



## Invest in Düsseldorf Guideline for foreign Companies

Willkommen  
in Düsseldorf

Benvenuto

歡迎

Bienvenue

Welcome  
to Düsseldorf

歡迎

boa  
vinda

υποδοχή

Willkommen

welkom

Bienvenue

υποδοχή

boa vinda

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## Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

we are pleased to welcome you to Düsseldorf! Düsseldorf is an excellent business location and also offers a high quality of life – “Business Meets Lifestyle”!

Over the recent years, Düsseldorf has developed, with a continued strong upward trend, into the most successful metropolis on the Rhine. The State Capital benefits both from its mix of business sectors and from its excellent location in the heart of Europe. Thanks to its highly diversified and international industrial structure and its excellent infrastructure, Düsseldorf is the favourite location for foreign companies. Many of the “global players” are at home in Düsseldorf. All in all, there are about 40,000 companies in Düsseldorf, including more than 5,000 subsidiaries of foreign companies.

The Düsseldorf Office of Economic Development is your central contact for everything regarding getting

into business in the State Capital of North Rhine-Westphalia. We assist you in obtaining the required permits from the authorities, provide you with the necessary information and bring you into contact with further service-providers. In addition, we help you to establish contact with the networks of Düsseldorf – both the professional and the private ones.

Contact us – we will be glad to provide you with the essential information for establishing your business and will, of course, bring you into contact with all the relevant institutions! We will support you with advice and assistance for a successful start in Düsseldorf.

This brochure gives you the essential information for an easy and successful start in Düsseldorf in a nutshell.

Yours sincerely,

Your team at the  
Düsseldorf Office of Economic Development

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economic@duesseldorf.de



# 1. Entry formalities

Before arriving in Germany and staying in Düsseldorf, some important formalities must be settled. To make your start in Düsseldorf as pleasant as possible, you should begin your preparations as early as possible.

## 1.1 1.1 Residence titles

In order to legally visit Germany, foreigners generally need a visa or a residence permit, unless they are exempted by benefit of specific regulations. You will need this in particular for an intended visit of more than three months, and for taking up any gainful occupation.

### Visa for short visits

In order to enter Germany, every person first needs a valid passport of his/her home country and a visa or other residence title. This title must have been applied for and granted **prior to entering Germany** at the German Embassy or Consulate General in the visitor's home country.

However, the requirement for a visa is waived for citizens of EU member states plus Liechtenstein, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland. Citizens of these countries may move freely and reside within the EU territory.

If the visit to Germany is intended to take no more than three months, for citizens of certain countries the visa requirement is likewise waived. These include countries such as Australia, Brazil, Israel, Japan, Canada, Croatia, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea and the USA<sup>1</sup>.

A short-term visa for a stay of up to three months does not entitle you to taking up any gainful occupation. However, for setting up a business in the Düsseldorf area, a short-term visa may be recommendable. This visa enables you to take the first steps towards establishing your business, such as developing the business plan or continuing the preparations for registration. Please note that generally you will have to leave the country no later than the expiry of these three months and apply, in your own country, for the long-term residence permit for re-entry.

### At a glance

#### Application for a short-term visa (Schengen visa)

- Personal appearance of the applicant at the appropriate diplomatic or consular representation of Germany in his/her home country
- Visa application form
- Valid passport which must be valid for at least another three months after the intended departure
- Up-to-date biometric photograph
- Travel insurance with coverage of at least EUR 30,000
- Visa fee of approx. EUR 60
- Evidence of adequate financial security for the duration of the stay
- If necessary, evidence of willingness to return to home country and possibility to return

### Procedures

The visa for a short visit is granted after examination of each individual case, provided there is financial security and the interests of the Federal Republic are not jeopardized by the visitor's presence. Evidence of adequate financial security and of willingness to return to your home country should be presented when applying for the visa.

The **processing time** of the diplomatic or consular representations for issuing a visa for a stay of up to three months will usually take up to two weeks. The **fee** for issuing a visa amounts to approximately 60 Euro. Children or university students, for example, may be granted exemption from this payment.

### Please contact us, we will be glad to advise and support you!

#### Information in the Internet

Overview of all information relating to entry into and sojourning in Germany at:  
[http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/Uebersicht\\_Navi.html](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/Uebersicht_Navi.html)

<sup>1</sup> Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Argentina, Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Hongkong, Israel, Japan, Canada, Croatia, Macau, Malaysia, Mauritius, Macedonia, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, San Marino, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, St. Kitts and Nevis, South Korea, Taiwan, Uruguay, USA, Vatican City, Venezuela.

## 1. Entry formalities

### 1.2 1.2 Longer-term residence titles and authorization to engage in a gainful occupation

In order to stay in Germany for more than three months or to take up any gainful occupation, citizens of states without special provisions generally have to apply for and be granted such a residence title **before entering**. The procedure for granting a visa for a longer stay and / or taking up gainful employment may take up to several months. Therefore please keep in mind that you have to submit the application for the visa in due time.

#### 1.2.1 EU citizens

Citizens of any EU member state as well as citizens of Liechtenstein, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland do not require a visa to sojourn in the Federal Republic. However, for any stay of more than three months, they must register at the registration office<sup>2</sup> within one week of setting up their primary residence in Düsseldorf. In addition, a so-called **certificate of free movement** will be required. This is an informal certification of the legal right to residence which will be issued free of charge at the Immigration Office.

#### At a glance

##### Application for certificate of free movement

- Valid passport (or passport replacement, if applicable)
- Up-to-date biometric photograph
- Eventually existing legal residence certificates or permits
- Form sheet for notification of residence downloadable at: <https://formulare.duesseldorf.de/forms/frm/Z2Vhk8rCJ2r8QHqPpmjvvgDJF9V8j6><sup>3</sup>
- For self-employed persons (if applicable): Business registration, tax ID and documents relating to the intended activity
- For employees (if applicable): Employment contract or guarantee of employment
- For family members (if applicable): Birth and marriage certificates

The fundamental right of EU citizens to freedom of movement basically permits the citizens of any member state to work in any other member state under the same conditions as the citizens of said other member state.

However, for employees from the new accession countries of the EU from 2004 and 2007, **transitional provisions** partially apply. Since May 1st, 2011 the free movement of workers also applies to workers from the 2004 accession states of the EU<sup>4</sup>. For taking up any employment in Germany, citizens of the 2007 accession states Bulgaria and Romania will still require a so-called **EU working permission** until December 31st, 2013. This permit is issued by the Federal Employment Agency, provided that certain conditions are met.

However, these transitional provisions apply only to employees, not to self-employed persons! If you should require any further information, we will be glad to advise you.

#### 1.2.2 Non-EU citizens

If a stay of more than three months is planned, for non-EU citizens a **residence title** (in the form of a visa) is required for the Federal territory, which must be generally applied for at the appropriate diplomatic or consular representation in the home country **before entering** Germany. Please note that the application process may take up to three months, as the diplomatic or consular representation must obtain the consent of local authorities such as the Immigration Office or the Federal Employment Agency. Please contact us, we will be glad to counsel you as early as the compilation stage of your application documents and assist you in speedily settling the formalities.

#### At a glance

##### Application for a residence title (visa) in your home country

- Form sheet for a long-term stay; duplicate originals in the language used by the diplomatic or consular representation, downloadable at: [http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/Visabestimmungen\\_node.html](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/Visabestimmungen_node.html)
- Valid passport (valid for at least 6 more months)
- Up-to-date biometric photographs
- Evidence of health insurance (no travel insurance)
- Evidence of adequate financial security (e.g. bank statement or employment contract)
- Eventually registration certificate and police clearance certificate

<sup>2</sup> see item 5: Compulsory registration, <sup>3</sup> available in German only, <sup>4</sup> Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia

## 1. Entry formalities

An exception applies to citizens of Australia, Israel, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, South Korea and the United States. These are entitled to enter into Germany without a residence title and to request such a title only at the **Immigration Office** in Düsseldorf.



### At a glance

#### Exemption: Application for a residence permit in Düsseldorf

- Recognized, valid passport or passport substitute
- Evidence of health insurance (no travel insurance)
- Evidence of adequate financial security (e.g. bank statement or employment contract)
- Up-to-date photograph (“biometric photo”)
- Proof of accommodation

### Information in the Internet

For more information please see:  
[www.duesseldorf.de/buergerinfo/33/03/33ae01.shtml](http://www.duesseldorf.de/buergerinfo/33/03/33ae01.shtml)<sup>5</sup>

On **September 1st, 2011 the electronic residence title** was introduced in Germany. Instead of receiving the usual adhesive label for the passport the residence title will be handed out as chipcard by local Immigration Office. Main purpose is the uniform design for residence titles across the EU as well as a higher level of protection from abuse. Existing residence titles in passports and substitute documents keep their validity until December 31st, 2021 at latest.

You got to keep in mind the new process requires a two times personal appearance at the local Immigration Office. A first time for recording biometric data such as two fingerprints. And a second time for re-checking the recorded data when collecting the electronic residence title. The fees for issuing the residence title will increase as well. The Düsseldorf Office of Economic Development cooperates closely with the local Immigration Office. We will be glad to counsel you with your application for your residence title.

### Authorization to engage in a gainful occupation

Foreigners may engage in a gainful occupation only if their title of residence permits them to. For this reason, the residence permit issued for the purpose of a gainful occupation will usually expire when the underlying employment contract no longer exists or is changed.

Please keep in mind to request an appropriate residence title from the appropriate diplomatic or consular representation in due time before your planned entry into Germany.

### Information in the Internet

For more information, please see the website of the Federal Foreign Office:  
[http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/Uebersicht\\_Navi.html](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/Uebersicht_Navi.html)

### Self-employment

Self-employment is characterized in particular by the fact that a person is not subject to directives but rather conducts business in an entrepreneurial fashion. Thus, self-employed persons according to this definition comprise sole traders conducting business in an entrepreneurial fashion, but generally also representatives and directors of partnerships and corporations. If you wish to engage in self-employed business activities in Düsseldorf, you will require a residence permit which entitles you to take up such an activity. Initially, the residence permit will generally be limited to one year and to a maximum of three years.

A permit will generally be granted, after individual assessment by the Immigration Office, the Chamber of Industry and Commerce and the Düsseldorf Office of Economic Development, by the appropriate diplomatic or consular representation, if there is an overriding economic interest in the planned business, if the work can be expected to have a positive effect on the economy, and if the funding of the project is secured. These conditions are usually met if an investment of at least EUR 250,000 is made and five full-time jobs are created. But even for projects requiring smaller investment sums, a special regional interest may be identified.

<sup>5</sup> available in German only

## 1. Entry formalities

You should keep in mind, if you are older than 45 you are required to have an adequate pension plan. Usually the proof of an existing life insurance or private pension plan is sufficient.

Here, too, you should contact us as early as possible so we can provide you with an appraisal of your specific project.



### At a glance

#### Residence permit with the right to work in a self-employed capacity:

- see above, under "Check list": Residence Permit
- Evidence of adequate financial backing of the company / business plan
- Evidence of qualifications
- Business plan
- if applicable: Evidence of business experience, amount of invested capital, contribution to innovation and research
- if applicable: Evidence of an investment of EUR 250,000 and the creation of at least 5 jobs

### Employment / Employees

If you wish to bring your employees from abroad to Germany for building your business, they will also need a residence permit.

Obtaining residence permits for employees is usually straightforward if there is a specific job offer and comparably qualified German citizens or citizens of other EU countries are not available for the position. Since May 1st, 2011 the German Employment Agency delegated the case-related check of the German job-market to the Central Placement and Placement Services Office in Bonn. Primary target of this centralization is to create a faster process by concentrating the expertise and experience at one single place. Usually this process shall be no problem if you need your foreign employees due to their special experience, their language skills or because of their special knowledge in reference to the parent company. Furthermore, the job must generally require qualifications, and in the individual case, there must be public interest in the job. The Düsseldorf Office of Economic Development cooperates closely with the Immigration Office in Düsseldorf. We will be glad to counsel you with your application for your residence permits!

### Information in the Internet

Check for visa eligibility:  
[www.arbeitsagentur.de/migration-check-arbeitgeber](http://www.arbeitsagentur.de/migration-check-arbeitgeber)<sup>6</sup>



### Contact

#### Central Placement and Placement Services Bonn

Villemombler Straße 76  
 D-53123 Bonn  
 Phone: +49 (0)228.713-2000  
 Fax: +49 (0)228.713 270-1030  
[www.zav.de](http://www.zav.de)  
 Zav-Bonn.AE@arbeitsagentur.de



Please note that employees must be registered with the Social Security insurance system, and social security contributions must be paid (see also 4.3). You should also take into account that foreign employees must likewise receive German wages as are customary in the region.



### At a glance

#### Residence permit with the right to employment :

- see above, under "Check list": Residence permit
- Job description (form sheet: <https://formulare.duesseldorf.de/forms/frm/dt7CjQx14X43KgDMCJjJpGCAK5fk7Daf>)<sup>7</sup>
- Employment contract or letter of intent, including disclosure of wages, if available
- Detailed explanation why employment of a foreigner is necessary
- CV and qualifications of the employee

### Contact

#### State Capital Düsseldorf Local Immigration Office

Service Centre  
 Willy-Becker-Allee 7  
 D-40200 Düsseldorf  
 Phone: +49 (0)211.89-21020  
 Fax: +49 (0)211.89-29036  
[www.duesseldorf.de/auslaenderamt](http://www.duesseldorf.de/auslaenderamt)<sup>8</sup>  
 auslaenderamt@duesseldorf.de



<sup>6,7,8</sup> available in German only

## 1.3 1.3 Family Reunification

Our experience shows that most investors soon relish being in Düsseldorf and then wish to bring their families to Düsseldorf as well. This is usually straightforward if you have already received a residence permit, if your means of subsistence are secured, and if sufficient housing for your family is available.

Düsseldorf is a very family-friendly city and offers a wide range of educational and leisure activities. If you have already received a working permission with your residence permit, your family members are likewise entitled to engage in a gainful occupation.

With regard to other prerequisites and the necessary procedures, please contact the Düsseldorf Immigration Office.

## 2. Establishing an office in Düsseldorf

Located in the midst of the Rhine-Ruhr economic area with its more than 11 million inhabitants, Düsseldorf is the centre of one of the largest European markets. We are pleased that you, too, have chosen Düsseldorf as a location for your business, and will gladly assist you in building up your company.

In Germany, basically anybody may establish a business, regardless of citizenship. The business can be formed easily and quickly.

- Please note that any foreign qualifications require explicit recognition in Germany, for which certified translations will usually be needed.

For further information, please contact the **Chamber of Industry and Commerce (CIC) of Düsseldorf**. The Düsseldorf CIC represents the interests of the approximately 80,000 companies in the Düsseldorf region. Each company is required to enrol in the CIC and can benefit from the advantages. The CIC puts forward its own regional economic policy and is particularly active in the promotion of enterprises and in education and training.

The **Düsseldorf Chamber of Crafts and Trades** will also be pleased to support you in setting up your company. It represents the interests of craftspeople and traders in the Düsseldorf region towards government, administration and the general public.

### 2.1 2.1 Founding Formalities

The necessary formalities for starting a business vary, depending on the selected legal form. We recommend that you contemplate the appropriate legal form for your business as early as possible, so that you will be familiar with the formalities required in each individual case and thus will be able to plan the next steps towards establishing your business as quickly as possible.

We will gladly arrange contact with a suitable lawyer or tax consultant who can counsel you regarding the choice of a corporate form for the Düsseldorf area.

In general, formulation of a formally correct company agreement and selection of a proper trade name will be required. Furthermore, the new business has to be registered in the commercial register and with the trade office of the city of Düsseldorf.

#### At a glance

##### The preparation phase:

- For swift establishment of your business, you should ensure the acceptability and availability of the desired trade name with the Chamber of Commerce beforehand.
- You should furthermore ascertain whether your intended activity is subject to approval, since the necessary permits for registration with the commercial register must already be available (e.g. medical activities, gastronomy, crafts, banking and legal advice)



#### Contact



##### Düsseldorf Chamber of Industry and Commerce

Ernst-Schneider-Platz 1  
D-40212 Düsseldorf  
Phone: +49 (0)211.3557-0  
Fax: +49 (0)211.3557-400  
[www.duesseldorf.ihk.de/servicemarken/englisch/index.jsp](http://www.duesseldorf.ihk.de/servicemarken/englisch/index.jsp)  
ihkdus@duesseldorf.ihk.de

##### Düsseldorf Chamber of Crafts and Trades

Georg-Schulhoff-Platz 1  
D-40221 Düsseldorf  
Phone: +49 (0)211.8795-0  
Fax: +49 (0)211.8795-110  
[www.hwk-duesseldorf.de/engl/index.html](http://www.hwk-duesseldorf.de/engl/index.html)  
info@hwk-duesseldorf.de

## 2.2 The individual legal forms

In Germany, there is primarily a distinction between the legal forms of corporations and partnerships. Corporations are basically entities and thus bear the liability risk themselves. For this reason, more paperwork is required for corporations, and stricter founding conditions must be met.

Partnerships are generally characterized by the personal liability of the partners. The founding conditions, by contrast, are generally less stringent than for corporations.

Please note that depending on the legal form you must comply with certain **notification requirements**. These include in particular mandatory information on letterheads, invoices and web sites. For more information, please contact the CIC.

### Corporations

#### GmbH (Limited Company under German Law)

The most widely known and most important form of corporation is the German limited liability company (“Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung”, GmbH). This form of corporation is characterized by the relatively low founding capital of at least EUR 25,000 and the limitation of liability of the individual shareholders to the injected capital. Furthermore, the GmbH can be founded by one single person.

Like all corporations, the GmbH is a legal entity, i.e. it can itself become a party to contracts, and it can, for example, sue and be sued in court. The GmbH itself is also liable for all financial obligations. As the name implies, the shareholders are liable only to a limited extent, namely up to the amount of the deposit initially made. For this very reason, the GmbH is an interesting form for relatively small companies.

#### At a glance

##### GmbH Founding stages:

1. Selection of partners and opening of a bank account; the deposit of the initial capital (at least EUR 12,500 must be available at the time of registration with the Commercial Register).



2. Signing of the company agreement by all partners and authentication by a notary
3. Appointment of at least one director
4. Filing with the Commercial Register by a notary
5. Registration in the Commercial Register (the limitation of liability will not enter into force before that date!)
6. Business registration

The GmbH is a recommended form especially for entrepreneurs who want to avoid personal liability.

#### Further corporation types

Other corporation types such as the stock corporation (“Aktiengesellschaft”, AG) or the partnership limited by shares (“Kommanditgesellschaft auf Aktien”, KGaA) offer some advantages in particular for larger companies. Because of the complex founding requirements, we will be glad to establish contact with a law firm or consultancy for you.

#### Representation, premises and branch office

A **representation** is an organisational unit of a company whose primary tasks consist of public relations and initiation of business contacts. A representation, however, is not a commercial enterprise as defined by the German Trade Act (Gewerbeordnung), which is the reason why commercial activities are not allowed in the representation. A business registration is therefore not necessary for establishing a representation.

Hence establishment of a representation is recommended only if you want to limit the activity e.g. to the mere initiation of business contacts. No further commercial activities are permissible in the context of the representation!

A **Premise** is a business unit who serve the activities of a company. Some Importance has the establishment as a branch office which can be run independently or dependent from the parent company. We will be glad to recommend you a suitable law firm for further advice.

## 2. Establishing an office in Düsseldorf

### Partnerships

Partnerships differ from corporations in that they are largely dominated by the personal activities of the partners. In particular, the company is not liable for debts, but the individual partners are, personally and to an unlimited extent. Partnerships include the Civil Law Association (“Gesellschaft bürgerlichen Rechts”, GbR), General Partnership (“Offene Handelsgesellschaft”, OHG) and Limited Partnership (“Kommanditgesellschaft”, KG). With the exception only of the GbR, all partnerships must likewise be registered in the Commercial Register.

For further consultation, we will be pleased to recommend a suitable law firm.

## 2.3 Business registration

Before starting into business, every entrepreneur must register with the Commercial Registration Office. Generally no additional permission is required for conducting business. However, for certain businesses which are subject to approval, such as restaurants and crafts enterprises, in addition to the registration a business license must be requested. The business registration office of the city of Düsseldorf and the CIC will be glad to provide you with further information.

Before your business can be launched, it will be registered with the **Business Registration Department** of the Office for Public Order. You can register your business personally, by post or by email. When registering personally, you will generally be able to take your registration home with you immediately. The fee for business registration is 20 Euro.

The business registration is automatically forwarded to one of the five Düsseldorf tax offices, and a **tax ID number** is then assigned to your business. In addition, your company will automatically be enrolled in the Düsseldorf Chamber of Commerce and in a trade association, if applicable.

### At a glance

#### Business registration:

- Registration form sheet ([www.duesseldorf.de/formular/pdf/32\\_gewanmel.pdf](http://www.duesseldorf.de/formular/pdf/32_gewanmel.pdf))<sup>9</sup>
- Passport
- Up-to-date registration certificate
- If applicable: Residence permit with note of working permission
- If applicable: excerpt from the Commercial Register
- For branch offices: Certificate of the registration of the foreign company, with certified translation
- If applicable: commercial tenancy agreement
- If applicable: specific documents for obtaining permission for certain activities
- approx. EUR 20

### Contact

#### Office for Public Order of the City of Düsseldorf

Commercial Registration Department  
 Worringer Straße 111  
 D-40210 Düsseldorf  
 Phone: +49 (0)211.89-94488  
 Fax: +49 (0)211.89-33799  
[www.duesseldorf.de/ordnungsamt/gewerbe/gewmeld.shtml](http://www.duesseldorf.de/ordnungsamt/gewerbe/gewmeld.shtml)  
[gewerbemeldestelle@duesseldorf.de](mailto:gewerbemeldestelle@duesseldorf.de)

<sup>9</sup> available in German only

## 3. Essentials for doing business in Düsseldorf

### The right time to start doing business

Basically you can get into business immediately after receipt of the license for your company in Düsseldorf. Please note, however, that prior to registration in the commercial register some special regulations are to be observed, and the shareholders may be personally liable even in a corporation. For this reason, as a precaution you should commence business activities only after completion of the registration in the commercial register.

### Buying property

If you consider purchasing real estate in Düsseldorf, you have all the options. German law does not impose any restrictions on real estate purchase or possession by foreigners.

Please note that conclusion of a contract for the sale of real estate always requires authentication by a notary; that the transaction is taxable; and that the change of ownership must be registered in the land register (“Grundbuch”) of the city of Düsseldorf. For this reason, when buying real estate you should in any case seek professional legal assistance.

### Renting office or industrial space

For finding suitable premises, you can search the regional newspapers such as the *Rheinische Post* and the *Westdeutsche Zeitung* for yourself, get informed on the Internet or contact the Office of Economic Development. It is also quite common to hire an agent to search for premises.

Please note that when an agent is hired, in general the future tenant will have to pay the agent’s commission. The monthly rent consists of the so-called basic rent (known as “cold rent” in Germany) which accrues for granting use of the premises, and the extra charges, i.e. the running costs such as the costs for heating, water, waste disposal, etc.. Before signing the tenancy agreement, you should demand precise information what further costs you may incur, and what other contracts you will have to conclude separately, such as electricity, television and telephone. Please allow for up to 6 weeks for the installation of the connections.

Furthermore, a deposit by the tenant, which will usually amount to two to three months worth of the “cold” rent, will usually be required. After proper return of the leased property, the deposit will be paid back to the former tenant.

## 3.1 3.1 The ideal premises

Düsseldorf as a business location is architecturally characterized by the excellent availability of real estate, first-class new constructions, a large potential for building plots for new construction, and stable rents. Here you can choose freely among everything from representative historic buildings up to ultramodern office premises.

Foreign investors have also had very positive experiences with our [real estate service](#). We will be glad to help you find suitable office space, commercial premises and municipal and private building sites, or to bring you into contact with an estate agent. With qualified site consulting we draw your attention to important location advantages and future developments in the state capital, in order to give you the information you need for correctly choosing your company headquarters. We will prepare individual offers for you and will be glad to accompany you during the visit. In addition to our annual real estate report, we will also be glad to provide you with the commercial rent index.

A large number of real estate offers in German can be found on the Internet, e.g. under [www.immobilienscout24.de](http://www.immobilienscout24.de), [www.immonet.de](http://www.immonet.de) or [www.immowelt.de](http://www.immowelt.de).

## 3.2 Staff

The Düsseldorf labour market offers a large pool of workers of any qualifications. The comprehensive education and training programs – 45 universities and colleges are located in the wider Düsseldorf-Rhein-Ruhr area, and is thus the densest network of higher education in the Federal Republic – will enable you to find qualified and motivated employees. Hence we are confident that you will be able to find appropriate staff in Düsseldorf for building your company.

The Düsseldorf Employment Agency will be glad to assist you as a competent partner in the recruitment of new staff. They provide candidate pre-selection and swift presentation of well-matched candidates. Their staff will also advise you on all aspects of the labour market, such as the possibilities for financial support in hiring staff.

In addition, you can also seek suitable workers by placing advertisements in the newspapers, in trade journals or on the Internet. We will also be happy to establish contacts with privately-owned personnel placement agencies.

### Contact

#### Information

Düsseldorf Employment Agency  
 Grafenberger Allee 300  
 D-40237 Düsseldorf  
 Phone: +49 (0)1801.555 111 (Employees) <sup>10</sup>  
           +49 (0)1801.664 466 (Employers) <sup>10</sup>  
[www.arbeitsagentur.de/duesseldorf](http://www.arbeitsagentur.de/duesseldorf) <sup>11</sup>  
 Duesseldorf@arbeitsagentur.de

## 3.3 Labour law issues / Social security / Staff costs

Labour productivity in Germany is exceptionally high by European and international standards. This is not only confirmed again and again by statistics, but it also reflects the opinion of entrepreneurs all over the world. For example, in the year 2010 Germany was once more voted, after a survey among American entrepreneurs, by the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) to be the most popular investment location in Europe. The participating entrepreneurs said they particularly appreciate the high quality of their employees.

### Costs

**Ancillary labour costs** in Germany amount to some 40% of the gross wages. It is the duty of the employer to correctly pay all taxes and duties to the tax office. You should also consider that in general your foreign employees must likewise receive German wages as are customary in the region.

### At a glance

#### ancillary labour costs

Overview of the dimension of the total ancillary labour costs to be deducted by the employer, about half of which is paid by the employee (each expressed as percentage of the gross wage; without income tax; as at the beginning of 2011):

Pension insurance	19.9%
Health insurance	15.5%
Unemployment insurance	3.0% (for childless persons)
Care insurance	2.2%
Accident insurance	depends on the individual industry sector

The employer must provide **accident insurance** for his employees. Usually this is done via the statutory membership of the employer in an **Accident Prevention & Insurance Association** specific for the individual field of industry. Moreover, the staff must be registered for **social security** by the employer. The statutory health insurance providers (collection offices) have been assigned the task of collecting all total social security contributions and transfer them to the competent authorities.

<sup>10</sup> German speaking only, <sup>11</sup> available in German only

### 3. Essentials for doing business in Düsseldorf

In Germany, there is basically a **statutory health insurance** for employees. The employee can freely choose the health insurance provider, with the employer defraying 7.3 % and the employee defraying 8.2 % of the dues. Workers who have earned, for three years running, a gross annual salary of currently at least 49,500 Euros, as well as self-employed workers, are eligible for private insurance.

When the insured person subscribes to a public health insurance provider, upon request his/her family will also be included into the insurance. In private health insurance, for each family member an additional contribution will be due. There is also the option of taking out **supplementary private insurance** in order to complement and extend the services of the statutory health insurance providers.

Once you have decided to hire employees, you will also need a so-called company registration number, which is to be obtained from the Employment Agency. The company registration number is only for labour and occupational research and must be forwarded to the health insurance provider for social security. You can request the company registration number by phone or e-mail from the company registration number service of the Federal Employment Agency:

#### Contact

##### **Federal Employment Agency Company Registration Number Service**

Phone: +49 (0)1801.664 466

(Land line price: 3.9 ct / min,  
mobile phone rates no more than 42 ct / min)

Fax: +49 (0)681.988429-1300

betriebsnummernservice@arbeitsagentur.de

##### **Service hours:**

Monday to Friday from 8.00 to 18.00 o'clock

The Federal Republic of Germany has concluded **social security agreements** with several other countries in order to avoid double insurance and to allow for crediting of time spent abroad against social security in the home countries after return. These agreement countries besides all members of the EU and the EEA include Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, Croatia, India, Israel, Japan, Canada, Macedonia, Montenegro, Morocco, Serbia, South Korea, Switzerland, Turkey, Tunisia and the United States.

#### **Labour law**

German labour law has some peculiarities that you should know about before hiring employees. We will be glad to recommend a suitable lawyer who can provide comprehensive advice in this regard!

**Employment contracts** can basically be limited to up to two years for new hire. Please note that without a valid written agreement defining the term of the contract, the employment contract is considered as permanent under German law .

With regard to employment contracts, please be aware of the **collective agreements** which have been negotiated in many branches by trade unions and employer associations, and which are binding for their members.

The **working hours** for employees are generally eight hours per day, with five working days from Monday to Friday. In addition, with a five-day working week there is entitlement to a minimum of 20 paid leave days per year. In Düsseldorf, there are also 11 public holidays, during which – with a few exceptions – no work is done. 24–30 leave days per year are common.

## 3.4 3.4 Taxes

German tax law discriminates between taxation of individuals and of businesses. This means that each year you will have to submit a tax return to the tax office, both for yourself as an individual person and for your company. Upon registering your business you will automatically be assigned a tax number by your responsible tax office.

For detailed information about German tax law, please contact a tax advisor, since here we can give you only a brief overview of the most important taxes. As the amount of the taxes to be paid may also be affected by the individual type of business ownership, we advise you to consult a tax advisor even before founding your company. We will be glad to recommend competent partners.

Individuals pay an **income tax** on all of their income, individually ranging from 14 to 45%, depending on the income.

In Germany, the general **sales tax** (VAT) is below the European average, amounting to 19% and 7%, respectively, for consumer products and everyday services.

In addition, each businessperson must also pay a tax to the community where his/her business is based (**business tax**). As the city of Düsseldorf has been free of debt since 2007 and has an excellent budget, it has been possible to cut back the business tax several times in recent years. The business tax of the city of Düsseldorf is currently only at 440 points (c. 15.4%), and thus by German domestic standards Düsseldorf is particularly attractive for investors.

### Corporations

For corporations such as the GmbH, primarily the so-called **corporate tax** accrues. This means that the entire income of the company will be taxed at a rate of 15%.

If profit is transferred to a foreign parent company, the so-called capital gains tax will be due, amounting to 25%. However, where there is a **double tax treaty**, there is the possibility of exemption from or refund of the tax.

After distribution of the profits to the shareholders, in a second step the so-called **withholding tax**, always amounting to 25%, is deducted.

Next there is also the so-called **solidarity contribution** to be paid, amounting to 5.5% of the corporation, income and capital gains tax, which was introduced primarily to cover the costs of the German reunification. The combination of corporation tax and solidarity contribution thus amounts to 15.825%.

### Import and Export

Import and export of goods and services within the European Union is largely liberalized. There are no customs due, only the so-called **acquisition tax** must be deducted. The acquisition tax corresponds to the individual sales tax in the country in which the recipient of the goods is based. In Germany, shipments from third countries, i.e. countries which are not EU members, are subject to the **import turnover tax**, which likewise amounts to 19% and 7%, respectively.

#### Information in the Internet

further information available at:  
[www.germantaxes.info](http://www.germantaxes.info)



## 4. Living in Düsseldorf

In quality-of-life surveys and rankings, Düsseldorf is regularly found right at the top. A wide range of cultural activities, numerous sports clubs, large parks, international associations, educational institutions and many events and city festivals emphasize the feel-good factor in Düsseldorf. By making substantial investments in the fields of education, sports and culture, the city supports its continued positive development. The international flair of Düsseldorf, together with Rhenish cheerfulness, will make you, too, quickly feel “at home” here.

### Contact

#### State Capital Düsseldorf Municipal Office

Service Centre

Willy-Becker-Allee 7

D-40200 Düsseldorf

Phone: +49 (0)211.89-91

Fax: +49 (0)211.89-29035

[www.duesseldorf.de/einwohnerangelegenheiten/meldeangelegenheiten/anmeldung/index.shtml](http://www.duesseldorf.de/einwohnerangelegenheiten/meldeangelegenheiten/anmeldung/index.shtml)<sup>13</sup>

einwohnermeldeamt@duesseldorf.de

### 4.1 4.1 Accommodation after arrival

The Düsseldorf real estate market offers manifold possibilities with regard to residential houses and apartments, too. The information concerning office space given above applies here as well. The individual quarters offer ambiances to suit any taste. Rural quarters such as Kaiserswerth contrast with the urban and vibrant quarters such as Flingern and Bilk and offer a felicitous mix of urban feel and cosiness. In the local newspapers and on the internet, you will find a large number of offers, e.g. at [www.immobilienscout24.de](http://www.immobilienscout24.de).

#### Registration

Once you have found a permanent home in Düsseldorf, you must register it within a week. Registration can be done either at the Municipal Office of the residence quarter or at the Registration Office in the Service Centre in the vicinity of the Main Station, and it must be performed personally or by proxy for all family members. Registration by mail is not permissible. The Municipal Office and the local Immigration Office are also situated in the Service Centre.

Please bring the following documents along for registration:

#### Check List

1. Passport and residence permit, if applicable
2. Recommended: Completed Application Form Sheet (downloadable from <https://formulare.duesseldorf.de/forms/frm/QjNF7caFz8XRHJrtgDhqa1HTNmJjHZg>)<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> available in German only

### 4.2 Mobility and Driver's license

One of the questions most frequently asked immediately after arrival concerns validity of foreign driving licenses. Basically, the following applies: Licenses issued in EU or EEA countries are fully recognized in Germany. Citizens of other countries must have their licenses transferred within 6 months after establishing a regular residence in Germany.

To obtain a German driver's license, you must pass a theoretical and a practical driving test. After successfully passing the tests, the foreign license will be replaced with the German one.

Driver's licenses of the citizens of some countries such as many U.S. states and Canada, Israel, Japan, Switzerland, Singapore and South Korea can be exchanged without a driving test but only if you have are over the required legal age of 18 years.

Please also note that in Germany there are special license categories for driving motorcycles and trucks. Only in exceptional cases will foreign driving licenses be authorized to drive these vehicles.

Please remember to have your driver's license transferred in due time, since driving without a license is punishable in Germany. The processing time is about 4 to 6 weeks.

## 4. Living in Düsseldorf

Please bring the following documents along for transferring the driver's license:

### Check List

1. Passport, residence permit and certificate of registration
2. Foreign driver's license, with official translation if applicable
3. If applicable, a statement that the foreign license is valid
4. Two biometric photographs
5. If necessary, evidence of exams passed and eye tests
6. Fees: EUR 35.00 to 43.40

### Contact

#### State Capital Düsseldorf Traffic Office

License Department  
 Höherweg 101  
 D-40200 Düsseldorf  
 Phone: +49 (0)211.89-27050  
 Fax: +49 (0)211.89-29187  
[www.duesseldorf.de/kfz/fuehrerschein/dienste/ausland.shtml](http://www.duesseldorf.de/kfz/fuehrerschein/dienste/ausland.shtml)<sup>14</sup>  
 fuehrerscheinstelle@duesseldorf.de

### Flights / Trains / Public Transport

Its position alone is sufficient for the city of Düsseldorf to offer ideal location conditions. In the heart of Europe, with excellent transport links, the major European business capitals such as Paris and London are just an hour's flight away.

Düsseldorf International Airport is the third largest airport in Germany and is located only about 15 minutes away from the city centre, in the north of the city. 75 airlines offer direct flights to more than 180 destinations all over the world.

[www.flughafen-duesseldorf.de/dus\\_en/](http://www.flughafen-duesseldorf.de/dus_en/)

Located centrally in North Rhine-Westphalia, Düsseldorf is connected to the densest railway network in Germany. Long-distance connections include the intercity network (ICE) of the Deutsche Bahn.

[www.bahn.de/i/view/USA/en/index.shtml](http://www.bahn.de/i/view/USA/en/index.shtml)

Düsseldorf has a well-developed public transport network. Monthly tickets offer benefits.

[www.vrr.de/en/index.html](http://www.vrr.de/en/index.html) or  
[www.rheinbahn.com/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.rheinbahn.com/Pages/default.aspx)

### Toll for trucks

Since the beginning of 2005, in Germany a distance-based fee for heavy trucks on highways is being collected. The amount of toll to be paid by the user depends on the highway kilometres actually travelled ("distance-related" fee). The toll will be collected for an individual vehicle, with its assigned license number, which is subject to toll.

The amount of the toll per mile (so-called toll rate) is graded by the number of axles of the vehicle and by emission categories.

For more information about HGV (Heavy goods vehicle) toll, please see

[www.bmvbs.de/EN/TransportAndMobility/transport-and-mobility\\_node.html](http://www.bmvbs.de/EN/TransportAndMobility/transport-and-mobility_node.html)

### Green Zone

Since February 15th, 2009, the Düsseldorf city centre has become a so-called Green Zone. In this zone, car traffic is restricted. Only vehicles with low-emission badges ("Schadstoffplaketten", also known as "particulate matter badges" – "Feinstaubplaketten" –) may still enter this zone. There are interdictions for vehicles with very high pollutant emissions. For more information about the Green Zone in Düsseldorf, please see the website of the Düsseldorf Road Traffic Office. There you can also order the respective badges on/line.

[www.duesseldorf.de/kfz/feinstaub/001\\_umwelt.shtml](http://www.duesseldorf.de/kfz/feinstaub/001_umwelt.shtml)<sup>15</sup>

For general information about the Green Zone and the required badges, please see:

<http://www.environmental-badge.co.uk/en/environmental-badge.html>

<sup>14, 15</sup> available in German only

## 4.3 Education and Schools

In addition to the free public schools – which increasingly also offer, depending on the qualification to be reached, bilingual classes –, Düsseldorf also provides numerous fee-based private and international schools. Particularly noteworthy are the Lycée Français, the Japanese School and the International School of Düsseldorf, which offers teaching for 1,000 students from 50 nations and qualifies students for universities all over the world.

Extensive information on schools in the city can be found on the web pages of the School Administration Office:

[www.duesseldorf.de/schulen/index.shtml](http://www.duesseldorf.de/schulen/index.shtml)<sup>16</sup>

For those who have completed school, Düsseldorf offers education and training opportunities in the many local companies, businesses and associations, the Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf and several colleges. With 45 universities and colleges, the Düsseldorf-Rhein-Ruhr area also has the highest density of universities of the Federal Republic.

A broad range of courses is also offered by the Düsseldorf Community College

[www.duesseldorf.de/vhs/](http://www.duesseldorf.de/vhs/)<sup>17</sup>

### Contact

#### State Capital Düsseldorf Education Counselling

Bertha-von-Suttner-Platz 1

D-40227 Düsseldorf

Phone: +49 (0)211.89-93499

Fax: +49 (0)211.89-29234

[www.duesseldorf.de/bildungskompass](http://www.duesseldorf.de/bildungskompass)<sup>18</sup>

[bildungsberatung@duesseldorf.de](mailto:bildungsberatung@duesseldorf.de)

### Child Care

Düsseldorf is a family-friendly city, continuously expanding its childcare facilities. Children from 3 years of age onwards are taken care of for free in Düsseldorf's publicly owned kindergartens! The costs of care for children under three years of age are income-dependent.

There are many options for childcare. In addition to kindergartens, nurseries and pre-school kindergarten facilities there are a wide variety of facilities where children are taken care of during the day by trained professional personnel, partly also bilingually.

There are also many international kindergartens in Düsseldorf, especially noteworthy are the four Japanese kindergartens, which can accommodate more than 320 children. Information and statements are available at the Youth Welfare Office of Düsseldorf. In addition, the "i-Punkt Familie" offers a lot of information about child care in Düsseldorf and will gladly advise you when searching for suitable facilities.

### Contact

#### State Capital Düsseldorf Youth Welfare Office

Willy-Becker-Allee 7

D-40200 Düsseldorf

Phone: +49 (0)211.89-91

[www.duesseldorf.de/jugendamt](http://www.duesseldorf.de/jugendamt)<sup>19</sup>

[jugendamt@duesseldorf.de](mailto:jugendamt@duesseldorf.de)

#### i-Punkt Familie – Child Care Portal –

Heinz-Schmöle-Straße 8–10

D-40227 Düsseldorf

Phone: +49 (0)211.89-98870

[www.duesseldorf.de/jugendamt/ipunkt/index.shtml](http://www.duesseldorf.de/jugendamt/ipunkt/index.shtml)<sup>20</sup>

[i-punkt-familie@duesseldorf.de](mailto:i-punkt-familie@duesseldorf.de)

### Child Benefits

If you are a citizen of the EU, of the EEA or of Switzerland and have children, you are entitled to child benefits. Currently this amounts to 184 Euros per month and is to be applied for at the Employment Office, where you also get further information. On the basis of intergovernmental agreements, citizens of other states may also be entitled to such benefits. Citizens of third countries are eligible for child benefits if they have a valid settlement permit.

<sup>16-20</sup> available in German only

## 4.4 Health and Insurance

### Health

With the university hospital, 14 further hospitals and more than 1,400 medical practitioners, Düsseldorf provides excellent health care. You are free in the choice of your doctor or hospital, but depending on the individual service, co-payments may be required. For more information on compulsory health insurance, please see 4.3.

Most doctors in Düsseldorf have a good knowledge of the English language. For a list of doctors with knowledge of further foreign languages, please see: [www.amazingdusseldorf.com/health-care/medical.html](http://www.amazingdusseldorf.com/health-care/medical.html)

Physicians in Düsseldorf:  
[www.nfp-duesseldorf.de](http://www.nfp-duesseldorf.de) <sup>21</sup>

Emergency practice:  
[www.notfallpraxis-duesseldorf.de](http://www.notfallpraxis-duesseldorf.de) <sup>22</sup>

### Pension Plans

In Germany, for employees and for certain groups of self-employed persons, there is **compulsory pension insurance** (see ancillary labour costs). After retirement, there will then be an entitlement to pension payments, depending on the length and duration of the payments. At least in large companies, a company pension plan is common, too.

However, independent entrepreneurs are generally exempted from compulsory pension insurance, as well as from compulsory health insurance. They can take out private pension insurance from in state-subsidized private pension insurance providers.

Entitlement to a pension is also maintained for foreigners who have contributed to a German pension scheme and return to their home country later.

### Insurance

In addition to compulsory insurance (see above), anyone is free to take out further insurances. **It is recommended to take out at least a household and a personal liability insurance.** It will be best for you to check together with the CIC or your insurance agent what kind of insurance might be useful for you and your company.

## 4.5 Leisure, Culture and Sports

Düsseldorf offers an environment where recreation and leisure can be interwoven with business in the most pleasant way. There are a wide range of sports and leisure facilities.

Almost any kind of sport is offered by local sports clubs for active practice, including, e.g., soccer, tennis, golf, ice hockey, riding, sailing, cycling.  
[www.ssbduesseldorf.de](http://www.ssbduesseldorf.de) <sup>23</sup>

Düsseldorf also offers a lot to watch. In addition to the premier league teams in ice hockey (DEG Metro Stars) and handball (HSG), crowd pullers also include soccer (Fortuna), basketball (Magics), cross country skiing, marathons and the World Amateur Boxing Championships.

In the event premises of the city, such as the Esprit Arena, the ISS Dome, the Burg-Wächter Castello, the Capitol Theatre and Philips Hall, international stars and productions regularly perform. Lovers of classical music also get their money's worth, especially in the Tonhalle and the Deutsche Oper am Rhein. Musicals, vaudeville shows, ballets and theatre complete the spectrum. Numerous museums and galleries, including in particular the NRW Art Collection in the K20 and K21, invite you to come and linger. Libraries and the International Library of Düsseldorf offer reading material galore.

Baths, including a water park and a lido, provide refreshment in the summer time. Castles rich in history, monuments and parks offer sightseeing and relaxation. Signposted cycle trails and boat trips on the Rhine are ways to explore the surrounding countryside. Moreover, in Düsseldorf there are many small and large cinemas. Cinestar also shows current movies in their original language.

Cinema Program Overview:

[www.biograph-online.de](http://www.biograph-online.de) <sup>24</sup>

Cinestar: [www.cinestar.de](http://www.cinestar.de) <sup>25</sup>

## 4. Living in Düsseldorf

Düsseldorf is also a place to revel late at night. There are not only large numbers of restaurants, nightclubs and bars for every taste, but also the Old City known as the “longest bar in the world” and the up-and-coming media port to guarantee high spirits until the break of dawn.

The Rhenish carnival merits special attention. Once a year in February, people party from Thursday to Monday in the streets of the city, masked and frisky. Furthermore, many ceremonies and parades are held.

Shopping in Düsseldorf is not neglected either. Opportunities are found especially in the city centre and in the Old City. The world’s best-known designers are present on the Königsallee, one of the most exclusive shopping streets in Europe.

In Germany, the majority of people are of Christian faith. However, in Düsseldorf, a liberal and multi-cultural city, there are also numerous institutions of other denominations.

For dates, tickets and more information, please see, e.g.: [www.duesseldorf-tourismus.de/en/home](http://www.duesseldorf-tourismus.de/en/home)

### Foreign Institutions

In Düsseldorf, the State Capital of North Rhine-Westphalia and an important business location, numerous foreign government agencies and representations, foreign and religious communities, associations and business organizations can be found. You will find more information about the individual institutions in your neighbourhood locally in your quarter or on the internet.

For example at:

[https://www.duesseldorf.de/wirtschaftsfoerderung/pdf/adressen\\_institutionen\\_e.pdf](https://www.duesseldorf.de/wirtschaftsfoerderung/pdf/adressen_institutionen_e.pdf)

[www.duesseldorf.de/en/index.shtml](http://www.duesseldorf.de/en/index.shtml)

[www.meinestadt.de/duesseldorf](http://www.meinestadt.de/duesseldorf) <sup>26</sup>

[www.amazingduesseldorf.de](http://www.amazingduesseldorf.de)

<sup>26</sup> available in German only

## 5. Further information

### Extensive collection of links

[www.duesseldorf.de/eng/company/index.shtml](http://www.duesseldorf.de/eng/company/index.shtml)

### General information about the city

State Capital Düsseldorf:

[www.duesseldorf.de/en/index.shtml](http://www.duesseldorf.de/en/index.shtml)

Information on events:

[www.duesseldorf-tourismus.de/en/home/](http://www.duesseldorf-tourismus.de/en/home/)

For browsing:

[www.meinestadt.de/duesseldorf](http://www.meinestadt.de/duesseldorf) <sup>27</sup> and

[www.amazingduesseldorf.de](http://www.amazingduesseldorf.de)

The Düsseldorf Trade Fair:

[www.messe-duesseldorf.de](http://www.messe-duesseldorf.de)

### Establishing and running a business

Düsseldorf Office of Economic Development

[www.duesseldorf.de/en/economic/index.shtml](http://www.duesseldorf.de/en/economic/index.shtml)

Düsseldorf Founding Network:

[www.go-dus.de](http://www.go-dus.de) <sup>28</sup>

Düsseldorf Chamber of Industry & Commerce:

[www.duesseldorf.ihk.de/servicemarken/englisch/](http://www.duesseldorf.ihk.de/servicemarken/englisch/)

Employment Agency:

[www.arbeitsagentur.de/nn\\_426332/EN/Navigation/Startseite/Englisch-Nav.html](http://www.arbeitsagentur.de/nn_426332/EN/Navigation/Startseite/Englisch-Nav.html)

Düsseldorf Chamber of Crafts and Trades:

[www.hwk-duesseldorf.de/engl/index.html](http://www.hwk-duesseldorf.de/engl/index.html)

Accident Prevention & Insurance Associations:

[www.dguv.de/content/index.jsp](http://www.dguv.de/content/index.jsp)

North Rhine-Westphalia Founding Network:

[www.go.nrw.de](http://www.go.nrw.de) <sup>29</sup>

Founding information:

[www.existenzgruender.de/englisch/index.php](http://www.existenzgruender.de/englisch/index.php)

### Information about business and life in Germany

[www.howtogermany.com](http://www.howtogermany.com)

General Information:

[www.invest-in-germany.com](http://www.invest-in-germany.com)

Customs Duty:

[www.zoll.de/english\\_version/index.html](http://www.zoll.de/english_version/index.html)

Taxes:

[www.germantaxes.info](http://www.germantaxes.info)

Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany:

[www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Startseite\\_node.html](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Startseite_node.html)

Bundesverband der Dolmetscher und Übersetzer

(Federal Association of Interpreters and Translators):

[www.bdue.de/indexen.php](http://www.bdue.de/indexen.php)

City Magazines:

**Prinz:** <http://duesseldorf.prinz.de/> <sup>30</sup>

**coolibri:** [www.coolibri.de](http://www.coolibri.de) <sup>31</sup>

Local newspapers:

**Rheinische Post:** [www.rp-online.de](http://www.rp-online.de) <sup>32</sup>

**Neue Rhein Zeitung:** [www.derwesten.de](http://www.derwesten.de) <sup>33</sup>

**Westdeutsche Zeitung:** [www.wz-duesseldorf.de](http://www.wz-duesseldorf.de) <sup>34</sup>

Cinema Program:

[www.biograph-online.de](http://www.biograph-online.de) <sup>35</sup>

### Education

International School of Düsseldorf:

[www.isdedu.de](http://www.isdedu.de)

Düsseldorf Community College:

[www.duesseldorf.de/vhs](http://www.duesseldorf.de/vhs) <sup>36</sup>

City Libraries:

[www.duesseldorf.de/stadtbaechereien/index.shtml](http://www.duesseldorf.de/stadtbaechereien/index.shtml) <sup>37</sup>

### Transport

Düsseldorf International Airport:

[www.flughafen-duesseldorf.de/dus\\_en/](http://www.flughafen-duesseldorf.de/dus_en/)

German Railways:

[www.bahn.de/i/view/USA/en/index.shtml](http://www.bahn.de/i/view/USA/en/index.shtml)

Rhein-Ruhr Transport Association:

[www.vrr.de/en/index.html](http://www.vrr.de/en/index.html)

Car route planner for all Europe:

[www.viamichelin.com](http://www.viamichelin.com)

NRW cycling routes:

[www.radroutenplaner.nrw.de/RRP\\_home\\_02\\_en.html](http://www.radroutenplaner.nrw.de/RRP_home_02_en.html)

### Leisure / Sports / Culture

German Opera on the Rhine:

[www.rheinoper.de/en\\_EN/index](http://www.rheinoper.de/en_EN/index)

Düsseldorf Theatre:

[www.duesseldorfer-schauspielhaus.de/#English](http://www.duesseldorfer-schauspielhaus.de/#English)

K20, K21, Art Collection:

[www.kunstsammlung.de/en/home.html](http://www.kunstsammlung.de/en/home.html)

Aquazoo:

[www.duesseldorf.de/jugendamt](http://www.duesseldorf.de/jugendamt) <sup>38</sup>

Sports in Düsseldorf:

[www.duesseldorf.de/top/thema071/index.shtml](http://www.duesseldorf.de/top/thema071/index.shtml) <sup>39</sup>

## 6. Costs at a glance

Below we have listed some basic costs associated with establishing an office in Düsseldorf. These are merely approximations.

### Residence Permit

Granting of a residence permit entitling to self-employment:	EUR 100 (valid for up to one year) EUR 110 (valid for more than one year)
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### Establishing an office in Düsseldorf

Business registration	EUR 20
Establishing a GmbH (with a minimum capital of EUR 25,000)	
• Lawyer, notary, registration:	EUR 1,500 to 4,000
• Accountant, if required:	EUR 1,500

### Running costs

Rent for an office, depending on location:	EUR 10 to 20 per m <sup>2</sup> and month plus additional costs
rent for combined office and warehouse space:	EUR 5.50 to 12 per m <sup>2</sup> and month plus additional costs
Rent for a warehouse:	EUR 4.50 to 7 per m <sup>2</sup> and month
Rent for a garage:	EUR 65 per month
Purchasing prices for commercial properties: (e.g. in the Industrial Park)	EUR 80 to 200 per m <sup>2</sup>
Gross salary for a secretary (39 hours per week, 30 days paid leave per year, 5 years of work experience, one foreign language, aged about 25 years):	approx. EUR 2,200 to 2,500 per month (= EUR 28,000 per year)

### Maintenance costs

Purchase price for a private car (medium-class):	c. EUR 25,000
Leasing rate for a private car (medium-class):	c. EUR 250
Taxes and insurance for a car (Medium-class, fully comprehensive insurance):	c. EUR 120 per month (= EUR 1,500 per year)
Rent (for a new apartment, 70 m <sup>2</sup> , 3 rooms):	EUR 7 to 9 per m <sup>2</sup> and month plus additional costs
Rent for a detached house:	EUR 10 to 15 per m <sup>2</sup> and month plus additional costs
Rent for a terraced house:	EUR 8 to 12 per m <sup>2</sup> and month plus additional costs
Purchase price for an apartment (new apartment, 70 m <sup>2</sup> , 3 rooms)	EUR 1500 to 2000 per m <sup>2</sup>

## 7. Index

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## 8. Overview of Institutions

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<p><b>Office of Economic Development</b>            Burgplatz 1, D-40213 Düsseldorf            Phone: +49 (0)211.89-95500            Fax: +49 (0)211.89-29062            Hotline: +49 (0)211.89-99980            economic@duesseldorf.de</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gen. advice and support</li> <li>• Location information</li> <li>• Real Estate Service</li> </ul>	5
<p><b>Service Centre</b>            Willi-Becker-Allee 7, D-40227 Düsseldorf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immigration Office</li> <li>• Municipal Office</li> <li>• Registration Office</li> </ul> <p>Mon, Tue 7.30-16.00 o'clock            Wed 7.30-13.00 o'clock            Thu 7.30-18.00 o'clock            Fri 7.30-13.00 o'clock</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residence permission (general)                Mo-Fr 7.30-13.00 o'clock by appointment</li> <li>• Settlement permission (general)</li> <li>• EU certificate of free movement</li> <li>• Registration certificate</li> </ul>	5, 9, 18
<p><b>Federal Foreign Office</b>  <a href="http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/de/WillkommeninD/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/Visabestimmungen.html">http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/de/WillkommeninD/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/Visabestimmungen.html</a></p>	The website of the Federal Foreign Office provides detailed information on entry into Germany. The forms are available on-line for download.	6, 8
<p><b>Düsseldorf Chamber of Industry and Commerce</b>            Ernst-Schneider-Platz 1            D-40212 Düsseldorf            Phone: +49 (0)211 3557-0            Fax: +49 (0)211 3557-400            ihkdus@duesseldorf.ihk.de</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Checking the availability of the company name</li> <li>• Counselling</li> <li>• becoming a member automatically after business registration</li> </ul>	11
<p><b>Düsseldorf Chamber of Crafts and Trades</b>            Georg-Schulhoff-Platz 1            D-40221 Düsseldorf            Phone: +49 (0)211.8795-0            Fax: +49 (0)211.8795-110            info@hwk-duesseldorf.de</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling</li> </ul>	11
<p><b>Commercial Registration / Public Order Office</b>            Worringer Straße 111            D-40210 Düsseldorf            Phone: +49 (0)211 89-94488            gewerbemeldestelle@duesseldorf.de</p> <p>Mon-Fri 8.00-12.30 o'clock            and by appointment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business registration</li> </ul> <p>Business registration can be done on-line as well. For more information, please see the website of the business registration office:  <a href="http://www.duesseldorf.de/ordnungsamt/gewerbe/gewmeld.shtml">http://www.duesseldorf.de/ordnungsamt/gewerbe/gewmeld.shtml</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business registration information</li> <li>• Special Use Authorizations</li> </ul>	13

Institution	What kind of service is provided there?	Page
<p><b>Employment Agency</b>            Grafenberger Allee 300            D-40237 Düsseldorf            Phone: +49 (0)1801.664 466 (Employers)            Duesseldorf@arbeitsagentur.de</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employer Services</li> <li>• Staff Search</li> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Company number assignment</li> </ul> <p>Phone: +49 (0)1801.664466 (3.9 ct/min);            Fax: +49 (0)681.988429-1300            betriebsnummernservice@arbeitsagentur.de</p>	15
<p><b>Federal Social Insurance for Miners and Mine Employees</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social security registration of marginally employed persons</li> <li>• For detailed information please see the employer portal at <a href="http://www.kbs.de/lang_de/nn_10140/DE/5_speziell/node.html?__nnn=true">www.kbs.de/lang_de/nn_10140/DE/5_speziell/node.html?__nnn=true</a></li> </ul>	16
<p><b>Traffic Office, License Department</b>            Höherweg 101            D-40233 Düsseldorf</p> <p>Mon, Tue, Wed 7.30-13.00 o'clock            Thu 7.30-18.00 o'clock            Fri 7.30-13.00 o'clock</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transfer of driving licenses</li> <li>• Vehicle registration</li> <li>• Green Zone information</li> <li>• EPA Badge</li> </ul>	19
<p><b>Traffic Management Office</b>            Auf'm Hennekamp 45            D-40225 Düsseldorf</p> <p>Mon-Wed 7.30-15.00 o'clock            Thu 7.30-18.00 o'clock            Fri 7.30-13.00 o'clock</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resident parking permits</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Education Centre (WBZ) at the Main Station</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education Counselling</li> <li>• Community College</li> </ul> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> floor, rooms 2.02, 2.03, 2.03a            Bertha-von-Suttner-Platz 1            D-40227 Düsseldorf</p> <p>by appointment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation for schools, higher education, continuing education and professional training</li> <li>• „Bildungskompass“ database</li> <li>• wide range of courses offered (languages, culture, history, education, etc.)</li> </ul>	20

Institution	What kind of service is provided there?	Page
<b>i-Punkt Familie</b> Heinz-Schmöle-Straße 8-10 D-40227 Düsseldorf	• Child Care portal	20
Mon, Tue, Fri	09.00-16.30 o'clock	
Wed	09.00-12.00 o'clock	
Thu	13.00-18.00 o'clock	



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