

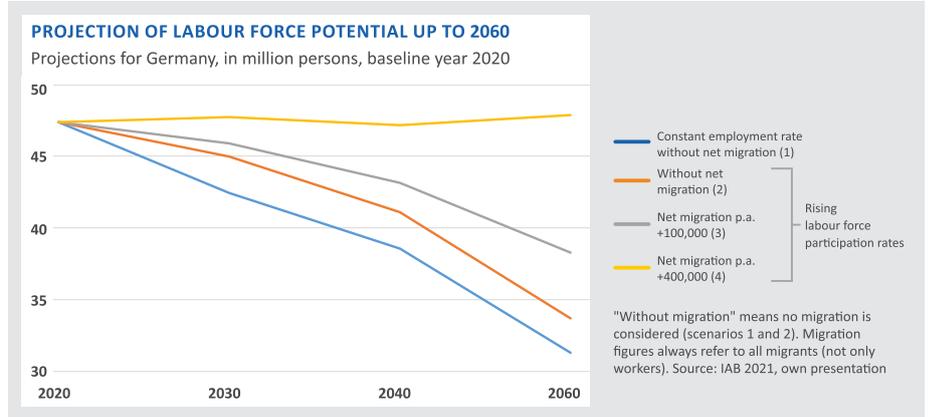
Skilled worker immigration in Germany



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DEMAND FOR SKILLED WORKERS

In Germany, the demand for skilled workers will be high in the coming decades. According to the Institute for Employment Research (IAB), for purely demographic reasons the labor force potential of currently 47.4 million persons would probably decline by 7.2 million between 2020 and 2035, and by another 8.9 million by 2060. Only with net immigration of 400,000 persons per year it would remain constant until 2035 or even rise to 47.9 million workers by 2060.



SKILLED WORKER IMMIGRATION

Skilled worker immigration in Germany is nothing new. The Green Card facilitated the entry of IT specialists from non-EU states from 2000 to 2004 onto the German labour market.¹ When the Immigration Act replaced the Green Card at the beginning of 2005, it prompted extensive reform of the provisions of migration and integration policy as well as foreigners' right of residence. While the EU Freedom of Movement Law regulates the residency and employment of foreign EU citizens, the Residency Law governs the corresponding regulations for third-country citizens, i.e. non-EU citizens. With the [Skilled Immigration Act \(FEG\)](#) that came into force on 1 March 2020, the legal framework for the immigration of skilled workers from third countries was expanded and simplified. Better controlled, faster and more sustainable work migration of third-country citizens with a university or vocational qualification is the objective. There were already regulations in place for skilled workers with academic qualifications before the FEG. Now skilled workers with vocational qualifications will also benefit from improved access to the labour market. It is possible to enter Germany with a (partially) recognised vocational or academic qualification, a concrete job offer, or to search for a job. When it comes to partial recognition, the skilled worker must catch up on training contents in Germany and/or sit an exam. The employers benefit from a faster skilled worker process. The previous limitation to shortage occupations for people with vocational qualifications and the so-called priority review no longer apply. The FEG also saw the establishment of the [Service Center for Professional Recognition \(ZSBA\)](#). It supports foreign skilled workers living abroad who make their application for recognition from there.

NETWORK IQ

The Network "Integration through Qualification (IQ)" has been working to improve the sustainable and qualified labour market integration of people with a migration background. Target groups include both adults with a migration background living in Germany as well as newly arrived migrants regardless of residency status. The cornerstone of Network IQ's day-to-day work is the development and implementation of advice and training provision for migrants with qualifications acquired abroad. It is engaged in seeking structural change. With its offer of intercultural training and advice provision for job centres, employment offices, municipal administrations and SMEs, the Network IQ seeks to establish a culture of openness and recognition within government administration and business. The key area "regional skilled workers networks - immigration" has been part of the Network IQ since 2019. By establishing regional skilled worker networks and advice centers on skilled worker immigration, the program supports the implementation of the FEG.



¹ From August 2000 until the end of 2004, 17,931 work and residence permits were given to foreign IT specialists, cf. Federal Office for Migration and Refugees: Migration Report 2005, p. 77–82.

IQ OFFERS IN THE AREA OF SKILLED WORKER IMMIGRATION

From the start of 2019 to the end of 2020, 46 subprojects were developed across the country in the IQ key area “regional skilled workers networks – immigration” and now focus on the following working areas:

 <p>Advising employers, especially SMEs, on the possibilities and procedures of skilled worker immigration, in close cooperation with the Employer Service</p> <hr/> <p>e.g. legal questions, qualification recognition, recruitment, financing</p>	 <p>Supporting employers with integration management to secure long-term commitment of international skilled workers</p> <hr/> <p>e.g. developing mentoring structures for onboarding and practical life skills, provision of intercultural awareness courses</p>	 <p>Networking between the stakeholders involved in skilled worker immigration</p> <hr/> <p>such as employment agencies, immigration authorities, recognition authorities, municipal economic development</p>	 <p>ZSBA support in advising international skilled workers</p> <hr/> <p>on the recognition of vocational and refresher trainings</p>
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The subprojects in this IQ key area support employers (including small and medium-sized enterprises, SMEs) and stakeholders in the area of skilled worker immigration (including job centres, employment agencies, municipal administration, immigration authorities). In doing so, they work closely with the Employer Service (AG-S) of the Federal Employment Agency and the ZSBA and offer advisory sessions, events and training sessions on various topics. From 2019 to June 2022 there were 46 active subprojects in the area of skilled worker immigration. With 588 self-organised events, 10,836 participants, primarily from institutions such as employment services, SMEs, immigration authorities, chambers, guilds, as well as education and employment providers, were reached and offered possibilities for networking. In addition, 62 self-organised training sessions, mostly focusing on skilled worker immigration, recognition and integration management, took place with 896 participants. The 18,032 advisory sessions² carried out were mainly oriented towards many SMEs from the sectors “health and social care”, “construction”, “hospitality sector and gastronomy”, “provision of freelance, scientific and technical services”, as well as “manufacturing/production of goods”. In terms of content, the target groups were predominantly interested in skilled worker immigration, recognition, residency law, skilled worker recruitment, and integration management.



²The number of advisory sessions includes initial and follow-up advisory sessions as well as another 188 advisory processes monitored in this key area until Dec. 2020. An advisory process is defined as more than three follow-up sessions.

Sources:

IQ DP/ebb GmbH:
Monitoring of the key area “Regional skilled workers networks – immigration” (survey period 01.01.2019 to 30.06.2022, reference date 07.07.2022)

Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung (IAB) der Bundesagentur für Arbeit: IAB Kurzbericht - Aktuelle Analysen aus dem Institut für Arbeitsmarkt- und Berufsforschung Nr. 25, 23.11.2021:

<https://doku.iab.de/kurzber/2021/kb2021-25.pdf>

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Explore more information and latest figures on the Network IQ here: www.netzwerk-iq.de/en/

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