in Germany. For example, more than 20% of all new mothers do not use the postnatal care to which they are legally entitled because they cannot find a midwife*. Demand is therefore increasing for employees with a foreign degree.

There has been an increasing shortage of midwives in Germany for many years*. Although the number of trainees rose by 44% to 2,688 between the academic years of 2008/2009 and 2018/2019, the profession of midwife is one of the shortage occupations in Germany.

For the year 2021, for example, the Federal Employment Agency stated that reported vacancies could not be filled within 57 days. Also, only around one in every two positions could be filled with somebody who is currently not in employment. The unemployment rate for this specific profession in 2021 was just 0.6%. The chances of finding an adequate position are assessed as high.** Increased demand for midwives is also anticipated in the years ahead, due in part to Germany's age distribution.

Because vacancies cannot be fully taken up by midwives who have studied or completed training in Germany, people who obtained their professional qualification as a midwife abroad are in high demand. Most vacancies are available in hospitals. However, working on a freelance basis is also possible. Further information is available here: <https://www.selbststaendig.de/geschaeftsideen/hebamme>. Anybody interested and still living abroad can find out more at www.make-it-in-germany.de. Advice can also be obtained via email, telephone or online chat from the "Working and Living in Germany" hotline.

The hotline refers those interested in recognition to the Central Service Agency for Professional Recognition (ZSBA) for more in-depth advice and support with the procedure.

Another important source of information is the **Recognition Finder** which provides you with key information concerning the recognition of your vocational qualification. For example, it will direct you to an advice centre and to the competent authority for the recognition application.

Individuals with foreign professional qualifications already living in Germany can contact the regional **IQ advice centres** for information about the options for recognition.





How is training and recognition for midwives regulated in Germany?



- Midwife is one of the professions in Germany with a legally protected professional title. This means that state authorisation is required to use the professional title of midwife in Germany and to be allowed to work as a midwife. Those who gained their professional qualification abroad can apply to go through a recognition process with the competent authority. This gives you authorisation to practise your profession in Germany. The basic requirement for this is training or a degree in the field of midwifery. In your home country, the qualification must authorise you to work as a midwife.



- The content and duration of training for midwives are defined by the German Midwifery Act (Hebammengesetz, HebG) and by the study and examination regulation for midwives (Studien- und Prüfungsverordnung für Hebammen, HebStPrV). This is divided into a theoretical element and a practical element. The theoretical element of the training focuses, for example, on outpatient and inpatient healthcare provision for mother and child during pregnancy, childbirth, the postnatal period and breastfeeding and also on the science of midwifery and risk and quality management. In the practical element of the training, you work as a “midwife in recognition” in a hospital.

Since 1 January 2020, midwives have been trained on bachelor's degree courses. There is, however, a transition period in place until 31 December 2027, after which a degree is mandatory.



- If substantial differences are identified between your training and the German training, then you must compensate for these accordingly. This can be done either by participating in an adaptation period for a maximum of three years, or by taking a knowledge test. If you pass the adaptation period or the knowledge test, you receive authorisation to use the professional title of “Midwife”.



- You also need to provide further evidence such as medical suitability, personal integrity and proof of language skills at level B2. If your qualification is identified as equivalent to the German training and you meet the other requirements, then authorisation to practise is granted.



- Network IQ provides training in different towns and cities in Germany for foreign midwives. The IQ advice centre is able to help you find the right offer for your professional recognition.



Is my professional qualification likely to be recognised in Germany?

To be able to work in Germany as a midwife, you must have your foreign qualification recognised. If you completed your qualification in a third country (i.e. outside the EU/EEA), you will go through the individual recognition procedure. This checks whether your training is equivalent to the German training or whether there are substantial differences.

In principle, the midwifery exam for midwives from EU countries is also recognised in all nations of the EU. However, the competent authority for the federal state needs to check the training qualification acquired abroad. Adaptation courses for midwives from third countries are offered in various towns and cities, further information is available about this on pages 10 and 11, and also here: <https://www.hebammenverband.de/beruf-hebamme/berufliche-anerkennung/#c11658>

You can find out precisely what recognition involves from the IQ advice centre. Advisers will help you to prepare for the recognition procedure and to begin this. They will inform you about which adaptation periods or knowledge test preparation courses are right for you if substantial differences from the German training are specified in your assessment notice. The adaptation period lasts for a maximum of three years. It is concluded with a professional discussion on the content learned. The knowledge test relates to the content of the state final examination.

From the introduction of the Recognition Act in 2012 through to the end of 2020, 2,600 applications for recognition were submitted by foreign midwives nationwide. According to statistics, approximately two-thirds of procedures up until the end of 2020 resulted in a positive decision. A further 750 applications were going through the recognition process. Just under 50 procedures resulted in a negative decision.***From January 2019 to June 2022, IQ recognition advisers provided more than 2,900 advisory sessions for persons with the reference occupation of midwife who were seeking advice. Over the same period, almost 190 individuals started an IQ job training scheme.

Worth knowing: Recognition procedure for midwives

Working as a midwife in Germany is regulated at federal level. This means you need authorisation from the state to practise the profession if you wish to work in Germany as a midwife. Each federal state has its own competent authority to which you are able to submit your application for recognition of your state-recognised qualification. This means you apply in the federal state where you live or in which you want to live after entering Germany. If your training is assessed as equivalent, you can work anywhere in Germany for an unlimited period.

What pathways are available for working in Germany as a midwife?

1

Seek advice

If you live in Germany, you need recognition of your professional qualification to be able to work as a midwife. The Network IQ advisers will discuss with you how you might gain this recognition. For example, they will help you to find the right recognition centre for your place of residence and profession.

2

Submit an application

The Network IQ can help you prepare the documentation to apply for recognition of your qualification as midwife. As a rule you have to submit, for example, documentation of your work experience and qualifications translated into German and your CV to the recognition centre. The procedure involves a fee. In some cases, the German state may provide financial assistance. IQ is also able to inform you regarding these options for financial support.

3

The recognition authority checks your documents

The competent recognition authority in your federal state checks your application and determines whether your foreign qualification is equivalent to all parts of the degree/training in Germany. This involves checking whether substantial differences exist between your training and the German midwifery training. Once all necessary documents have been submitted, this check must be completed within four months. In certain cases, the time period may be extended. The recognition procedure is governed by the training and examination regulation for midwives (HebAPrV). Since 1 January 2020, midwives have been trained on conventional degree courses. The full-time vocational school examination can still be taken until the end of 2027 under the previous statutory regulation.

4

You receive your assessment notice

If no substantial differences are identified, the competent authority certifies the equivalence. If you fulfil all further criteria for authorisation to practise the profession, such as German language skills at level B2 and medical suitability, you receive authorisation to use the professional title of "Midwife". This places you on an equal legal footing with those who completed the German midwifery qualification.



5



Substantial differences

If substantial differences are identified between your training and the German training, then you must compensate for these in order to receive recognition. The basis for this is also the training and examination regulation for midwives. You can compensate for differences with either an adaptation period which lasts for a maximum of three years or a knowledge test which relates to the content of the state final examination. If you pass the adaptation period or the knowledge test and if you meet the further requirements for the authorisation to practise the profession, you then receive authorisation to use the professional title of “midwife”. Your IQ advice centre can help you find appropriate training to compensate for the identified differences.

6



Find work!



If you have studied midwifery and live abroad, then in addition to a job offer in the non-regulated sector, you will need evidence that your degree is comparable to the German degree if you want to immigrate to Germany. Many foreign university qualifications can be found in the **anabin** database.

If your qualification cannot be found in anabin, you must have your certificate assessed by the Central Office for Foreign Education. Your statement of compatibility provides you with an official document which describes your foreign higher education qualification and certifies the options for its use for professional and academic purposes. The statement of comparability ranks the foreign training against the German education system. However, it is not a substitute for recognition and also does not enable you to use the professional title of “midwife”.

Miljana Boskovic is working in her dream profession.



Miljana Boskovic comes from Serbia. At home, she completed intermediate-level medical school, specialising in midwifery, as well as a six-month placement. In Belgrade, she again studied, this time for three years at the higher-level medical school, specialising in midwifery, worked for six months as an intern and sat two state examinations. She then worked for two years as a midwife on a freelance basis. In contrast to Germany, there are plenty of nurses and midwives in Serbia. The job situation therefore ultimately led to Ms. Boskovic to decide to go to Germany with a friend to find work. In preparation, she learned German to language level B1.

She discovered that her state examination needed to be recognised in Germany. She

Success stories

contacted the regional council in Hesse. They decided that she needed to complete 900 hours of practical training. She set about searching for a hospital where she could do this practical work. There was a desperate need for skilled workers everywhere, but they had to be experienced and have a certificate. Another option Ms. Boskovic learned about was having the nursing diploma recognised. She tried again to get a recognised diploma, this time with the district government in Düsseldorf. There she found an employee who knew all about the shortage of midwives. He strongly advised her to seek recognition as a midwife. It was ultimately decided that she needed to complete 500 hours of practical work as a midwife. In July 2020, she was able to enter Germany. The hospital in Bergisch-Gladbach appointed her as a midwife in recognition and by December 2020 she had already completed the 500 hours of practical training. However, because she still felt a little unsure, the assessment notice was changed and increased to 700 hours of theoretical training. From February to October 2021, she studied four theory modules at the Schulzentrum für Gesundheitsberufe (Education Centre for Healthcare Professions) and worked alongside this at the hospital. This was concluded with a four-hour professional discussion in November. Her contract of employment has been permanent since 1 February 2022.

Her persistence and ambition have paid off!

Miljana Boskovic received her certificate five days before the interview. Congratulations!

The Network IQ offers various adaptation courses for midwives. In North Rhine-Westphalia you can complete further training in Mönchengladbach.



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Since 2018, the Schulzentrum für Gesundheitsberufe am Niederrhein (Education Centre for Healthcare Professions, SGN) has offered an adaptation period for midwives from third countries. Any differences specified in the assessment notice as needing to be compensated for can thus be addressed in theoretical teaching. The teachers and practice tutors are experienced midwives and doctors who focus the course specifically on simulation-based training units and on individual and ongoing support for participants during their practical deployments in hospitals and on a freelance basis. This helps manage the transition into the German labour market as effectively and as sustainably as possible.

There is no charge for attending the course. The subproject is set to run until 31 December 2022.

Further information is available here:

Schulzentrum für Gesundheitsberufe am Niederrhein GmbH (SGN)

Hubertusstraße 100 | 41239 Mönchengladbach

<https://sgn-mg.de/de/Anpassungslehrgaenge-fuer-auslaendische-Fachkraefte.htm>

Adaptation period for midwives from third countries.

The “Zentrum für Fort- und Weiterbildung an der Evangelischen Hochschule Berlin” (Centre for Advanced and Continuing Education and Training at the Protestant University of Applied Sciences in Berlin) offers an adaptation period for midwives who want to work in their profession in Germany but whose foreign qualification is not recognised. In the adaptation period for midwives from third countries, you can train and achieve full recognition of your foreign qualification within 12 months.

The course lasts a total of 12 months and begins each year in October. During the course, you are employed in a three-shift system in a maternity clinic of your choice and are instructed by experienced midwives. The online teaching at the Protestant University of Applied Sciences is run alongside this on two working days per week. There is a final examination at the end of the course.

There is no charge for attending the course. The subproject is set to run until 31 December 2022.

Further information is available here:

Zentrum für Fort- und Weiterbildung
an der Evangelischen Hochschule Berlin
Adaptation course for midwives
Teltower Damm 118-122 | 14167 Berlin

www.eh-berlin.de

Anpassungslehrgang-hebammen@eh-berlin.de



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Midwife is Oksana's dream profession. She did everything she could to be able to work in her profession again.



In 2011, Oksana Florian moved from Ukraine for love, together with her twelve-year-old son from her first marriage, in order to be with her husband in Brandenburg. She had originally planned to go to her sister in Canada, and had therefore learned English and French. This meant that when she entered Germany she could barely speak German (A-1) and initially spent six months intensively and determinedly learning the language. She completed the B1 examination with 100 percent success.

In Ukraine, Ms. Florian had completed training as a midwife in 2000 achieving the grade of "very good". She then studied for three years and gained a bachelor's degree which enabled her to work in a hospital as a senior midwife. She was able to show that she had 11 years of professional experience when she came to Germany.

Success stories

Oksana Florian had already applied to the Brandenburg State Office for Occupational Safety, Consumer Protection and Health for recognition as a midwife and a general nurse when she entered Germany.

Once she had learned sufficient German, she was made aware of a 10-month adaptation course for general nurses at the Europäische Bildungswerk für Beruf und Gesellschaft (European Training Centre for Work and Society) in Potsdam. She completed the course at the same time as the B2 examination, and sat the examinations while heavily pregnant with her second child. The placement and the practical examination took place in the hospital in Eberswalde, and the theoretical examination was in Potsdam. In 2013 she received her recognition certificate as a nurse. Shortly after this she was deployed on the children's ward. She quickly realised that being a midwife was her dream profession and that she would give anything to be able to continue working in this profession. She then had two strokes of good luck. She was deployed in the maternity ward from 2018 and in the same year she became a mother for the third time. When she then received a letter in 2019 from the Protestant University of Applied Sciences in Berlin offering her an adaptation period for midwives from third countries (IQ), she decided to grasp the opportunity. She passed the final examination in July 2020 before the end of the course.

Oksana Florian is employed for 32 hours a week in the hospital in Eberswalde. She also supports women in pre- and postnatal care and provides care once a week to pregnant women in a gynaecologist clinic.

Ms. Florian is very satisfied with what she has achieved. And she's also pleased she had the opportunity to have her training recognised via adaptation periods. She's also very grateful to her husband for the huge support he provided.

What remains for her is her main goal of opening a birthing centre. With the energy she has, she will also manage this.

Sources

*<https://www.kartenmacherei.de/studie-hebammen/?msclkid=bec81171cf9b11ec887facc32b7c0379#bedarf-an-hebammen>

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***Federal Statistical Office

Weitere Informationen:

www.netzwerk-iq.de

www.anererkennung-in-deutschland.de

www.netzwerk-iq.de

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