The Recognition of Foreign Qualifications in Germany

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Social Self-I Training C2
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Agenda

- Basics and Legal Frame
- Recognition Procedure
- Latest Developments and Challenges
- Network „Integration through Qualification (IQ)“
- Counselling on Recognition and Job Training
Basics and Legal Frame

- Länders (= German federal states) Regulations
- Recognition Grant
- Federal Recognition Act
- § 17a of the German Residency Act (AufenthG)
- Key Point Paper on the immigration of skilled workers from third countries
Basics and Legal Frame

- regulates the professional recognition of regulated professions
- applies to all citizens of the European Union (EU), the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland
- guarantees them access to the same profession and under the same conditions as nationals
- to be transposed into national law by the Member States within two years
- in Germany, the directive has been transposed in the professional specialist laws and regulations
“Law to improve the assessment and recognition of professional and vocational education and training qualifications acquired abroad”

relates to over **600 occupations** governed by **Federal Law** (e.g. all training occupations in the dual system)

- Article 1: Vocational Qualifications Assessment Law (BQFG)
- Articles 2-61: adaptations and amendments to professional and vocational laws → where necessary and possible: opening up for qualifications and nationals from third countries
Basics and Legal Frame

→ Vocational Qualification Assessment Law (BQFG) of the federal states or individual laws for individual occupations differing from BQFG

→ entered into force between 2012 and 2014

→ regulate the recognition of foreign qualifications for those occupations for which the federal states are responsible
  » e.g. teacher, educator, social education specialist, engineer, architect and medical specialist
Basics and Legal Frame

→ skilled workers from third countries are enabled to compensate for substantial differences by taking part in a training measure in Germany

→ after gaining full equivalence or authorisation to practise, they are permitted to spend a period of up to one year seeking a job

→ opportunity to qualify for full equivalence and become integrated into the labour market
Basics and Legal Frame

→ **financial support to cover expenses** related to the recognition procedure
→ covers costs for
  » fees and transport associated with the recognition procedure
  » translation and certification of certificates, qualifications and reports
  » obtaining any necessary evidence
  » qualification analysis
→ up to the value of 600 Euros
Basics and Legal Frame


Key Point Paper on the immigration of skilled workers from third countries

→ developing a **law on the immigration** of skilled workers
→ accelerating the **recognition procedure**
→ enhancing German **language training abroad**
→ enhancing **administrative procedures**
→ strengthen **marketing activities** in collaboration with enterprises
Recognition Procedure

- **No major differences**
  - **Equivalence examination by competent authority**
  - **No equivalence**

- **Major differences**
  - **Non-regulated professions**
    - Notice of partial equivalence: overview of existing qualifications and deficits
  - **Regulated professions**
    - Professional licensing subject to the fulfillment of additional requirements

- **Bridge qualification**
  - (AKA adjustment qualification, upgrading qualification)
  - **Aptitude test**
  - **Bridge course**
    - (AKA adaptation period, upgrading course)
  - **Knowledge test**

- **Full recognition of professional credentials: notice of full equivalence „Gleichwertigkeitsbescheid“**

- **Application on the job market**

- **Flanking training-related support & language training**

- **Notice of rejection**
Latest Developments and Challenges: Facts and Figures

From 2012 to 2016, 86,500 applications for recognition were made in professions governed by federal law alone.

The most frequent target professions (2016):
- teacher
- engineer
- business economist / economist
- registered general nurse

Significant increase in the number of new applications for professional or occupational recognition:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Regulated professions</th>
<th>Non-regulated occupations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>8,775</td>
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<td>2013</td>
<td>12,057</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>13,485</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>14,388</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>17,256</td>
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Application figures 2016 by world regions:

- Europe (continent): 16,992
- Asia: 4,464
- Africa: 966
- South America: 312
- North/Central America and Caribbean: 162
- Australia and Oceania: 21
Latest Developments and Challenges: Facts and Figures

- most applications result in **full equivalence**
- number of recognition certificates in 2017:
  - 22,254 in professions governed by federal law
  - 8,400 in professions governed by federal state (“Länder”) law (without certificates confirming „no equivalence“)
Latest Developments and Challenges using the Example of Teaching Qualifications

- **Basics**
  - regulated by (different) „Länder“ (federal states) laws
  - partly different regulations for persons from EU and third countries
  - teacher training in Germany: complex (two-stage) training

- **Main challenges**
  - foreign teaching qualifications mostly cover 1 school subject only
  - German language skills required on level C2 (CEF)
  - different pedagogical and didactic concepts
  - The way to full equivalence is long and complex
Latest Developments and Challenges using the Example of Teaching Qualifications

- **Some solutions**
  - in some federal states: special regulations for teaching only 1 school subject / partial access to profession
  - bilingual schools: teaching positions in own mother language
  - Network IQ: special pedagogical language training (often combined with intercultural aspects of teaching)
  - different professional pathway (e.g. adult education)

### Recognition certificates Teaching Qualifications (2017)

- **Full equivalence**: 54%
- **Imposition of a compensation measure**: 28%
- **Partial equivalence**: 10%
- **Others / no certificate**: 7%
- **Ongoing procedure**: 1%
Network “Integration through Qualification (IQ)”
Objectives and Structures

- central **labour market integration programme** of the Germany Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in order to improve labour market integration of people with a migration background

- special target groups:
  - people who have acquired professional credentials abroad
  - labour market and economic stakeholders

- structure
  - 16 regional networks with approx. 380 subprojects
  - five competence centres
  - IQ Dissemination Project

- explanatory film: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkVfnoYi2M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkVfnoYi2M)
Organisation

NATIONWIDE

Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) financial management

Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS) principal donor
Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) & Federal Employment Agency (BA) strategic steering partners

IQ Dissemination Project (IQ DP)
Support Fair Integration

5 IQ competence centres

Web portal “Recognition in Germany”

Funding programme “Initiative New Quality of Work” (INQA)

REGIONAL LEVEL

16 Regional networks and regional coordinators

381 Subprojects

Counselling on credential recognition and job training
100 Subprojects

Bridge training schemes within the context of the Recognition Act
137 Subprojects

Development of intercultural competence and other offers
125 Subprojects
Fair Integration
19 Subprojects

Funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (BMAS).
## Main Activities

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Main Activities

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  - on the recognition of foreign professional qualifications
  - on training programmes and compensatory measures for the attainment of full recognition and employment appropriate to one’s level of education

- qualification measures in the context of the Recognition Act
  - job training within the context of the Recognition Act,
  - facilitating the full recognition of foreign qualifications and labour market integration appropriate to one’s qualifications

- intercultural competence development
  - expansion and enshrinement of intercultural competence in the structures of:
    - Municipalities
    - Labour market service providers
    - Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)
  - services for refugees
  - fair integration (since 2018)
Counselling on Recognition and Job Training
Credential Recognition: Relevant Stakeholders

- Points of single contact
- Website “recognition in Germany”
- Hotline “working and living in Germany”
- Competent assessment authorities
- Central office for foreign education (ZAB)
- Databases like “bq portal”, “anabin”
- “Pro recognition” “counselling service abroad”
- IQ counselling centres
- Employment agencies
- Job centres
- Migration counselling services
- Counselling services on further education and training
- Websites “make-it-in-Germany” “handbook Germany”
Specific Services for People with Foreign Qualifications

- "Working and Living in Germany": hotline in English and German providing information on
  - labour market
  - residency
  - learning the German language and
  - the recognition of foreign qualifications

- "Recognition in Germany": multilingual information portal providing comprehensive information on the recognition of foreign professional qualifications
  - "Recognition Finder": tool to find out whether one needs an official "certificate of recognition" in order to pursue his/her profession in Germany, and which is the relevant competent authority
  - points of single contact: according to EU services directive; linked to the information portal

- "ProRecognition": project for recognition guidance abroad
  - German chambers of commerce and industry abroad and German trade delegations
  - China, Egypt, India, Iran, Italy, Morocco, Poland, Vietnam

- IQ counselling centres
Further Services for People with Foreign Qualifications

- employment agencies and job centres
- migration counselling services
  → migrant organisations
  → youth migration service (JMD) and advisory service for adult immigrants (MBE)
  → refugee counselling services
- websites
  → www.make-it-in-germany.com: official multilingual website for international qualified professionals informing people interested in migrating to Germany on how to successfully plan their move – from the preparations in their home country right through to their arrival and first steps in Germany
  → www.handbookgermany.de: giving information on questions of everyday life in Germany like asylum, housing, health, university and work in seven languages from communities for communities of refugees and newcomers
- counselling services on further education and training
Services of Competent Authorities

- **competent assessment authorities**
  → duty for assistance and support => counselling service on recognition application and procedures

- **Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB)**
  → German part of ENIC and NARIC: providing information on recognition procedures according to the EU Directive on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications
  → issues statements of comparability that describe foreign higher education qualifications including their professional and academic usage

- **bq portal**: work and knowledge sharing platform ([www.bq-portal.de/en](http://www.bq-portal.de/en))
  → including 87 country profiles with more than 3,150 professional profiles (as of July 2018)
  → supporting assessment authorities and companies to better assess and understand vocational and further training qualifications obtained abroad

- **anabin**: database ([www.anabin.kmk.org/anabin.html](http://www.anabin.kmk.org/anabin.html))
  → assisting public authorities, employers, employees as well as private persons in classifying a foreign qualification within the German education system
IQ Counselling Centres on Recognition and Job Training

- more than 100 centres all over Germany
- plus around 60 mobile counselling services
- run by a variety of different organisations

**recognition counselling**: to identify clients’ options on how to use their foreign qualifications in their professional context in Germany.

**job training counselling**: to identify clients’ qualification options on how to reach full professional recognition and/or employment appropriate to their level of education

- between 1 January 2015 and 30 September 2018
  - → 139,412 people were counselled on recognition issues
  - → 40,655 people were counselled on job training issues
### Services of the IQ Counselling Centres

#### Professional Counselling on Recognition
- clearing the client’s request
- analysing documents
- pre-clearing whether client has right to recognition procedure
- counselling on recognition procedure (also in context of certain visa regulations)
- pre-clearing of possible reference profession and identifying competence authority
- considering of language requirements
- explaining options of financial support
- declaring negative prognoses
- supporting application process and during recognition procedure
- explaining assessment notices

#### Professional Counselling on Job Trainings
- explaining assessment notices
- giving an overview of qualification options
- explaining IQ entrance requirements
- showing options of German language acquisition
- explaining options of financial support by IQ and further programmes on federal or state level
- referring to training schemes

#### Basic Information and Reference to Further Counselling
- showing alternatives to recognition procedure
- options of financial support according to German social security code II and III
- asylum law and conditions
- job search
- recognition of qualifications with the purpose of starting vocational or academic training
- general further training
- competence measurement
- general legal issues
- further issues

#### Further Possible Tasks
- survey on occupational development
- supporting the determination of demand for IQ qualification schemes
- networking
- information and training of disseminators
Possible Results of the Counselling

- **start of a new firm**
- **German degree** (vocational education and training, academic career, external exam)
- **further qualifications** (e.g., language course)
- **recognition based on a different legal act** (e.g., federal Expellee Act)

**counselling on recognition**
- clients with professions regulated by federal law or professions of the dual system
- clients with professions regulated by state law
- clients with non-regulated academic professions

**application**
- application based on federal Recognition Act
- application based on a state Recognition Act
- application of an assessment of higher education certificates through ZAB (Central Office for Foreign Education in Germany)
Knowledge Management and Quality

background: heterogeneous network with great number of different organisations

- various activities on regional and federal level to ensure high quality of counselling
  - meetings for professional exchange and further development
  - trainings
  - online platform and forum
- documents
  - orientation framework
  - quality matrix
- counselling tools
- …
Thank you for your attention!

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