

ARRIVING AND MORE.



INFO-GUIDE for Refugees in Federal State Reception Centers (Landes-Aufnahmeeinrichtungen - LAE) in Saxony-Anhalt

- Initial Reception Centers
- Application for Asylum
- Integration Services



ALL I NEED TO KNOW.

Address of welcome

About this brochure

This brochure is for people who are applying for asylum in Saxony-Anhalt. It provides initial guidance concerning the key processes they will go through in the Initial Reception Centre, the asylum procedure itself and the life in Germany that may await them. It is no substitute, however, for detailed individual guidance.

Please note that this edition contains all the current amendments until July 2021. We cannot guarantee that all the information is complete. The handout in the individual sections gives the names of competent contacts who can provide further information.

To help you find your way around your Initial Reception Centre, you will find a site plan in the brochure.

The online version of the brochure in several languages can be downloaded from the integration portal for Saxony-Anhalt at www.integriert-in-sachen-anhalt.de. You can also now use our web app <http://erstinfos.de>!

The publishers wish to thank the staff of the Central Initial Reception Agency of the state of Saxony-Anhalt and the asylum advice centre at Caritas for their friendly support in the drafting of this manuscript. We would like to thank the Refugee Council Saxony-Anhalt for their hints and critical comments.

Welcome to Saxony-Anhalt!

You have reached the Central Initial Reception Agency of the state of Saxony-Anhalt (ZAST) and are now in the first stage of the asylum application process. Saxony-Anhalt is an open-minded federal state. We aim at receiving you as refugee at best and offering guidance and integration services at an early stage. Beyond that, many people provide assistance during their leisure time.

On the following pages we have compiled important information concerning the first phase of your residence in order to facilitate guidance in the reception center and to assist you during the asylum procedure (Last revised 01/2021).

Employees as well as volunteers espouse with high commitment best possible and humane living conditions. Due to the huge number of daily arriving asylum seekers, processes might be delayed or temporarily faulty. Thank you for your understanding and patience.

Nevertheless, processes keep taking longer than expected. Try to keep patience in such cases. Adapt yourself to the fact that the whole integration process is time-consuming and might also include setbacks. Do not get discouraged.

In your initial reception centre you too can play a part in ensuring that people from different nationalities and cultures get along harmoniously with one another. This might not always be easy, however, experience has shown: Many problems can be solved with respect and mutual consideration. We hope that this information guide will answer any urgent questions and put you in touch with people who will be able to offer you further guidance.

We wish you the very best for your path and your future.

1 Initial reception in Saxony-Anhalt. Rules - provision of necessities - offers

How initial reception works

If you have come to Germany in search of protection and would like to apply for asylum, you will be allocated by the authorities to an initial **reception centre for asylum seekers** in a particular federal state on the basis of a quota system.

In the State of Saxony-Anhalt, initial reception is handled by the Central Point of Contact for Asylum Seekers (ZASt) based in Halberstadt. The ZASt has branch and field offices.

It is at the ZASt that your initial reception (registration) as an asylum seeker will be processed. In the process, personal data will be recorded, and you will be photographed and asked to provide fingerprints.

If Saxony-Anhalt does not handle applications for asylum from your country of origin, staff members will transfer your application to the authorized federal state.

The ZASt is part of the arrival centre in Halberstadt. There you will be offered an initial medical inspection, along with accommodation, meals and other necessities. You will stay either here or at another ZASt site until you can be allocated to a local authority and are transferred there.

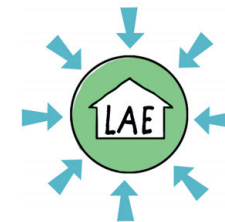
If you are not transferred to another federal state, you will go through all the stages of your asylum process while accommodated here in the ZASt. Halberstadt is also home to a field office of the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF). At BAMF, you file your asylum application.



You have to remain on site

For the period of initial reception you will be required to live and remain on the site (**often referred to as a residency requirement**). That means that your residence is restricted to a certain area (administrative or urban district). Residential obligation exists in order that public authorities are able to reach you anytime and that you receive important documents in time. This requirement will remain in effect for at least three months or for as long as you are required to stay in the initial reception centre.

If, for instance, you wish to visit relatives or leave your initial reception centre for any other reason, you will need **permission** to leave the site. You must apply to the BAMF for this permission. If permission is granted, you must tell the social worker in the ZASt who is responsible for your area that you are going to be absent! If you leave the area without permission, you will face a fine; in case of recurrence, criminal proceeding is imminent.



Length of Residence in the LAE

The law states that the period of residency in the initial reception centre is in principle up to 18 months, in the case of families with children under 18, it will not exceed 6 months. The actual duration of your stay will depend on the decision made on your application for asylum and your cooperation in the asylum process.

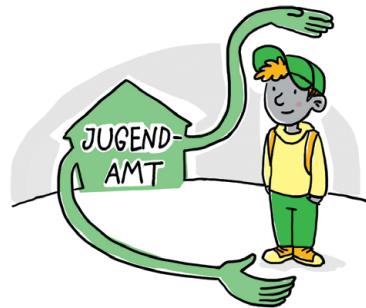
If you have come from a safe country of origin such as member states of the European Union, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ghana, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Senegal or Serbia, your application for asylum will have little prospect of success. If your asylum claim is not recognised by the BAMF, you will have to stay in the initial reception centre until you leave the country. For families with children under 18, this period will, as above, not exceed 6 months.

Accommodation

You will be accommodated in one of the various residential buildings in the ZASt in dependence on your needs and the accommodation available. Please understand that you have no entitlement to single accommodation. Most of the accommodation on offer is in dormitory rooms. If you have questions or problems, please contact the social workers responsible for your area.

Protection of unaccompanied minor refugees

If you are younger than 18 years old (under age) and stay in Germany **without any parent or custody holder**, you are in particular need of protection. After your arrival, you will be **adopted by the authorized youth welfare office**. You do not stay in the initial reception centers but will receive advice, care and accommodation by youth welfare services.



Jugendamt = authorized youth welfare office

Specific protection of women

Unaccompanied women or women with their children are being accommodated in a separate section. The accompanying consultation in this section is provided by social workers. During the consultation, you can address your personal problems openly. Social workers take a stand for you and support you with all questions and problems.

Sexual identity

In Germany, no one can be disadvantaged because of his or her sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, intersexual and queer people). If you have any questions and/or if you look for consulting services, please do not hesitate to contact your social worker. Look for hints (rainbow) for special consulting offers.



Distribution (transfer) to local authorities

If you have good prospects of permanent residence or if your asylum application is approved, you will be allocated to a municipality. The LAE staff will tell you which municipality is going to admit you. Currently, personal wishes regarding your residence in Saxony-Anhalt cannot be taken into account. Nevertheless, if you have first-degree relatives (children, parents, minor siblings, in the case of minors also siblings over 18 years) you are entitled to claim to move to your relatives' place of residence.

Action in case of conflict

Living together in a very confined space might lead to conflicts. You can contribute to de-escalation through your own responsible actions.

- Please keep calm in case of conflict.
- Try to settle disputes with involved parties on-site by addressing conflict resolutions.
- Report any dangerous situation to social workers immediately.
- In the event of an emergency, call the security service or the local police.
- If you have been a victim of racist and right-wing violence, you can contact the **mobile victim consultation** for support and assistance.

Where can I complain if there are problems?

The primary purpose of your residence in the ZASt is to ensure that you are properly accommodated for the duration of your asylum process. If you have problems with other residents or with staff at the facility or other organisations and authorities, you can contact the on-site social workers in confidence. The ZASt staff will tell you about the complaint options available to you. They will also listen to any suggestions you may have to improve communal life in the centre. The BAMF has sole jurisdiction over any questions concerning your asylum process.

If you have a complaint, you can approach the ZASt staff personally at any time. If you have criticisms or useful information, you can also use the ZASt complaints post box in the lobby in Building A 2. Don't forget to leave your name

and registration number so that the responsible parties can answer you. You can also send your complaint by e-mail: complaint.box@lae.sachsen-anhalt.de. You can also submit your complaint anonymously; it will in all cases be investigated. A complaint will have no implications for your ongoing asylum process.

Supply in the initial reception centers



Benefits

In your federal state reception center you receive statutory aids and an initial fitting-out.

You receive as **non-cash benefits**:

- vouchers for breakfast, lunch and dinner
- bed linen and dishware
- clothes and hygiene products

Besides, you receive **pocket money** for your individual demand. It is paid cash and it is calculated for one person of legal age (18 years). Only one member of a family receives the full sums. Other family members receive reduced sums. You can get vouchers for clothing from the social welfare office, which you can then use to go shopping in town. If you urgently need clothing when you first arrive, it will be available in the clothing stores in the accommodation areas.

Social work

Social workers with specific responsibility are assigned to all accommodation areas. You can approach them if you have problems. These members of staff will give you all the important information you need concerning your stay in the centre. They will tell you about processes, appointments and current developments, hand out mail and help you if you have any questions regarding official applications: they are your main points of contact in the ZASt.

You should inform yourself about further counselling options on offer and read the current public notices on display.

Please let them know if you would like to leave the centre for a longer period.



Health Care

In cases of acute illness, go to the medical care point (**MediCare**). Here you will always find medical professionals on work days. A team of emergency paramedics with an ambulance will additionally be available at the site security office in the evenings and at weekends.

If the on-site medical personnel cannot provide treatment, the MediCare staff will initiate the process of further treatment by a specialist doctor. You will need to apply to the social welfare office via MediCare for the required treatment certificate. Only the necessary medical care as set out in the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act (Asyblg) will be provided.

Please present your residence ID every time you go to the MediCare point. When you first visit, please also bring all your existing or prescribed medicines or information on your medical history.



In an emergency, contact the staff on site, ask other residents for help and ask the site security to call for professional help!

If you are feeling very oppressed by particular experiences or sleeping badly, or your body is reacting in an unfamiliar way, then you may be experiencing trauma. You will be able to get questionnaires on your problems from the social workers' offices which may help you find the right advice for your needs. Please talk to the social workers or the MediCare team. The members of staff will put you in touch with our **psychological service team**.

If you already have documentary evidence of previous illnesses and/or treatments, please bring these to your initial interview. If psychotherapeutic treatment is necessary, the psychological service team will register you with the State Psychosocial Centres in the cities of Magdeburg and Halle (Saale).

If you need help due to **HIV** (or some other sexually transmitted disease), please contact the **Aids support centres** in Halberstadt, Halle (Saale) or Magdeburg. These will advise you anonymously and will name specific contact points.

Offers in the arrival centre

Organizing the time

Do not rush your asylum process. Take advantage of the local counseling centers with their services as well as corresponding information material (flyers, videos and others). In this way, you can prepare yourself for your hearing.

Allow sufficient time for learning German. In your facility, there is usually the possibility to learn the German language. Take advantage of existing offers or find out about possibilities of independent learning by asking the social workers.

Please also note **first orientation services** such as the multi-lingual orientation course for refugees. Outside of the initial reception center (for example, in the municipal community college), you also have the possibility to attend German courses or courses on daily routine. Thus, you can make yourself familiar with life in Germany.

Attention: Please ask beforehand if these courses are charged.

Your situation is characterised by many challenges, and the situation will not always be an easy one for your children. Give them the opportunity to play with others. In the ZASt there are services on offer to help your children use their free time well, e.g. a learning workshop (Caritas). Encourage your children to take part!

Please note: As the parent or guardian, you are fundamentally responsible for the welfare and actions of your children. This means that you should always know where your child is in the arrival centre. Watch it yourself wherever possible or inform other legal guardians where they can reach you. Your child, too, should always know where you are.



Take part in **job opportunities** or **charitable work** (translation, support at events, cleaning work, repairs and other work). You can thus gain first experiences with the German labor market. In addition, you can thus actively shape your immediate living environment and improve your pocket money.

Get involved, have your say, express constructive criticism! Ask your social workers about the opportunities available for participation in the running of the centre (e.g. kitchen committee).

Assessing professional competences

In the federal state reception center, the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) already provides the assessment of your professional competences. You will be asked about your educational and professional qualifications as well as your previous work experiences. If these skills are required for the jobs market, careers counselling and referral for the **recognition of foreign qualifications** can follow **quickly**. A recommendation based on a specific need for training may also be a factor in your allocation to a particular local authority.

Competences and qualifications are required for most professions. Especially, if you already have completed a vocational training or if you have a university degree, you should therefore take advantage of the **competence assessment** in the LAE.



Ausbildung = education

2 Asylum Procedure

Fundamental Right of Asylum

The right of asylum is an international fundamental right. In the Federal Republic of Germany it is part of the constitution (article 16a: "Politically persecuted people enjoy the right of asylum"). You can reclaim the right of asylum if you provably experienced political persecution in your country of origin or if you were in life-threatening conditions there for other reasons. In addition, having joined the Geneva Convention on Refugees, Germany committed itself to receive refugees who require international protection. Accordingly, your individual reasons for protection are proved in the course of the asylum procedure.



Recht auf Asyl = right of asylum

Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)

In Germany, an application for asylum can only be filed at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF). BAMF is not a court but an authority. It verifies whether you have been persecuted in your home country and whether you will be threatened by persecution in case of return. If you have experienced persecution, it is essential whether you have obtained state protection in your home country. It is also verified, if you can obtain protection in another part of your country of origin.



Verification is only possible on the basis of your personal asylum application. File the asylum application as soon as possible at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. The Federal Office will inform you about where and when to file the asylum application.

The Federal Office sets up a file on you and records your personal details. If you have turned 14, you will be photographed and fingerprinted.

During the application, you will be informed about your rights and duties regarding the asylum procedure. This information will be handed to you in writing in your national language. BAMF will invite an interpreter/translator to your personal appointment with the decision maker. You are entitled to be heard in your mother tongue. You are allowed to bring along your lawyer to the appointment. You can also bring along a trusted person in case you have announced it.

What is requested with the asylum application?

Once you file an asylum application, you apply for protection in Germany. First of all, BAMF proves whether or not Germany is responsible for your application. If

- you have already applied for asylum in another European country,
 - you have been granted asylum in another European country or
 - If your application for asylum has been rejected in another European country or
 - you have been granted a Schengen visa by another European country in the last 6 months,
- Germany is not officially responsible for you. In this case, you will receive a letter from the Federal Office, in which you will be asked to travel to the country responsible for you.

Residence papers

You will be given your "proof of arrival" by the staff in the ZAS, provided that this has not already been issued by another agency. The proof of arrival will contain information about you and your photograph. As soon as these documents are issued, your registration as asylum seeker is being recorded. On this basis, the Federal Office will invite you to your personal asylum application.

As soon as you have filed your asylum application, the proof of arrival or BÜMA will be exchanged for the permission to reside (Aufenthaltsgestattung). You have to carry that document with you all the time and you have to show it to the police in case of identity checks. This ID will also set out the territory in which you are allowed to reside. As soon as you have been transferred to a receiving local authority in Saxony-Anhalt, you must inform the BBAMF of your new address.

Consultation on the asylum procedure - preparation of the hearing



Centres which offer advice on the asylum procedure can also be found in the arrival centre.

In Halberstadt, Saxony-Anhalt, you have the right to receive advice from the BAMF on the asylum procedure in a group information session and from Caritas in a one-to-one advice session. Information is available from the advice centres on your rights and obligations in all stages of the asylum procedure. You will also be given personal advice on your option to return voluntarily to your country of origin or to migrate to another country. In the advice centres you will also have the opportunity to disclose any special needs to be taken into account in your hearing at the BAMF.

The Hearing

The **hearing**, often called "interview", is the most important instance for applicants to explain why they have fled. On the basis of the hearing, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees decides whether or not you will be granted asylum in Germany.

! Please note: The hearing is the first and only possibility for you to amply describe your personal motifs for the claim to asylum! Be aware of the significance of the interview and prepare well for the hearing.



Antrag auf Asyl = apply for asylum

Depending on available capacity at the BAMF, the hearing will take place some time after submission of the application. The BAMF will invite you in writing to a "hearing in accordance with Section 25 of the German Asylum Act (AsylG)". An interpreter will also be present at the hearing. You should tell the ministry in good time which language the hearing should be conducted in: **to be heard in your native language is your right as an asylum seeker**. Any special wishes, e.g. for the interpreter to be female, should be submitted in good time. If there are special reasons on grounds of persecution (in cases of gender-specific persecution or for LGBTQ* people or victims of torture), specially trained officers are available at the BAMF. Please say in good time, e.g. in the asylum procedure advice session or to the social workers, if you need special support in the hearing.

The hearing is composed of about 25 questions about your background, the reasons for fleeing and your journey to Germany. Take your time for that. Provide true and full information. If possible, exhibit instruments of evidence or pictures. The decision maker will validate if your information is in accordance with the information you provided at registration. You are entitled to back-translation of your statements. Verify that all the statements of your hearing in the translated report are correct and confirm with your signature.

! Caution: Check if the names of all family members are spelled correctly!

Decision of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees

The BAMF will inform you in writing of its decision on your asylum claim. Reasons will be given for the decision, which will be sent to you along with **advice** on legal remedy. This advice will state whether or how the decision can be reviewed and contested.

You will receive notification of a decision in your favour if:

- your claim to asylum has been recognised in accordance with Article 16a of the German Basic Law (Grundgesetz) or
- award of refugee status in accordance with the Geneva Refugee Convention (section 3 subs. 1 of the Asylum Act), or
- award of subsidiary protection (section 4 subs. 1 of the Asylum Act), or
- imposition of a ban on deportation (section 60 subs. 5 or 7 of the Residence Act).

A positive decision confirms your right to remain. This will be accompanied by the issue of a **residence permit**, which will be issued to you by the competent immigration authority. Depending on the reasons given in support of your application, an initial right to remain will be granted for between one and three years.

In the event that the decision goes against you, you will be issued with an order to leave the country and a threat of deportation which will oblige you to leave. If you do not leave the country by the date set for your departure, you will be deported and will have to pay the associated costs. You will be offered support by the repatriation advice centre if you have any questions about your departure from the country. If deportation is not possible, the immigration authority can grant temporary leave to remain (**provisional suspension of the deportation order**). This provisional leave to remain is a temporary ID document which identifies you as a registered person. It does not give you the right to remain. You will still be under obligation to leave the country.



Calling in a lawyer after receiving a negative notice

You can file an appeal against the Federal Office's decision in court. The notice of appeals provides indications of possible legal means and deadlines for applicants. Please note that you have to answer quickly if you want to file an appeal. Also, in case you intend to engage a lawyer, you should take action early on. Independent advice on legal protection in the asylum process is offered in Saxony-Anhalt by organisations including **Caritas's asylum process advice** centre and the **Refugee Council**.

Filing a follow-up or second application

You will be able to file a follow-up application if your first application for asylum in Germany is rejected. Any follow-up application must be filed with the BAMF office which ruled on your original application. A further application process (follow-up application) will take place only if either the objective or the legal situation has changed in your favour or new evidence has come to light. The follow-up application must then be filed within three months. If your asylum application had been rejected in a safe third country or in Norway or Switzerland, Germany is responsible for your procedure. In this case, it is referred to a second application.

This is possible, if you were placed in danger should you be returned to your country of origin or if the circumstances in your country of origin had deteriorated. If BAMF accepts your evidence, you undergo the whole asylum procedure again.

Voluntary return

If you are obliged to leave the country or if you want to return to your home country, voluntary return is a conflict-free and safe alternative to compulsory repatriation. The Federation's **REAG/GARP-program** is a subsidy program for voluntary return. There is no legal claim to financial or other support in case of voluntary return.

Address the staff in the asylum procedure counseling centers. They will support you regarding the application and organize your departure.

Family reunification

As a person to whom refugee status has been granted or as a person entitled to asylum, you are entitled to subsequent immigration of your spouse and of your minor, unmarried children. You file an application for privileged family reunification at the Federal Foreign Office. It implies that your core family can enter to Saxony-Anhalt and receive a legal status. Please note that this application must be filed a maximum of three months after your recognition as refugee or asylum-entitled person.

In the case of persons who may be entitled to protection by virtue of their relationship to an individual to whom protection has been granted, whether the spouse and children under the age of 18 of such an individual or the parents of children under the age of 18 will be allowed to be reunited with them is at the discretion of the authorities. Any family reunion will take place in the context of the visa application procedure, i.e. the application must be filed with the relevant foreign mission (embassy or consulate general). The foreign mission and the competent domestic immigration authority will verify whether the legal conditions for family reunion have been met. Up to 1,000 relations of persons entitled to subsidiary protection may enter Germany each month in this way, although particular criteria must be satisfied which justify a family reunion on humanitarian grounds. You should talk to the staff at the Caritas advice centre, who will then give you initial information and, in the event of a transfer, the addresses of advice centres.

If your asylum procedure is still pending or if you have a national ban on deportation, you can also apply for family reunification. For this to be granted, you need to prove that you have adequate living space and that you can support yourself and your family members entering the country financially.

3 Arriving in the Municipalities - Integration Services



Accommodation

The municipality responsible for you after initial reception will provide accommodation in a communal accommodation or an apartment. Usually, families with children are rapidly provided with an apartment. Single refugees can be accommodated as a small group or residential community in a shared apartment.

Contact persons

Your key contact persons are social workers in the municipality who supervise you in the dormitories or in the apartment. Local **welcoming initiatives** as well as voluntary guides and mentors support you regarding first orientation. **Migration counseling centers** usually provide consultation during fixed office hours. Here you will be given expert support regarding the asylum procedure, questions concerning your rights as a foreign national, social benefits, language support and other requirements of daily life. Besides, there are organizations and associations on site. These provide information, encounters, culture, sports and language courses.

In larger cities, migrants have allied in migrant organizations. Many of them still remember how difficult it is to settle down. Therefore, they assist newly arriving people in translations and orientation. Contact **the regional network of migrant organization of Saxony-Anhalt (Landesnetzwerk der Migrantenorganisationen - LAMSA)**. You can get information there and find out which migrant organizations are located nearby.

Study German

It is important to study the German language as quickly as possible. Only thus you are able to participate in German social life and find a good job. In order to support that, all immigrants, among them recognized refugees with residence permit, can attend **integration courses of the Federation**. These courses cover 600 hours language course and 300 hours orientation course. During the orientation course, regulations, rights and duties as well as practical knowledge about life in Germany are taught.

Asylum seekers from Syria, Eritrea or Somalia can attend an integration course during the asylum procedure (last revised 01/2021). If this applies to you, you must file an application with the BAMF. Please ask your social worker or consultant about it.

There are also plenty introductory offers: basic courses, language cafés, language mentoring or voluntary offers of associations. Your social worker will also inform you about on-site possibilities of language training. Language courses might be combined with job hunting and qualification. Therefore, also address the job center or the employment agency (Arbeitsagentur).

! Caution: Missing or insufficient language skills are often the main obstacle to labor market integration. Therefore, take advantage of all possibilities to study German as quickly and intensively as possible.

Recognition of professional qualifications

Pursuing a career in Germany mostly requires recognized professional qualifications. If you hold a vocational training or an academic degree, take care that these competences are filed.

In case you have not been able to take advantage of competence assessment offers in the federal state reception center, address immediately after your arrival the social workers or consultants in the municipality responsible for you. They will inform you about the employment agency's **competence assessment** that



assesses formal education, training, professional qualification and academic degree as well as work experience. By the time your qualification profile is gathered, you should take advice on your possibilities of recognition. Contact the respective counseling centers of **IQ Network**. The consultants will support you step by step along the often arduous path of **foreign degree recognition**.

! Please note: In Germany, qualifications and professional competences are required for the pursuit of most professions. These can be filed in the recognition counseling. For some professions, recognition is the prerequisite in order to be permitted to work in this profession in Germany.

Integration into labor

As recognized refugee you are allowed to work in Germany, because you obtain an unrestricted employment permit. If your asylum procedure is still pending or if you are suspended from deportation (Duldung), employment permit can be granted at the earliest after three months residency. You can apply for the employment permit at the foreigners' registration office. The Federal Employment Agency conducts an examination. It agrees if the position meets the minimum legal requirements.

As long as you are obliged to stay in a LAE, you are not allowed to take up employment.

Saxony-Anhalt aims at speedy competence assessment and integration into labor. Many partners collaborate in labor market counseling. Counseling is provided by migrant consultants at the Federal Employment Agency (BA), at job centers, at Chambers of Crafts and Chambers of Industry and Commerce. Many associations as well assist by counseling, e.g. the regional initiative "Professional in Focus" ("Fachkraft im Fokus"), project network **Job Bridge PLUS** (Jobbrücke PLUS), **IQ Network** and the **regional network of migrant organizations** (LAMSA e.V.). Ask your guardian or consultant responsible specifically about the possibilities of labor market integration that come into consideration for you.

Blickpunkt Migrantinnen - specialist service centre for the integration of women migrants in Saxony-Anhalt into the jobs market

This specialist service centre makes it easier for women migrants and refugees in Saxony-Anhalt to access the jobs market. It offers advice and assistance, e.g. in the search for training or work, in registration for qualifications, in the search for suitable language support and childcare, in the event of residence problems or in the search for accommodation.

The following qualifications (modules) are available:

- Learning German
- Empowerment
- Preparing for work
- Support in entering the jobs market.

Childcare

In Germany, every child has the right to a place in a day-care facility (Kita) to promote their age-appropriate development, including their mental/spiritual development, by means of pedagogic care and educational services and to help them integrate successfully into a community. This will apply also to your child when you are allocated to an administrative district or administratively independent town or city. Attending a Kita will help your child learn German and establish contact with other children through shared learning and play. Your social worker will help you to apply for a place in a Kita.

School education for children

Children in Germany are entitled to receive an education and are obliged by law to attend school from the age of six. Your children are also subject to the same general obligation to attend school. Schools in many towns and cities in Saxony-Anhalt offer special language classes. Your child will initially be able to learn German in such a class before going on to follow the same curriculum as the other children. Your social worker will tell you about the next opportunities and help you to make an application.

School education through to early adulthood

In Germany, children first attend primary school before going on to attend secondary school to acquire a school-leaving qualification. There are various kinds of school-leaving qualifications. These are a condition for your child's further education. A school-leaving qualification will give your child the basic right to start an occupational training course or go to university or college. Without a qualification it is difficult to find a good job.

As parents, you can ask the teachers for advice in all phases of your child's/children's school career. Further information on the German school system is also available from the Landesnetzwerk der Migrantenorganisationen in Sachsen-Anhalt (LAMSA e.V.) (the state network of migrant organisations in Saxony-Anhalt).

Education and study

If your child has a school-leaving qualification, you can seek advice as to the available educational options. In Germany, the "dual education" system offers vocational training for many professions. This kind of vocational training generally lasts three years, and involves practical training in a company and theoretical education at a vocational college. You can ask for advice from a job centre or contact the state network of migrant organisations. The state network supports young migrants in their search for a training place and also offers them support throughout the training.

You can study at higher education institutes in Saxony-Anhalt if you have a school-leaving qualification entitling you to study (Abitur) or have already begun a course of study. Depending on which course interests you, please contact the academic immigration authorities at the higher education institutes in Saxony-Anhalt.



4 Consultation and support for particular life situations

Support in family planning and pregnancy issues

Pregnancy advice centres and centres which deal with conflicts arising from pregnancy support women and couples throughout the pregnancy and around the time of birth. They also offer advice and support in the event of conflict arising from pregnancy. Irrespective of whether a pregnancy is involved, women, men and couples can seek advice on issues concerning sexuality and family planning. There is an advice centre in every administrative district.

Special protection for women

For women travelling alone and their children who have been subjected to violence or are in need of special protection, there is an institution in Halle known as the FlüchtlingsFrauenHaus (**house for women refugees**). You can only apply to this institution if you have been granted permanent or provisional leave to remain. Here you will be offered protection from assault and given support as you build up a self-determined life, with personal intervention in the event of crisis and the tools to manage your daily life.

There are currently seven women's centres in Saxony-Anhalt.

A women's centre is a place

- for women of all ages; all are welcome, from girls to senior citizens
- where women with a migrant background are integrated
- for women who need education and information
- where sport and dance are encouraged
- for women who are separated or divorced
- of culture and creativity

See for yourself what they offer, either online or in person!

Assistance in cases of domestic violence

When families are allocated to local authorities, the wives should know that there are walk-in advice centres and refuges for women in every district as well as centres for intervention to which they can turn in cases of domestic violence.

Support in case of xenophobic assaults

If you have experienced a racially motivated outrage or if you feel threatened by right-wing extremist violence, immediately contact a **victim consultation center (Opferberatungsstelle)**. Employees will be there for you and will support your causes. They will accompany you to the police, to the doctor or to a lawyer. Anyway, be aware that: **You have the right to make perpetrators accountable!**

Problems due to sexual identity

In Germany, you have the right to freely decide about your body. If you are discriminated against due to your sexual identity, you can approach the social workers on site. Anonymous support is provided in Halle at the **counseling center Begegnungs- und Beratungszentrum "Lebensart" e.V. (BBZ)** and in Magdeburg at **CSD Magdeburg e.V.** or at the **lesbian and gay association (Lesben- und Schwulenverband Sachsen-Anhalt - LSVD)**. At these places, you will receive further information about bisexuality, homosexuality, trans- and interidentity (LSBTI*). The **psychotherapeutic service (Psychotherapeutischer Dienst)** provides relief in case of emotionally demanding problems.

Antidiscrimination centre for Saxony-Anhalt

Hallesche Jugendwerkstatt gGmbH

This is the central and independent point of contact and advice for people who have suffered from discrimination in different areas of life.

It offers qualified advice and support for people who have been discriminated against due to

- their ethnic origin

- their sex
- their religion or world view
- a disability
- their age
- their sexual identity.

The antidiscrimination centre listens and works with the person seeking advice to find possible solutions, supporting them as they take further steps.

The advice sessions are free of charge and confidential. Where needed, an interpreter can be arranged, the costs of which will be covered.

Entknoten – counselling centre against racism in daily life and discrimination

Landesnetzwerk Migrantenorganisationen Sachsen-Anhalt (state network of migrant organisations in Saxony-Anhalt - LAMSA)

You do not have to put up with discrimination!

- Are you having difficulty renting an apartment?
- Is your application being ignored?
- Are authority employees treating you unfairly?
- Are you being treated disrespectfully?
- Are you not being served in shops or banks?

If you are being disadvantaged on the grounds of racist and ethnic or religious attribution, that is discrimination.

Discrimination is against the law. You have rights and can defend yourself.

We will support you!

We will listen to you. If you wish, we will work with you to find solutions and support you every step of the way. We will...

- take on the task of making enquiries and doing research
- write letters of complaint
- accompany you to interviews
- support you if you wish to take legal measures
- make the discrimination public

We will advise you **personally, confidentially** and **free of charge** and, if you wish, also anonymously. We work independently. We will do nothing without your consent. If needed, we will pay your travel costs and organise language support.

Democracy and Human Rights: Principles of our Coexistence

You are seeking protection as refugee in Germany. Our country guarantees asylum from political persecution and shelter from war and civil war.

This shelter is part of our democratic constitutional order. This order includes encompassing fundamental and human rights that constitute the foundation of our society. The rights of people in Germany are guaranteed in the German Constitution of 1949, in the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and in the European Union's Charta of Fundamental Rights of 2000. The rights of children are protected by the United Nations' Convention on the Right of the Child of 1989.

- Germany is a democratic republic. Head of state, parliament as well as government are elected democratically, the same is true for the parliaments and governments of the 16 Federal States and the self-governments of the cities and municipalities. All elections are conducted by secret ballot.
- Every person has the right to express his or her opinion, to assemble and to demonstrate for his or her opinion. All persons have the right to form democratic parties, unions and other associations.
- Many people in Germany commit themselves to cultural, social or sporting interests in associations or initiatives that take over many duties for the community.
- All persons are equal before the law. Government and authorities are bound to the Constitution and to the laws. Those whose rights are infringed, may defend themselves by complaint or in court and are not to be disadvantaged. Those who try to bribe a civil servant have to face punishment.
- Men and women have equal rights. That extends to the decision on one's lifestyle, the right to labor and free choice of profession as well as disposition of one's income. In Germany women pursue all careers, even leading positions.

- Children have the right to non-violent parenting, to early childhood and formal education. Fathers and mothers are equal regarding their children's education. Parents can have a determining influence in day care centers and at schools in terms of parental representations.
- All persons have the right to respectful interaction. Use of physical violence is prohibited.
- Every person has the right to freely practice his or her religion. Most people in Germany are Protestants or Catholics and most of the holidays and many customs in Germany originate in Christianity. German culture is moreover crucially shaped by Jews. Nowadays, also many Muslims are living in Germany. Besides, there is a range of other faith communities and many people without religious affiliation. No person shall be discriminated against because of his or her faith or ideology. Freedom of expression includes as well the right to criticize religions and religious communities.
- No person shall be discriminated against because of his or her origin, skin color, sex, sexual orientation, age or disability. Homosexuals do not have to hide in Germany and may recognize their long-term relationship like marriages by the state.

These fundamental rights also constitute the basis for respectful and tolerant interaction.

- The analysis of the German felonies at the time of National Socialism (1933 - 1945) is very important in Germany. Racism and anti-Semitism are socially proscribed. Denying the Holocaust is a crime.

Democracy thrives if people participate and commit themselves to their interests. This possibility is basically open to refugees. Associations, in particular, are delighted if you show interest. Many immigrants founded self-organizations that make a significant contribution to peaceful cooperation and solidarity in Germany.

Selected addresses and advice centres

Residency

- **Migration Counseling Saxony-Anhalt (Migrationsberatung Sachsen-Anhalt)**
Website: www.integriert-in-sachsen-anhalt.de/netzwerke/beratungsstellen/migrationsberatung-fuer-erwachsene-mbe/
- **Legal advice on residency and support with self-organisation**
Flüchtlingsrat Sachsen-Anhalt e. V. (Refugee Council) Magdeburg
Webseite: www.fluechtlingsrat-lsa.de
Phone: +49 391 50 54 96 13 (Magdeburg) / +49 345 44 50 25 21 (Halle/Saale)
- **Procedural information from Caritas for asylum seekers**
In Saxony-Anhalt (advice centre on asylum procedure) Halberstadt
Webseite: www.caritas.de | Phone: +49 3941 609300
- **Tracing service for families separated by conflict, run by the German Red Cross**
German Red Cross – State Association Saxony-Anhalt
Website: www.sachsen-anhalt.drk.de
Phone: +49 391 6106890 (MD)
- **Voluntary repatriation (Freiwillige Rückkehr)**
Rückkehrzentrum Sachsen-Anhalt (repatriation centre for Saxony-Anhalt)
An advice centre for the voluntary repatriation of citizens of third countries
Website: www.magdeburgerstadtmision.de/arbeitsgebiete/kompetenzzentrum-rueckkehr/
Phone: +49 391 53249 29/23

Work and vocational training

- **IQ Netzwerk Sachsen-Anhalt – Anerkennungs- und Qualifizierungsberatung (IQ Network in Saxony-Anhalt – advice on the recognition of existing qualifications and acquiring new ones)**
Halle / Halberstadt
Website: www.sachsen-anhalt.netzwerk-iq.de
Phone: +49 345 686948-23/-15/-21 (HAL) / +49 175 8132604 (Caritas HBS)

- **Focus on Professionals (Fachkraft im Fokus (FiF))**
Helping foreign professionals find work
Website: www.fachkraft-im-fokus.de
Phone: 49 152 537 729 43 (HAL), +49 391 6054 506 (MD)
- **Job Bridge PLUS (Jobbrücke PLUS)**
Integrating asylum seekers and refugees into work and vocational training
Magdeburg
Website: www.jobbruecke-chance.de
Phone: +49 391 7279882
- **Blickpunkt: Migrantinnen – specialist service centre for the integration of women migrants in Saxony-Anhalt into the jobs market**
Intercultural advice and community centre run by the Caritas charity
E-Mail: christiane.pruschek@caritas-magdeburg.de
Phone: +49 391 40 80 526 / 527 / 520 or +49 151 46152310

Health and Protection

- **Pregnancy advice centres in Saxony-Anhalt**
Website: www.ms.sachsen-anhalt.de/schwangerschaftsberatungsstellen
- **Leisure activities for your children in the ZAST:**
Learning workshop organised by Caritas (learning offer)
E-Mail: katja.lukanow-arndt@caritas-halberstadt.de
Phone: +49 152 55 81 86 82

Support and assistance for girls and women

- **FemaleRefugeeHouse (FlüchtlingsFrauenHaus) Halle**
Website: www.migration-paritaet-lsa.de/ffh | Phone: +49 345 5238115
- **Women against Violence (Frauen gegen Gewalt e.V.)**
Website: www.frauen-gegen-gewalt.de | Phone: +49 30 322 99 500
- **Emergency hotline „Violence against Women“ (free of charge)**
(Hilfetelefon „Gewalt gegen Frauen“ (kostenfrei))
Website: www.hilfetelefon.de | Phone: +49 8000 116016
- **Vera – Department of Trafficking in Women and Forced Marriage**
(Vera – Fachstelle gegen Frauenhandel und Zwangsverheiratung)
Website: www.awo-sachsenanhalt.de | Phone: +49 391 4015371

Women's refuges with walk-in advice centres

- **Burg:** Website: www.skz-burg.bplaced.net/maedchen-und-frauenzentrum-tea-treff/
Magdeburg: Website: www.courageimvolksbad.de
Dessau: Website: www.frauenzentrum-dessau.de
Halberstadt: Website: www.ufv-halberstadt.de
Wernigerode: Website: www.frauenzentrumWR.de
Wolfen: Website: www.Frauenzentrum-Wolfen.de
Halle: Website: www.dornrosa.de
- **Antidiscrimination centre for Saxony-Anhalt**
Hallesche Jugendwerkstatt gGmbH
E-Mail: antidiskreminierungsstelle@jw-frohe-zukunft.de
Mobil: +49 176 20 44 69 29 | Phone: +49 391 79 29 33 74
- **Entknoten – counselling centre against racism in daily life and discrimination**
state network of migrant organisations in Saxony-Anhalt (LAMSA)
Phone: +49 391 99 07 88 87 | WhatsApp: +49 152 56 03 47 47
E-Mail: entknoten@lamsa.de

Aid for the victims of xenophobic assault

- **Mobile advice for victims of far-right violence / miteinander e.V.**
Halle / Magdeburg / Salzwedel / Dessau-Roßlau
Website: www.mobile-opferberatung.de
Phone: +49 345 2267100 (HAL) / +49 391 6207752 (MD) /
+49 3901 306431 (SAW) /

Advice on issues of sexual identity and health

- **Gay and Lesbian Association Saxony-Anhalt**
(Lesben- und Schwulenverband Sachsen-Anhalt (LSVD))
Magdeburg
Website: www.sachsen-anhalt.lsvd.de
Phone: +49 391 5432569 / +49 179 9329614
- **AIDS-Support**
AIDS-Hilfe (Halle / Sachsen-Anhalt Süd e. V., Sachsen-Anhalt Nord e. V.)
Halle / Magdeburg
Website: halle.aidshilfe.de / www.aidshilfesachsenanhaltsnord.de
Phone: +49 345 5821271 (HAL) / +49 391 5357690 (MD)

Orientation and Social Integration

Networks and support in daily life

- **Counselling services and networks to support refugees/new arrivals**
Website: www.integriert-in-sachsen-anhalt.de/netzwerke/
- **Welcoming initiatives in Saxony-Anhalt**
Website:
www.integriert-in-sachsen-anhalt.de/willkommen/willkommensinitiativen/
- **Welcome meetings arranged by a volunteer-run agency in Halle-Saalkreis**
Website:
www.freiwilligen-agentur.de/themen-und-projekte/engagiert-fuer-fluechtlinge/
- **state network of migrant organisations in Saxony-Anhalt – LAMSA Halle**
Website: www.lamsa.de | Phone: +49 345 17 16 48 90
- **Migrant signposts “Welcome to Halle” and “Welcome to Magdeburg”**
Website: www.willkommen-in-halle.de and www.willkommen-in-magdeburg.de

Support in special life situations

- **advice centre for the hard of hearing**
Halberstadt / Magdeburg / Stendal
Telefon: 03941 61 25 45 (HBS), +49 391 6 27 29 16 (MD), +49 3931 712736 (ST)
- **association for the blind and visually impaired in Saxony-Anhalt**
State office in Magdeburg
Website: www.bsv-sachsen-anhalt.de | Phone: +49 391 2 89 62 39

Support with language barriers

- **language support by phone for migrants in Saxony-Anhalt (SiSA) Halle**
Website: www.lamsa.de | Phone: +49 345 21 38 93 99
- **Sachsen-Anhalt e.V. (state cooperative for sign language interpreters (LAG))**
Halle | Phone: +49 345 6 89 00 10
E-Mail: ldz.leps@gmx.de or lbst.traut@gmx.de

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**WELTOFFEN
WILLKOMMEN**
Sachsen-Anhalt

This brochure (with insert) is also available in other languages
on the Saxony-Anhalt integration portal:
www.integriert-in-sachsen-anhalt.de/willkommen/erstinformationen-fuer-fluechtlinge/
on the mobile website and as a web app:
www.erstinfos.de

You can order this brochure and insert in all
available languages here:
integrationsportal@agsa.de



Further Information

You will find further integration services with information about the German way of life -
regarding living, working, education, health and other topics -
in "**Wegweiser für Neueingewanderte**" (guide for new immigrants) at:
www.integriert-in-sachsen-anhalt.de/willkommen/wegweiser-fuer-neueingewanderte/

