



FAQs – Preparing your research stay in Germany



Hello and welcome!

Are you interested in doing research in Germany? Do you want to work on first-class research projects? If so, we have hundreds of different science and research institutions to choose from. Guests from many countries around the world come to Germany to work at universities and research institutions. German funding organisations and agencies support some 20,000 foreign researchers alone. However, a large number of scientists also finance their stay in Germany by other means, such as grants provided by their home institutions.

German research is extremely varied and offers excellent opportunities and conditions in all fields of science and academia. This includes the chance to work on first-class research projects headed by international researchers and to gain experience and expertise at the cutting-edge of scientific research.

The brochure at hand provides some practical tips and information to help you prepare for your research stay in Germany. However, because the landscape is developing so dynamically, the brochure can make no claim to be complete. Nevertheless, it will provide you with helpful links to websites where you can find the latest information on visa regulations, health insurance questions, the various kinds of research institutions, and the funding organisations and agencies operating in Germany.

For general information about Germany's research landscape and its latest developments, please visit the German research portal:

www.research-in-germany.de

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1. What research opportunities does Germany offer?

Various kinds of institutions provide opportunities for doing research. Traditionally, the universities form the backbone of Germany's science and research system, while major non-university research organisations, such as the Max Planck Society, Helmholtz Association, Leibniz Science Association, and Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft provide another pillar of German research. Besides these major players, industrial research and development also play a key role in Germany, as do the universities of applied sciences (Fachhochschulen).

General information

The brochure “German Research Institutions at a Glance” provides a good impression of the major research institutions and funding organisations in Germany. The brochure is available under

www.research-in-germany.de/downloads

An online “Research Explorer” delivers a unique overview of the major science and research organisations in Germany. This online database gives you access to over 17,000 German university and non-university research organisations and institutes.

www.daad.de/research-explorer



Doing research at university institutes

Germany has 356 universities, of which 234 are public, state-recognised higher education institutions, 83 private state-recognised institutions, 39 church maintained state-recognised institutions, 6 universities of education, and 183 Fachhochschulen (universities of applied sciences). Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835) had a great influence on the German university system by advocating the principle of the “unity of research and teaching”. Today, Germany’s universities cover a broad range of research activities, including basic research, applied research and development research. The top-class science and research performed at these centres of learning thrives on intensive cooperation between scientists, academics, research organisations and institutes, both at home and abroad.

The **Higher Education Compass** developed by the German Rectors’ Conference (HRK) is the most comprehensive search engine, providing information about all universities and higher education institutions, including technical universities, universities of education, universities of applied sciences and colleges or universities of art, music or film and church maintained colleges.

www.higher-education-compass.de





Another attractive option to do research in Germany is provided by the **Collaborative Research Centres (Sonderforschungsbereiche SFBs)**. These are funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Foundation – DFG). SFBs are long-term, but temporary, university research centres in which outstanding PhD students, scientists and researchers work together within cross-disciplinary research programmes.

www.dfg.de

Non-university research organisations

There are four major research organisations in Germany which operate independently outside the university sector:

– **Max-Planck-Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaften (Max Planck Society)**

More than 4,000 scientists and researchers work on projects at the 80 or so research institutes of the Max Planck Society (MPG). They perform basic research of the highest quality at the frontiers of knowledge and provide competitive research conditions for excellent scientists and scholars from all around the world.

www.mpg.de

– **Helmholtz-Gemeinschaft**
Deutscher Forschungszentren
(Helmholtz Association)

The Helmholtz Association contributes to solving the grand challenges which face society, science and industry by performing cutting-edge research in strategic programmes. With its large-scale facilities and scientific infrastructure, the Helmholtz Association researches systems of great complexity.

www.helmholtz.de

– **Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft**

The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft (FhG) has more than 80 research units, including 58 Fraunhofer Institutes at 40 different locations and undertakes applied research of direct value to private and public enterprise and of wide benefit to society.

www.fraunhofer.de

– **Leibniz-Gemeinschaft**
(Leibniz Science Association)

The 86 institutes of the Leibniz Science Association (WGL) do demand-oriented, interdisciplinary research. Numerous cooperation agreements exist with industry, the public administration, and politics. The Leibniz Association also cooperates closely with the universities.

www.leibniz-gemeinschaft.de



Industrial research

German companies rank among Europe's most innovative enterprises. The proportion of industrial investment in R&D is particularly high and accounts for two-thirds of all research done in Germany. Companies cooperate closely in the field of applied research, working together with university research institutes, globally operating Fraunhofer Institutes and the German Federation of Industrial Research Associations "Otto von Guericke" (AiF).

www.aif.de

(German Federation of Industrial Research Associations – AiF)

www.bdi-online.de

(Federation of German Industries – BDI)

www.fraunhofer.de

(Fraunhofer Gesellschaft – FhG)

www.dihk.de

(German Chamber of Industry and Commerce – DIHK)

The Academies of Sciences and Humanities

The Academies of Sciences and Humanities offer further research opportunities. Their central task is to coordinate and support long-term basic research projects and to develop and cultivate interdisciplinary dialogue. For further information please visit the website of the "Union of the German Academies of Sciences and Humanities".

www.akademienunion.de





2. What funding opportunities are available in Germany?

Numerous sources of funding are available to foreign scientists in Germany. Many organisations promote research in Germany by supporting individual projects and research cooperation, by awarding prizes for outstanding research achievements, and by funding scientific infrastructure and encouraging contacts in science and research.

The brochure “**German Funding Programmes for Science and Research**” provides a good overview of the funding opportunities available to international students, graduates, post-docs, scientists and researchers from various institutions and organisations. The brochure can be downloaded from:

www.research-in-germany.de/funding_programmes

The **key funding organisations** are the German Research Foundation (DFG), the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH) and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). If you receive a research grant, scholarship or fellowship, you will certainly also be able to benefit from their extensive range of support and advice services addressing various questions, such as how to choose the most suitable research institute or how to solve questions of everyday life in Germany.

– **Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung** (Alexander von Humboldt Foundation – AvH)

Each year, the AvH enables more than 1,800 academics and scientists from all around the world to come to Germany to complete

research stays. Its programmes are open to applicants from all countries and all academic disciplines at various stages in their careers.

www.humboldt-foundation.de

– **Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft** (German Research Foundation – DFG)

The DFG is the central self-governing organisation of science and research and is responsible for funding research at higher education institutions and at publicly-financed research institutes in Germany.

www.dfg.de

– **Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst** (German Academic Exchange Service – DAAD)

The DAAD is one of the world's largest and most respected intermediary organisations. The DAAD promotes the international relations of Germany's universities by funding the exchange of students, academics, scientists and researchers and by running international programmes and projects.

www.daad.de



Besides these three key organisations, many other sources of funding also exist. The following links will help you find the right type of funding to accompany your qualification phases at all stages of your career in science and academia:

www.funding-guide.de



(A comprehensive scholarship database operated by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), English version available)

www.euraxess.de

(The database of the German Mobility Centre: please check English version > Careers in Research > Funding Programmes)

www.stifterverband.org

(The Stifterverband is the business community's innovation agency for the German science system; website only partly available in English)



3. What's the best way to find out about life and living in Germany?

The world not only knows Germany as a centre of innovation and scientific achievement, but also as a “Land of Poets and Philosophers”, with both fields according to some 80 Nobel laureates. Germany is a modern, cosmopolitan and inspiring country, enjoys a high standard of living, and has many lively cities and beautiful landscapes extending from the North and Baltic Seas, past the Black Forest, and down to the Alps. Germany's love of football, which brings young and old together from all over the country, also makes a sporting contribution to the country's wide and varied cultural life.

Come and discover the unique range culture and the arts, extending from music, theatre, museums, cultural heritage to history and beyond. To find out for yourself what Germany has to offer visit the websites listed below. Of course, this information cannot cover each and every aspect and that's why we recommend you to come and discover Germany in person.



The **Deutschland-Portal** provides information on a wide range of topics, including education, health, arts and the media. Please feel free to “experience Germany” at first hand by exploring the interactive map. The Deutschland Portal is provided by the Press and Information Office of the Federal Government. Essentially, the Deutschland-Portal is the virtual international calling card for the Federal Republic of Germany.

www.deutschland.de

The **Goethe Institute** is Germany’s international cultural representation at 146 locations worldwide. The Goethe Institute promotes the study of German abroad and encourages international cultural exchange. It runs an extensive network of 134 institutes, 12 liaison offices, plus 13 Goethe Institutes in Germany. Besides information on language courses and events, the website provides a comprehensive range of information on aspects of everyday life in Germany.

www.goethe.de

As the name suggests, **Facts about Germany** presents a wide range of basic facts and figures, provides advice, plus all sorts of up-to-the-minute information to give you a good insight into all aspects of modern life in Germany.

www.facts-about-germany.de



The **Web Guide on Research-in-Germany.de** also provides a wide range of links to interesting websites containing information on topics such as education, health, culture, trade fairs, and the media.

www.research-in-germany.de/links

(look under: Living in Germany)



4. Do I need to be fluent in German?

While it is not a problem to communicate in English at research institutes in Germany, there are still plenty of good reasons for at least gaining a basic knowledge of German. Language is the key to a country's culture and people and can help you integrate more easily into everyday German life. Hence, it would be very helpful to learn the basics before your research stay.

The **Goethe Institute** is Germany's leading cultural institution and offers language courses in many countries around the world as well as in Germany.

www.goethe.de

Of course, you can also attend a language course in Germany and broaden your knowledge of German here. Such courses are offered at universities, language schools and even some research institutes.

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) website contains detailed information on schools, institutions and universities, on online learning methods, funding organisations, and on where German is spoken around the world. The “Summer Schools in Germany” section includes a search engine on the courses offered by Germany’s universities.

www.daad.de/deutschland

(Please check English version, look under: Learn German > Where to learn German > Institutes)



5. What documents do I need to obtain before travelling to Germany?

The following list shows the documents which are normally required before entering Germany. However, this information does not apply to everybody. Please therefore be sure to contact the nearest German mission abroad (Embassy or Consulate) for information and advice on which documents you require.

- a **passport** or equivalent identity document valid for the whole duration of your stay in Germany;
- a **visa** for yourself and for any family members accompanying you (please also read the information on visa regulations in question 6);



- several **passport size photographs** for the various documents you will need during your stay;
- **birth certificate(s), marriage certificate**, if applicable, with a German translation if possible;
- **officially-certified copies of your doctoral degree**, and of **insurance documents** with German or English translations, if possible;
- where appropriate, confirmation by your **health insurance** provider that you are also covered in Germany (please also read question 9 on health insurance);
- if applicable, a statement detailing particular or previous diseases and any medication currently needed;
- your **vaccination certificate**, if possible, an international one.

If you plan to **drive a car** during your stay in Germany, you should bring the following documents:

- an **international driving licence** or foreign national driving licence;
- an **international “green” insurance card** confirming third-party insurance cover in Germany (if you intend to bring your own car to Germany);
- a **no-claims certificate** from your car insurance company. (This will qualify you for a discount if you intend to take out third-party car insurance in Germany.)





6. Do I need a visa?

Foreigners wanting to stay in Germany for longer than 90 days and who want to work or study in Germany need a visa. Nevertheless, there are several exemptions (see visa requirements below).

First of all, the good news: the procedure for admitting third-country nationals for the purpose of scientific research in Europe has been optimised. Find out more about **entry and residence requirements** for researchers from Non-EU-Countries here:

www.bamf.de/forschungsaufenthalte

(Federal Office for Migration and Refugees); please check English version, look under: Research (right-hand column) > Approval of research facilities (left-hand column)

In general, visa can be obtained from the German mission (Embassy or Consulate) in the respective country. Please be sure to contact the nearest German mission in good time for information and advice on the visa requirements.

www.auswaertiges-amt.de

(The Federal Foreign Office, please check English version, look under: Bilateral Relations > German missions abroad)

Visa requirements

for nationals of various countries:

– Nationals from the following countries are exempted from the visa requirement:

- EU Member State or an EEA State (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway) plus Switzerland





- Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, Republic of Korea (South Korea), New Zealand, and the United States
- Nationals of Andorra, Honduras, Monaco, San Marino are exempted from the visa requirement (visa only needed if the holder wishes to work in Germany before or after the stay).
- Nationals of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Malaysia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Romania, Singapore, Uruguay, Vatican City, Venezuela require a visa if staying for longer than three months. No visa is needed if the stay is shorter than three months.
- All other nationals require a visa, regardless of the length of stay.
(For up-to-date information, please go to www.auswaertiges-amt.de > English version > Welcome to Germany > Coming to or staying in Germany > Visa regulations)

Visa types

The type of your visa depends on the duration of your research stay. Essentially, two types of visas are available:

National Visa: Such a visa is issued for stays lasting three months or more. This is the visa you need for longer (research or study) stays.

Schengen Visa: This visa is issued for short stays of up to three months. Holders of a Schengen Visa must leave the country after three months. Hence, it is not a suitable



instrument for doing a doctorate or completing a longer research stay.

Arriving in Germany

Once you have entered Germany, you must report to the registration authority (Bürgeramt or Meldebehörde, just like everybody must who lives in Germany) and then to the Foreigners Authority (Ausländeramt). The staff there will also be able to give you information on residence and work permit issues. Your institutional sponsor may also be able to assist or advise you. Please discuss this with your local embassy or consulate.

We also recommend that you check the following website for further information:

www.auswaertiges-amt.de

(Please check English version, look under: Welcome to Germany > Coming to or staying in Germany > Visa regulations)

www.daad.de/en/form

(look under: Application Forms/Downloads)
(Information on the Statutory Frameworks applicable to Entry and Residence by Foreign Students, Academics and Researchers)



7. How can I find a job?

Traditionally, job offers are published in the Wednesday and (much larger) Saturday newspapers. However, in the age of the internet ever more employers are publishing their job vacancies online.



- **Academics.com/de** is the career portal for science, research and academia operated by the weekly newspaper “DIE ZEIT” and the journal “Forschung & Lehre”. Academics.com is an English online service especially designed for academic professionals. It includes jobs in science, research and academia as well as the latest vacancies at universities, colleges and research institutes, career tips, and much more.

www.academics.com

The pages of the German site for Academics.de is even more comprehensive and is the largest job exchange site for jobs in academic teaching and research in the German-speaking world.

www.academics.de

(available in German only)

- **Science jobs.de** provides job offers from researchers for researchers. It has just under 800 vacancies online at all times, plus an email alert service on new job vacancies; and a collection of links to 50 other general and subject-specific academic online job exchanges (only partly available in English).

<http://jobs.uni-hd.de>

- The **German Mobility Centre** at the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation offers various links to job exchanges.

www.euraxess.de

(Please check English version, look under: Job Search > Incoming)

The following provides a small selection of job exchanges with a focus on student and/or academic job searches. Check out the following websites:



Listed below are some **online job exchanges** that specialise in academic and research-related job offers:

www.studentenjobs24.de

(all kinds of jobs, from doctoral students to part-time work, only available in German)

www.jobscanner.de

(scans company websites for vacancies, only available in German)

www.jobworld.de

(metasearch engine, only available in German)



Federal Employment Agency (BA)

The Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit – BA) and its branch offices, the Employment Agencies (Arbeitsagenturen), are the first government contact points for those looking for a job in Germany. Its websites offer information for job seekers and above all various job exchanges with job search and job offer options.

www.arbeitsagentur.de

(only available in German)

You can find more links to online job exchanges in the **Web Guide on Research-in-Germany.de**:

www.research-in-germany.de/links

(look under: Scientific Career > Job Listings)





8. Do I need a work permit?

If you receive a “residence permit for researchers” you will automatically be given a work permit. You can find more information on the “residence permit for researchers” here:

www.bamf.de/forschungsaufenthalte

(Federal Office for Migration and Refugees); please check English version, look under: Research (right-hand column) > Approval of research facilities (left-column)

Grant holders, research assistants and research associates working at scientific-research institutes funded exclusively or mainly from public funds do not usually need a work permit. However, you should check with your future employer or sponsor whether this special regulation applies to you.

Visiting academics and researchers generally receive a residence permit for research purposes that allows them to take up gainful employment. Approval by the Federal Employment Agency is not generally required.

You can find more information on work permits on the following websites:

www.auswaertiges-amt.de

(Please check English version, look under: Welcome to Germany > Studying and working in Germany > Working in Germany)

www.euraxess.de

(Please check English version, look under: Incoming > Working)

www.daad.de/en/form

(look under: Application Forms/Downloads, Information Sheet: “Information on the Statutory Frameworks applicable to the Pursuit of Gainful Employment by Foreign Students, Academics and Researchers”)





9. Will my spouse be allowed to work in Germany?

Many spouses wish to accompany their husband or wife, when these go on a research visit or stay to Germany, and to work during their stay in Germany. Generally, spouses of foreigners who intend to take up regular employment need a work permit (exceptions: nationals from EU countries, or from Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway). Spouses of research grant holders, who wish to take up employment, must inform the German consulate before they leave for Germany and apply for the respective residence permit (i.e. a permit that allows “employment“).

The work permit itself must be applied for at the local Employment Agency in Germany. This should be done immediately after arrival, since the application may take several weeks to process.

If you have a “residence permit for researchers” your spouse will be allowed to work in Germany. To find out more about the “residence permit for researchers” please see:

www.bamf.de/forschungsaufenthalte

(Federal Office for Migration and Refugees; please check English version, look under: Research (right-hand column) > Approval of research facilities (left-hand column))





10. Do I need health insurance?

As long as you remain in Germany, you must ensure that you and those accompanying you have health insurance cover, regardless of whether you hold a grant, scholarship, fellowship, or employment contract. This insurance cover must take effect from your first day in Germany.

First of all, please check whether your normal insurance in your home country provides comprehensive coverage in Germany. If this is the case (normally only if a reciprocal social security agreement exists between your country and Germany), you will require written confirmation of this from your insurance company. If your home insurance policy does not cover other countries then you must, before travelling to Germany, take out a health insurance policy that is valid for the whole of your stay in Germany.

If you need to arrange health insurance in Germany, the requirements may vary. Whether you opt for private or statutory insurance will depend on your income. If you have been awarded a scholarship or a grant, you have to take out private insurance. Private insurance companies will take account of how long you wish to stay in Germany and will also offer special reductions for foreigners.

Whatever your circumstances, please seek advice from your employer or your scholarship provider, and from your home insurance company, before travelling to Germany.

Health insurance in Germany is unique in that the statutory and private health insurance companies cover a large proportion of the costs for medical and dental treatment, for

drugs and medicines, for hospital treatment (in-patients) and for treatments by therapists, rehabilitation measures, etc. (out-patients). As a rule, you can choose which doctor or hospital you want to go to.

More information on health insurance matters is available on the following websites:

www.euraxess.de

(look under: Incoming > Social security > Health insurance)

www.daad.de/health



11. Do I have to pay social security contributions?

If you have been awarded a research grant or scholarship, you are exempt from having to pay social security contributions. If, however, you are employed in Germany, you will have to pay the normal social security contributions. These cover pension, unemployment, nursing care, health and accident insurance, and are normally split 50/50 between the employer and the employee.

Statutory accident insurance is an exception. The employer pays this in full. Your social security insurance contributions will be deducted at source from your gross earnings. This is done directly by the employer, who registers you with your chosen health insurance company. The health insurance company will then inform all the other social security departments.

You can find further information on the following websites:



www.deutsche-sozialversicherung.de

(General information on the German social insurance system)

www.euraxess.de

(look under: Incoming > Social security)



12. Do I have to pay taxes?

This depends on the nature of your contract with the host institute. If you have received a grant or scholarship from a public institution in your home country for the duration of your research stay in Germany, you may, under certain circumstances, be exempt from taxation under German income tax law. Please ask your sponsor beforehand whether this applies to you.

If your research stay is based on an employment contract in Germany and lasts more than 6 months, you will automatically be required to pay income tax. If you stay for less than 6 months, your income will be taxed in your own country. Many countries have agreements that allow you to pay tax in your home country – so-called “reciprocal tax agreements” – which determine in which country the taxes have to be paid. You should check whether such an agreement applies in your case and, if so, where it is best for you to pay your taxes. Your employer’s HR (Human Resources) or personnel department will be able to answer general questions on taxation.



You can find further information on the following websites:

www.steuerliches-info-center.de
(German Tax Information Centre)

www.euraxess.de
(look under: Incoming > Taxation)



13. How can I find a place to live?

Finding somewhere to live in Germany can, like everywhere else in Europe, be difficult and time-consuming. As far as possible, it is best to start your flat hunting before you leave for Germany, and especially if your family is accompanying you.

If you travel to Germany and have not arranged your accommodation in advance, you can stay temporarily at a guesthouse, a hostel or a hall of residence. Always ask your research organisation or university whether they can offer accommodation for a limited period of time. This sort of arrangement is rare, however, and availability will be limited; places in student halls of residence are not normally offered to visiting postdocs.

There are various ways of finding accommodation when you arrive. You can start by checking the local newspapers which run large supplements, particularly on Wednesdays and Saturdays, with a wide range of



accommodation offers. You can, of course, also place your own advertisement. Another possibility is to check the noticeboards at the university or institute, where flat-sharing offers can often be found. Accommodation agencies also provide accommodation on short-term leases (see below for links).

Many property and rental agencies run portals that aim to bring accommodation providers and accommodation seekers together over the internet. Most of these portals not only offer one and two room flats or apartments, but also rooms in shared flats for rent without charging commission fees.

The most expensive way of finding accommodation is to use an estate agent, as this involves paying a commission equal to two months' or more rent plus a deposit. This really only makes sense for longer-term stays. Please make sure that you only use an estate agent who is a member of a registered association of estate agents, such as the Immobilienverband Deutschland (IVD) or the Ring Deutscher Makler (RDM).

Accommodation offers can be difficult to understand due to the many abbreviations they contain, such as 2ZKDB = 2 rooms, kitchen, hallway, bathroom. If you have problems understanding them, or have any other accommodation questions, then it's best to seek the advice of colleagues who have been living in Germany for some time, or to ask your research organisation or the International Office (Akademisches Auslandsamt) at your university.

The following links may also prove useful:

www.homecompany.de

(furnished and unfurnished apartments, flats and houses)



www.mitwohnzentrale.de

(temporary and/or permanent accommodation agency)

www.ivd.net

(German Association of Estate Agents – website in German only)

www.studenten-wg.de

(Accommodation in university towns, plus a car-sharing board and a database for rail ticket sharing, only available in German)

www.studenten-wohnung.de

(Accommodation exchange service for landlords and students with email alerts on the latest flats that become available in the chosen city, only available in German)

www.deutschland-wg.de

(Accommodation exchange for rooms, flats, apartments, and shared flats. Email alerts on new entries for flats, vacancies for flatmates or roommates, a place in a shared flat)

www.wg-gesucht.de

(Accommodation exchange for flats/apartments, shared flats and houses plus tips and checklists when moving, plus information on questions of landlord and tenant law, only available in German)

www.mieterbund.de

(for legal advice; in German only)
(a tenants' association)





14. What about pre-school and regular school facilities in Germany?

Some important information before we start: Child allowance is paid for all children up to the age of 18 – and in some cases, even beyond. Child allowance applications must be submitted to the Family Allowance Office of the Federal Employment Agency (BA).

In Germany, children between 3 and 6 years of age are able to attend a pre-school facility, such as a crèche, nursery or kindergarten, on an hourly basis, both mornings and afternoons. Attendance is voluntary. A fee is charged. Terms of payment vary from town to town and are usually based on the parents' income. The local youth welfare department (Jugendamt) in your nearest town or another competent local authority will be able to provide information on the availability of such facilities as well as on other day-care services for small children.

All children aged between 6 and 15 (or in some federal states 16 years) must attend school. School life begins with four years at primary/elementary school (Grundschule). After this, pupils go on to one of the following types of secondary schools:

- “**Hauptschule**” Secondary school (UK) or junior high school (US) leading to a general leaving certificate: Hauptschulabschluss (= 10th grade)

- “**Realschule**” Secondary school (UK) or high school (US) leading to an intermediate school-leaving certificate:
Realschulabschluss (=10th grade, with the option of a 1-year extension) (erweiterter Realschulabschluss = 11th grade)
- “**Gymnasium**” Grammar School (UK) or Senior High School (US), leading to an “**Abitur**” (= 12th or 13th grade). The Abitur is the highest school-leaving certificate and qualifies holders for admission to higher education.
- “**Gesamtschule**” is a comprehensive school that is not offered in all federal states. A comprehensive school combines the three above school types within a single institution.

The **Gymnasium** and the senior grades of a **Gesamtschule** lead to the Abitur school leaving certificate, the higher education entrance qualification in Germany.

School lessons are generally held in the morning in Germany, although all-day schooling is becoming more widespread. Attendance at state-run schools in Germany is free of charge. There are very few fee-paying private or international schools.

You can find further information on the following websites:

www.euraxess.de

(look under: Incoming > Schools or Kindergarten)

www.bildungserver.de

(Information on internet resources for all aspects of education)





We hope that the brochure has helped you prepare for your stay in Germany. For more links to R&D websites, please visit the **Web Guide on Research-in-Germany.de**. It provides well over 250 annotated links to the most relevant sites with information on science and research in Germany.

www.research-in-germany.de/links

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