



The graphic features a black background. On the left, there is a map of Germany with the German flag colors (black, red, and gold) overlaid. To the right of the map, a blue rectangular box contains the text "EU Blue Card – Applicable in Germany" in white. Further to the right, a grey rectangular box contains contact information in black text.

**EU Blue Card –  
Applicable in Germany**

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The EU Blue Card is an EU work permit that has been introduced by the majority of EU countries to attract high-skilled non-EU citizens to work (employment) and live in the EU (excluding Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom). Its concept is similar to that of the U.S. Green Card with the aim to make immigration easier into EU countries. Effective from July 1, 2012, the relevant EU regulations have been transformed into German domestic laws and application for the EU Blue Card is possible.

For foreign companies with German subsidiaries or branch offices, this is a great advantage. Before, when applying for a resident permit in Germany, expatriate employees from foreign countries had to go through the “priority check” and “labor market check” conducted by the German Federal Employment Agency. This would normally take several months.

Under the EU Blue Card system, the “priority check” and “labor market check” have, in principle, been replaced by a review of the qualifications of the applicant and the prospective work contract that has been concluded with the German employer. No approval of the German Federal Labour Market Authority is required, if

- An applicant holds a degree of a German university; and
- The annual gross salary of the applicant is at least two third of annual contribution assessment ceiling of pension insurance (currently 71,400€).

For some sectors with a shortage of talents (e.g. engineers, IT professionals etc.), a reduced 52% of annual contribution assessment ceiling of pension insurance is sufficient.

**Please note:** An approval is required if the applicant holds a degree of a foreign university – to be recognized by Germany – and with an offer of an employment in the shortage sector.

The duration of stay by the EU Blue Card is limited to an initial period of four years. An extension of this initial period is possible. If the work contract stipulates a stay of less than four years, the EU Blue Card will be valid for three more months after the termination of the work contract.

Having been in Germany for a period of 18 months, the EU Blue Card holder can move to other EU countries.

An EU Blue Card can only be applied for if the applicant has some kind of residence permit in Germany. That means, in a first step a visa for entering Germany has to be applied for e.g. at the German Embassy. In a second step the application for the EU Blue Card has to be submitted to the office of the foreign department that is responsible for the region of the place of residence of the applicant in Germany.

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