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Craft - Assessment of the equivalence of foreign professional qualifications in craft trades not requiring a licence or similar trades (master craftsman examination)

There are around 200 different occupations in the skilled crafts sector in Germany.

41 of these professions are summarised as **exempt trades** in Annex B Section 1 of the Crafts Code:

1. undertakers
2. bow maker
3. brewer and maltster
4. bookbinder
5. gemstone cutters and engravers
6. fine opticians
7. photographers
8. galvanisers
9. building cleaners
10. violin makers
11. glass and porcelain painters
12. goldsmiths and silversmiths
13. engravers
14. hand-drawn instrument makers
15. wood and building preservationists (wall protection and wood impregnation in buildings)
16. wood sculptors
17. woodwind instrument makers
18. ceramist
19. piano and harpsichord maker
20. basket and wickerwork designers
21. beautician
22. furrier
23. tailor
24. metal and bell founders
25. metal sculptors
26. metal wind instrument maker
27. pattern makers
28. milliners
29. millers
30. precision tool mechanics
31. print and media technologists (printers, screen printers, flexographers)
32. saddlers and fine bag makers
33. shoemakers
34. sailmaker
35. textile designers (embroiderers, weavers, lace makers, trimmers, knitters)
36. textile cleaners
37. watchmakers

38. gilder
39. wax puller
40. wine cooper
41. plucked instrument maker

A further 51 professions are listed as **trades similar to crafts** in Annex B Section 2 of the Crafts Code:

1. ironworkers
2. alteration cutters
3. dressmakers, decorators
4. asphalt pavers (excluding road construction)
5. execution of simple shoe repairs
6. building drying trades
7. concrete drillers and cutters
8. floor layers
9. ironing shops for men's outerwear
10. brush and paintbrush makers
11. stave makers
12. decorative seamstresses (excluding window dressers)
13. installation of standardised prefabricated building components (e.g. windows, doors, frames, shelves)
14. vehicle recyclers
15. stitch carpet manufacturers
16. meat cutter, boner
17. fuger (in building construction)
18. tanner
19. beverage line cleaner
20. glove maker
21. manufacture of customised wire frames for decorative purposes
22. wood block maker
23. wooden ladder maker (customised production)
24. wooden tyre maker
25. wood shingle maker
26. clog maker
27. offal butcher (Kuttler)
28. cable layer in building construction (without connection work)
29. piano tuner
30. artificial tamper
31. lampshade maker (customised production)
32. make-up artist
33. metal saw sharpener
34. metal grinder and metal polisher
35. mould maker
36. pleated burner
37. pile driving (driving piles in hydraulic engineering)
38. prop makers
39. pipe and sewer cleaners
40. umbrella makers
41. drum maker
42. quick cleaner

43. ice-cream maker (with distribution of ice cream with usual accessories)
44. lithographer
45. fabric painters
46. tank protection companies (corrosion protection of oil tanks for firing systems without chemical processes)
47. carpet cleaners
48. textile hand printers
49. theatre and costume painters
50. theatre costume seamstresses
51. theatre sculptors

In general, no special qualifications are required for the trades that do not require a licence or similar crafts in order to practise them self-employed. These professions in the skilled crafts sector are not regulated.

This means that if you want to work independently in these professions on a permanent basis, you do not need a specific professional qualification. However, it may be advantageous if you can present an equivalence assessment for your professional qualification acquired abroad.

What is an equivalence assessment?

You have the right to a recognition procedure. **The procedure is called "equivalence assessment".**

The responsible Chamber of Crafts checks whether your professional qualification is equivalent to the German professional qualification (the master craftsman's examination under German craft law). The competent authority compares the qualifications using certain criteria. Important criteria are the content and duration of the training. The competent Chamber of Crafts also takes your professional experience, your other certificates of competence and qualifications into consideration during the equivalence assessment.

You will receive notification of the result of the procedure. The notification will state any existing and any missing professional qualifications. However, you will not receive a master craftsman title.

Recognition is an instrument of transparency to make your professional qualification acquired in another country more usable on the German labour market. The certificate enables employers to better assess your professional qualifications. For skilled workers from third countries, a recognition procedure is usually a prerequisite for the issue of a visa. Third countries are all countries outside the European Union (EU), the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland.

Procedure:

1. If you would like to work in the skilled crafts sector in Berlin, submit an application for equivalence assessment to the relevant Berlin Chamber of Crafts. You can also submit the application for equivalence assessment online from abroad. The responsible Chamber of Crafts will inform you which documents may need to be submitted as certified copies. Please do not send any originals by post. If documents are not available in German, a German translation is also required.

2. The Chamber of Crafts will check the documents and determine whether and to what extent your professional qualification from abroad is equivalent to the German professional qualification in the skilled crafts sector.

3. After paying the administrative fees, you will receive a notification with the result of the recognition procedure. Possible results may be

- a.) You will be recognised if your professional qualification and the German professional qualification are equivalent.
- b.) Sometimes there are significant differences between the professional qualifications. The differences are listed in your notification. You can use this decision to obtain further qualifications and later submit a new application for equivalence assessment.
- c.) If your professional qualification is not equivalent at all, you will not be recognised.

Note:

Regardless of the equivalence assessment, if you want to start self-employed work in the skilled crafts sector in Berlin, you must register with the relevant Chamber of Crafts in the register of trades not requiring a licence or in the register of crafts-like trades. These are different procedures, more information can be found below under "More Information".

Prerequisites

- **Training of foreign craftsmen**

You have a state-recognised professional qualification in a craft from another country.

- **Place of activity in Berlin**

You want to work in Berlin in the corresponding trade.

- **Documents and translations**

You have to submit your documents in German. Usually, the translations must be made by publicly appointed or authorised translators.

- **For online applications: registration/login via BundID**

(<https://service.berlin.de/nutzerkonten/bundid/>)

To submit your application online, log in with your BundID account. If you do not yet have a BundID account, please register with BundID. The basic registration with a user name and password is sufficient for this.

Documents required

- **Application for assessment of equivalence between the foreign professional qualification and the German reference profession**

You can apply online or in writing by post

- **Proof of identity**

Suitable proof of identity is, for example, a passport (passport substitute), all European identity cards or a convention passport.

Your proof was not issued in German? Then please also enclose a German translation.

The following information must be legible in Latin letters on the proof, e.g. in the translation of the proof of identity: Surname, first name, place of birth, date of birth. The proof of identity should include a photo of you and your

signature.

- **Curriculum vitae**

The curriculum vitae (CV) or résumé should provide a tabular overview of your:

1. training programmes (professional training, academic training, school education)
2. further training
3. previous jobs

The CV must be written in German.

- **Proof of training**

Submit your proof of professional qualification. This can be, for example: examination and degree certificates, professional certificate, diploma certificate, Bachelor's and/or Master's certificate or comparable documents. If available, also enclose evidence of the content and duration of your training. These can be, for example Diploma Supplement, the Transcript of Records, the Relevé de Notes, the study book, the examination regulations as well as subject and grade overviews or comparable documents.

Your certificate was not issued in German? Then please also enclose a German translation.

- **Proof of professional experience**

Certification of the type and duration of your relevant professional experience. This includes, for example, references, work books, professional training or comparable documents.

Was your certificate not issued in German? Then please also enclose a German translation.

- **If applicable, certificate from the country of training**

If the profession is regulated in your country of training: a certificate stating that you are authorised to practise the profession in your country of training. The certificate must be issued by the competent authority in your country of training.

Was your certificate not issued in German? Then please also enclose a German translation.

- **If applicable, proof of name change**

If your first name or surname no longer matches the name on your professional qualification certificate (e.g. due to marriage, change of nationality, change of gender or similar reasons), please enclose official proof of the name change with your application. This can be a birth certificate, marriage certificate, naturalisation certificate or other suitable proof of the name change.

Was your proof not issued in German? Then please also enclose a German translation.

- **If applicable, declaration or proof of previous applications for equivalence assessment**

A declaration that you have not yet submitted an application for equivalence assessment or, if applicable, documents relating to previous applications for equivalence assessment submitted to other competent authorities.

Forms

- **Application for assessment of equivalence between the foreign professional qualification and the German reference profession**

(<https://www.hwk-berlin.de/downloads/antragsformular-bqfg-91,828.pdf>)

Fees

- Usually up to approx. EUR 600.00.
- The Chamber of Crafts will inform you about the costs. The costs generally depend on the time and effort required for processing and are due immediately upon notification of the fee notice.
- You may also incur additional costs (e.g. for translations or notarisation of your documents). These costs vary from case to case.

Legal basis

- **Crafts Code (HwO) § 51g**
(https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/hwo/__51g.html)
- **Crafts Code (HwO) § 50c**
(https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/hwo/__50c.html)
- **Crafts Code (HwO) Annex B List of trades that can be operated as crafts that do not require a licence or similar trades**
(https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/hwo/anlage_b.html)
- **Professional Qualification Determination Act (BQFG) §§ 4-7**
(https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/bqfg/__4.html)
- **Professional Qualification Determination Act (BQFG) § 8 sec. 1 no. 2**
(https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/bqfg/__8.html)
- **Fee schedule of the Berlin Chamber of Crafts**
(<https://www.hwk-berlin.de/downloads/gebuehrenordnung-91,150.pdf>)
- **List of fees of the Berlin Chamber of Crafts**
(<https://www.hwk-berlin.de/downloads/gebuehrenverzeichnis-91,151.pdf>)

Average time to process request

Approx. 3 months, if all documents are complete.

More information

- **Foreign qualifications (Berlin Chamber of Crafts)**
(<https://www.hwk-berlin.de/artikel/auslaendische-qualifikationen-91,0,277.html>)
- **Information on the recognition of foreign professional qualifications on "Recognition in Germany"**
(<https://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/en/index.php>)
- **Information on the recognition of foreign professional qualifications on the BQ-Portal (Information portal for foreign professional qualifications)**
(<https://www.bq-portal.de/en>)
- **Point of Single Contact Berlin**
(<https://www.berlin.de/ea/en/>)
- **Brochure Recognition of foreign professional qualifications in the skilled crafts sector from the Federal Ministry of Economics**
(<https://www.bundeswirtschaftsministerium.de/Redaktion/DE/Publikationen/Ausbildung-und-Beruf/anerkennung-auslaendischer-berufsqualifikationen->

[handwerk.html](#))

- **User Guide to the Professional Recognition Directive**
(<https://www.berlin.de/formularverzeichnis/?formular=/wirtschaft/einheitliche-r-ansprechpartner/benutzerleitfaden-zur-berufsqualifikation.pdf>)
- **Financial assistance in the recognition procedure (recognition in Germany)**
(<https://www.anererkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/en/financial-support.php>)
- **List of publicly appointed translators in Germany (Justice Portal)**
(<https://www.justiz-dolmetscher.de/>)
- **Craft - Apply for a Registration in the Directory of Crafts Not Requiring Approval (service)**
(<https://service.berlin.de/dienstleistung/141577/en/>)
- **Craft - registration in the Register of Trades Similar to Crafts (service)**
(<https://service.berlin.de/dienstleistung/141579/en/>)

Average time to process request

<https://www.ea.berlin.de/intelliform/forms/eu-dlr-ng/Berlin/Berufsanerkennung/index?AnliegenID=351301&hb=145>

Notes on responsibility

If you intend to work in Berlin, the Berlin Crafts Chamber is responsible for determining equivalence in a craft or similar trade that does not require a licence. The Chamber of Crafts will provide you with guidance before you submit your application and will identify the appropriate craft occupation for you. The Chamber of Crafts will inform you which documents you need to submit in the original or as a certified or simple copy with a German translation.