

Coming to and Living in Germany

Table of Contents

I. Introduction

II. Preparation and Move

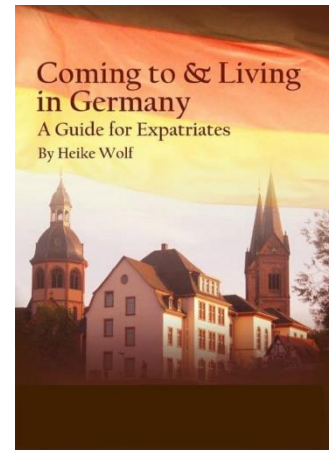
1. Books
 - a. General Expat Books
 - b. Books about Living in Germany
2. Internet
 - a. Expat Links
 - b. Germany-related links
 - c. Regional links
3. Clubs
4. Companies (in case of an international assignment)
5. Relocation Agencies
6. Universities and Academic Exchange Agencies
7. House Hunting
 - a. Buying or Renting
 - b. Rent Contract (Mietvertrag) and Rent Law (Mietrecht)
 - c. Utilities

III. First Impressions and General Information about Germany

1. First Impressions
2. The Basics about Germany
3. A Short Overview of German History
 - a. The Beginning (pre-historical times – 482)
 - b. From the Franconian Empire to the first German Empire (482 – 919)
 - c. The Crusades and the High Middle Ages (919 – 1273)
 - d. The Habsburg Family and the Late Middle Ages (1273 – 1490)
 - e. The Renaissance, the 30-year War and its Consequences (1490 – 1701 AD)
 - f. Preußen (Prussia) – A New Power (1701 – 1815)
 - g. The Wiener Kongreß and the Fight for German Unity (1815 – 1871)
 - h. The German Empire (1871 – 1918)
 - i. The Way into World War II and the Destruction of Germany (1918 – 1945)
 - j. The Division and Reunification of Germany; Germany Today (1945 – Today)

IV. Culture Shock

1. What is Culture Shock?
2. How to Overcome Culture Shock
3. Culture Shock? What Culture Shock?
4. Peculiarities of German Culture
 - a. Unfriendly and private Germans?
 - b. Hierarchical and Formal Structures
 - c. The state will take care of it
 - d. Separation of work and private life
 - e. The positive and negative aspects of thorough organization and planning ahead
 - f. Employee-oriented Employment Law



- g. Punctuality
- h. „It’s not even their business, is it?“ – The habit of correcting others
- i. The liberal German
- j. Shop opening hours and holidays
- k. Lunch and dinner – eating patterns
- l. Karneval, Spargelzeit, Weinprobe, Christmas – a German year
- m. Coffee and cake

V. Bureaucracy and Laws

1. First impressions and tips
2. Immigration and Work Permit Laws
 - a. Entering Germany
 - b. Living and working in Germany
3. Special German Laws
 - a. An- and Abmeldung (Registration and De-registration)
 - b. Ruhezeit (Quiet Period)
 - c. Garbage separation
 - d. Buying, driving and maintaining a car
 - e. Traffic rules
 - f. Kirchensteuer (Church tax)
 - g. GEZ (Television fees)

VI. Leisure and Social Life in Germany

1. Leisure in Germany
 - a. German Gemütlichkeit
 - b. Beer gardens and pubs
 - c. Dining and wining
 - d. Town festivals
 - e. Clubs
 - f. Spazieren gehen
 - g. Stammtisch-Culture
 - h. Sports
 - i. English cinemas, theaters and libraries
2. Sightseeing
 - a. North Germany
 - b. Central Germany
 - c. East Germany
 - d. South Germany
 - e. Themed tourist routes
3. Meeting Germans and other Expats
 - a. “It just takes a while.”
 - b. The language issue
 - c. Where to meet people
 - d. Some closing advice on social life in Germany from other expats

VII. Daily Life

1. Shopping
 - a. General information



- b. Food shopping
- 2. Health Care
 - a. Health insurance system
 - b. Prescriptions and medication
 - c. Finding an English-speaking doctor and making an appointment
 - d. Emergencies and Medical Treatment outside Consultation Hours
- 3. “Did you try to learn German?” – “Absolutely!”
 - a. Where to Learn German
 - b. Germans’ attitudes towards non-German speakers
- 4. Banks
 - a. Opening a Bank Account
 - b. Methods of Payment
- 5. The Postal Service
- 6. Working
 - a. Finding employment in Germany
 - b. Applying for a job
 - c. Relevant Employment Law
 - d. Social and cultural aspects of the working environment
 - e. Volunteer, self-employed and freelance work

VIII. The situation of the accompanying spouse

- 1. Getting information
- 2. Sacrifices that will need to be made
- 3. Overcoming obstacles

IX. International Children

X. In a Nutshell

XI. Closing Words from Expats in Germany

