YOUR NEXT STEPS

#YOUNGREFUGEES_NRW

Info and addresses in the NRW area for young refugees

WWW.YOUNGREFUGEES.NRW
Your first guide

We warmly welcome all refugee children and young people to NRW. Whether you arrived by yourself or have an adult with you, who is responsible for taking care of you (usually a parent), we would like to offer you support.

You will find some basic information in this booklet to help you see ahead more clearly and settle in here more easily. It will tell you what your next steps could be, where you can find help or get more information.

We have also developed a web app for you with important addresses and web links for young refugees in our part of Germany.

The information has no commercial background.

www.youngrefugees.nrw

We wish you all the best

“Young Refugees NRW” is a joint project. It has been set up by the Workers Welfare in Western Westfalen (AWO) and the Institute for Social Work and Social Education (ISS). It is financed by the Welfare Work Foundation NRW (Stiftung Wohlfahrtspflege NRW).

NRW stands for Nordrhein-Westfalen

You are in the western part of the Federal Republic of Germany, or to be more specific, in the state of Nordrhein-Westfalen – shortened to NRW. Of all 16 states of the German Federal Republic, NRW not only has the largest population, but also has the strongest economy.

Children and young people in Germany

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 13 years of age</td>
<td>child/minor/underage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 – 17 years of age</td>
<td>youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From 18 years of age onwards</td>
<td>adult/of legal age</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These symbols will guide you

Have you arrived in Germany alone as an underage refugee? Or is your mother, father or another close relative who has the official right to take care of you (legal custodian) with you? Depending on your situation, other rules might apply. These symbols will help you find the information that concerns you.

Underage and alone refugees without legal custodians

Underage refugees with legal custodian(s)

During asylum process

After asylum has been granted: permission to stay in Germany.

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#YOUNGREFUGEES_NRW
Asylum process

When you apply for asylum, the asylum process will begin. This means the authorities will check and decide if you can stay in Germany. You can decide to make your own asylum application if you want.

When your application for asylum is accepted, you can first stay in Germany for a certain length of time. If your application is rejected, you will have to leave the country after a few days or weeks or you will be deported to another country.

You can appeal against a rejection within 2 weeks – you go to the authorities with a written or personal statement against the decision, giving your reasons. If it is successful it will result in a case being brought to court. Then the decision will be checked again. The asylum process takes about 6 months on average, but can often also be longer or shorter.

The central location for your asylum process is the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge – BAMF) in Nürnberg or a representative of BAMF located near your accommodation. This is where ...

» you will make an application for asylum in person

» your identification data will be taken (this means, photos will be taken, your passport or papers will be checked and fingerprints of all those over 14 years of age will be made)

» the authorities will check to see which EU country is responsible for the asylum application

» if Germany is responsible for you, a temporary residence permit (Aufenthaltsgestattung) will be issued. This will allow you to stay in Germany during the asylum process

» the asylum seeker will then be interviewed. Information on the interview is available in various languages at: www.asyl.net/index.php?id=337

» the decision on the asylum application will be made – whether you can stay in Germany or not – and given to you in writing.

You can find the addresses of all branch offices of BAMF here: www.bamf.de/EN/DasBAMF/Aufbau/Aussenstellen/aussenstellen-node.html

First guide for asylum seekers

An info page will show you step-by-step the important stages of the asylum process that an asylum seeker must go through. In 13 languages.

http://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Publikationen/Flyer/flyer-erstorientierung-asylsuchende.html?nn=1363214

Arrival in NRW

When you cross the border into Germany, you have to tell the border official or the policeman that you are an asylum seeker. It’s enough just to say, “Asyl” (the German for “asylum”). Then, you’ll be taken to an assembly centre. Afterwards, you’ll be taken to a primary reception centre in one of the German states and will be given food, clothing, a place to sleep and a registration card as an asylum seeker. You will live there for up to 6 months or until your asylum process has been decided. Now you have arrived in the state of Nordrhein-Westfalen.
Asylum process
You don't have to make an application for asylum after arriving. The decision depends on a lot of different things.

**No asylum application**
- Short-term permit (Duldung) (you get a residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis), which can be extended by the authorities again and again for as long as you are a minor)
- There may be other ways of staying in Germany legally
- However, your stay in Germany then remains uncertain and you also have certain limitations.

You should therefore quickly obtain advice as to whether you have to make an asylum application or not.

**Asylum application**
- Temporary residence permit (Aufenthaltsgestattung) - You can stay in Germany for as long as the asylum process takes
- If your application for asylum is approved: Residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis) - You can stay in Germany for a certain length of time
- If your application for asylum is rejected: Short-term permit (Duldung) - You get a residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis), which can be extended by the authorities again and again for as long as you are a minor

If you don't have any identity papers, how old you look or seem is very important. A special representative of the BAMF will be responsible for you and your asylum interview. Your custodian can also be with you in the interview.
In the state’s primary reception centres
First of all, the Arnsberg district administration sends the refugees to a primary reception centre in NRW. Families can stay together. In most cases, you must stay there for at least 6 months at first, or for the length of time needed for your asylum process.

In the first 3 months in Germany, you must stay in NRW. If you have good reason, you can apply to the foreigners’ registration office (Ausländerbehörde) for permission to leave NRW for a while. But you will only get food, somewhere to sleep and supplies in the facility that is responsible for you.

If you come from a so-called “safe country of origin” (from EU countries, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, Kosovo, Ghana or Senegal), you will have to stay in the primary reception centre until you leave the country.

In communities
For everybody else: After six months at the most, you will be moved to a town or community within NRW. If you have family living in Germany, you can ask at the social services office at the reception centre to be sent to the same community.

In the community, you will live in shared accommodation, emergency accommodation or sometimes in an apartment. But in many places there are not enough apartments for everyone at the moment.

Asylum seekers and their children must live in the accommodation provided. This is the case until the asylum process is finished.

Private accommodation
Sometimes it is possible to rent private accommodation, if you can pay for it. But the rules on this are different from place to place. You can ask at the local social welfare office (Sozialamt) if you are allowed to find a private apartment for yourselves. If you are allowed to do this, you can look in a newspaper or online for an apartment or room to rent.

Websites
www.fluechtlinge-willkommen.de

Living
With a residence permit, you can look for an apartment for yourself and your children (for example, through the internet, newspaper advertisements, the housing department or an estate agent). Children and young people can’t rent an apartment alone. If the income of the legal custodian is less than a certain amount, you can get support:

» Apply for a “Wohnberechtigungs-schein” (accommodation qualification certificate) at the housing department (Wohnungsamt) so that you can rent cheap social housing.
» The social welfare department or job center might pay your rent

If you get social benefit payments, the foreigners’ registration office can decide where you will live. You could be moved to somewhere else within NRW.

You can find more information on accommodation for foreigners at:
http://www.bamf.de/DE/Willkommen/Wohnen/wohnen-node.html

You are then allowed to travel as long as you fulfil the entry conditions of the state (e.g. visa). You can stay there for a maximum of three months.

Information on the entry conditions can be found at: www.auswaertiges-amt.de

Living
The youth welfare office (Jugendamt) in the town or community you were moved to is responsible for your accommodation. The youth welfare office will look at the following possibilities:

» Living with adult relatives
» Foster family
» Reception centre with special facilities for minors
» Other accommodation suitable for minors, e.g. homes or sheltered living units
Young refugees and their families in Germany are supported by the federal states and the communities.

**In the first 15 months**
As long as you are living in a reception centre organised by NRW, the state of NRW is responsible for your material welfare. When you have been transferred to a city or community, that city or community is responsible for you. You will be given clothes, food, body-care products and electricity, as well as some money for everyday needs. Each community decides for itself, whether you will get vouchers or cash to buy things for yourself. The centre pays directly for accommodation, facilities, household and items of daily use and heating.

**After 15 months**
After 15 months, every asylum seeker will get payments in the amount of social benefits (Sozialhilfe – a government payment for basic living standards in Germany).

Social welfare is defined in Book XII of the Social Code of law and changes every year. If you want to find out how much social welfare is for your family, you can use the calculator in German at: [www.geldsparen.de/inhalt/rechner/Soziales/sozialhilferechner.php](http://www.geldsparen.de/inhalt/rechner/Soziales/sozialhilferechner.php)

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**Who is the responsible contact person for your welfare?**
The youth welfare office in the community where you were sent as a refugee is responsible for you. You will get clothes, food, somewhere to sleep and other things for your daily needs.

You can find the addresses of all the youth welfare offices in NRW here:
Jugendämter
Landschaftsverband Rheinland
[http://www.lvr.de/de/nav_main/jugend_2/jugendamt/jugendamt_7.jsp](http://www.lvr.de/de/nav_main/jugend_2/jugendamt/jugendamt_7.jsp)
Jugendämter
Landschaftsverband Westfalen-Lippe
[https://www.lwl.org/jawl/jugendamt](https://www.lwl.org/jawl/jugendamt)
German in school
There are lots of German language classes in school: in preparation classes (before the school year), in reception classes (during the school year) or in international support classes.

Sometimes there are also extra German support classes for young refugees. Some schools offer bilingual classes.

For children and younger teens
Learn through play
The Reading Foundation (Stiftung Lesen) helps refugee children and their families with language and reading support. Special start-to-read sets are given out to refugee children of up to 5 years of age, and reading and media boxes are given to all children of up to 12 years of age in all German primary reception centres, free of charge.

If you didn’t get your set yet, ask the director of the primary reception centre for it.

Educational TV
You can now watch “Die Sendung mit der Maus” – a TV programme for pre-school children – in English, Arabic, Kurdish and Dari. Even adults can often learn something from it. www.wdrmaus.de/sachgeschichten/maus-international

For older teens and adults
Online courses
The free learning platform www.ich-will-deutsch-lernen.de is suitable for self-study or as extra material. Available in German and 15 other languages.

Refugee Radio
Funkhaus Europa broadcasts information and services for refugees in Arabic and English on its “COSMO Refugee Radio”.

There’s also a free app. You can listen to the programmes again on Soundcloud and they are available at http://www1.wdr.de/radio/cosmo/

Integration courses
The integration course will help you learn the German language and some important things about Germany, its history, culture and legal system. Whether you are allowed to take the course depends on different things and it’s only for adults. If your application for asylum is accepted and you can’t speak some basic German, you will have to take part in a course.

BAMF has a search engine that will help you find an integration course. www.bamf.de

German for work
Even during the asylum process, basic language courses are offered to refugees who will probably be allowed to stay in Germany and will find work easily – in all 30 employment agency areas in NRW. www.arbeitsagentur.de at: Schnellzugriff/Dienststellen

You will need the German language for your future life in Germany. Many opportunities have been created for refugees to learn German.
In Germany, all girls and boys have the same right to an education. If you have a good education, you will have a better chance of finding a job.

Small children
From its first birthday, a child can claim a place in a kindergarten (KiTa), as long as the family is already living in a community. Unfortunately, kindergarten places are generally hard to find in Germany. In state reception centres, this claim for a kindergarten place does not apply but there should be supervised playing areas here too.

Compulsory education
In NRW, as soon as they are moved from the reception centre (with no teaching) to a community, all boys and girls must go to school full-time for 10 school years from age 6, and then part-time until the end of the school year in which they turned 18 or until the end of their training.

The free booklet “Schulsystem NRW – einfach und schnell erklärt” (“NRW school system-explained quickly and easily) will tell you how the school system in NRW works – in 10 languages: https://www.schulministerium.nrw.de/docs/Schulsystem/ http://www.broschueren.nrw/

Work training
Training is very useful for your future in the job market. You almost always need a school-leaving certificate (Hauptschulabschluss). Training usually takes 2-3 years. It can take place at a vocational college or in a combination of lessons and work practice in a company (so-called dual system). There are many places to find help in choosing your career and in finding a training programme.

Who can join a training programme?
You need to graduate from school (proven by a certificate) for every training or study programme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School-based training</th>
<th>Practical training</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asylum seekers</td>
<td>at any time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the asylum application is accepted</td>
<td>at any time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With short-term permit (Duldung)</td>
<td>at any time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* with work permit from the foreigners’ registration office
** After finishing training successfully, you can get a temporary residence permit, if you find a job in your chosen career and can earn enough money to live on.

Studying
Every refugee is allowed to study at university in NRW. The requirement is the university entrance qualification (Abitur) or vocational university entrance qualification (Fachabitur), depending on the type of university. The university will check to see if you meet their requirements. If you can’t show your certificates, you can take a suitability test. You can find information in the European Recognition Manual. www.eurorecognition.eu/Manual/EAR%20HEI.pdf

More information is available here:
www.wissenschaft.nrw.de
www.eduserver.de

Other training opportunities
You can find courses, further education programmes, volunteer helpers, reading tutors and other offers on the internet. Your first contact person will be at the local VHS or the Federal Agency of Employment (Bundesagentur für Arbeit): http://kursnet-find.en.arbeitsagentur.de/kurs/

Looking for a school in NRW: www.schulministerium.nrw.de/BiPo/SchuleSuchen
There are certain rules for minors in the German job market, in the first place for their own protection.

**Children and work safety**

Children are not allowed to work before their 13th birthday. Between their 13th and 15th birthdays, children are allowed to carry out light work with the permission of their parents or custodians.

This includes, for example, delivering newspapers, running errands, babysitting, private tuition, taking care of pets, housework, garden work and so on. Children can work a maximum of 2 hours per day (on family farms a max. of 3 hours per day) and only Monday to Saturday between 8am and 6pm after school. Exceptions are made for work experience.

**Young people and work safety**

The same rules as for children apply to boys and girls from 15 years of age who are still in school full-time. But they are allowed to work during the school holidays: on work days between 6am and 8pm, for 8 hours a day and for up to 4 weeks a year, in some cases (with permission of the youth welfare office) even longer.

Young people who do not have to go to school full-time any more (after 10 years of school) can work up to 8 hours a day, to a maximum of 40 hours a week. Dangerous work is not allowed.

**Working**

If you are still in the middle of the asylum process or if you have a short-term permit (Duldung), you can apply for a work permit at the foreigners’ registration office after three months in Germany. If this office and the Federal Agency of Employment agree, you can get a job. But temporary employment or independent work (for example, opening your own business) is not allowed. Unless you are doing on-the-job training, you must be paid the legal minimum wage of €8.50 per hour.

If you are granted asylum and are given a residency permit, you can go ahead and look for a job in the normal way, on the internet, for example, or the job ads in the newspaper.

**Looking for work and job portals**

Young refugees and their families can find information and advice at the employment agency (Arbeitsagentur) or youth migration services (Jugendmigrationsdienst). Apart from ads in newspapers and on the internet, job fairs or spontaneous applications, there are also job portals with job offers for refugees, e.g. www.workeer.de

You can find online information on “Job market access and training opportunities for refugees” (Arbeitsmarktzugang und Möglichkeiten der Ausbildung für Flüchtlinge) at the www.eduserver.de website, also in English. www.bildungsserver.de/Arbeitsmarktzugang-und-Moeglichkeiten-der-Ausbildung-fuer-Fluechtlinge-11400.html

The “Recognition in Germany” (Anerkennung in Deutschland) information portal answers in 8 languages all the important questions concerning the recognition of foreign professional qualifications. www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de

**Do you have questions?**

Is it about your work permit? Then you should contact the foreigners’ registration office.

The Federal Agency of Employment will provide information on employment and work experience for asylum seekers and short-term residence permit holders at the central telephone number: +49 (0) 228 713 2000
Germany has a wide-reaching health care system. Most people here are insured through a statutory health insurance scheme.

In the primary reception centres, central accommodation and emergency accommodation of the State of NRW

Primary examination
As far as possible, you must have a primary examination by a doctor in the first week after arriving in Germany. This is to quickly see if you are ill. You will also be vaccinated. If you are under 15 years of age or are pregnant, other examinations will be made.

Suddenly very ill? Pain? Emergency?
In NRW’s reception centres, you can see a doctor during his consultation visits, and if necessary, you will be sent to see a specialist doctor. There is also an emergency service in the reception centres that you can contact in an emergency outside the doctor’s visiting hours. In life-threatening situations, you can also be taken to a hospital.

After 15 months and in a community
If you are sick, are in pain or have an accident, you will often need a special voucher ("grüner Schein") from social services in order to go to the doctor because social services will pay the costs of your visit. The voucher is valid for three months each time. When you go to the doctor, take this "grüner Schein" with you as well as a letter to the doctor and a medication plan, if you have these. If you use your "grüner Schein" when you visit the doctor, you will need a referral letter (Überweisungsschein) from this doctor, if you want to see another doctor within three months.

Emergency
If there is an emergency or the emergency services have to be called, you can use the "grüner Schein" or present it later. In an emergency, you can also see a doctor very quickly and hand in your "grüner Schein" later within 10 days. In life-threatening situations, you can get emergency treatment in a hospital.

Sick? Your asylum status decides

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>You get …</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>While you are in care, or in child support with full-time care, in a</td>
<td>Emergency health care as long as you don’t have your own health insurance; then the costs of your health care are paid by a health insurance company or the youth welfare office. This also applies to psychotherapy treatments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>home or other assisted living formats</td>
<td>Acute and emergency care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-term residency permit (Duldung) during asylum process (no child</td>
<td>*Emergency health care ends when you enter a statutory health insurance system, e.g. when you start training or are put into full-time care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>support)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You can find more information where you live from here:
» Doctor (GP)
» Health insurance company
» Health department
» Youth migration services

Contact persons and information on the German health system.
www.bamf.de/DE/Willkommen/GesundheitVorsorge/gesundheitvorsorge-node.html

An information video in English for refugees in Germany:

Explanation of the German health system in 10 languages:
www.1averbraucherportal.de/versicherung/krankenversicherung/international

You can find doctors, dentists and psychotherapists with the free app, BundesArztsuche.

In an emergency:
The telephone number of the emergency medical services – 116 117 – is free of charge, has no dialling code, and is available on all networks.
Contact with other people from different ethnic backgrounds will help you build a new life in our country.

You will find many opportunities to meet people in public facilities such as playgrounds or sports grounds, at flea markets and city or street festivals, as well as at facilities you have to pay to use, such as the zoo, swimming pool, theatre or museum. There are also many free cultural, leisure and sport opportunities specially for young refugees.

**German neighbours**
To understand how Germans live and how society here works, you should know about usual behaviour and politeness, even if not all people here really behave that way.

This is a general guide in 12 languages on living in Germany: [www.refugeeguide.de](http://www.refugeeguide.de)

**Sport**
It is not surprising that sport brings people together all over the world. You can burn off energy, enjoy success, have fun... even in a team. Even language problems can disappear while you’re playing.

*Want to join in?*
[www.integration-durch-sport.de](http://www.integration-durch-sport.de) offers an overview of sports clubs in NRW. You can get in touch with the various contact addresses from here.

You can learn more about how sports clubs are helping refugees and where you can find sports opportunities or support through sport here: [www.land.nrw/de/sportvereine-helfen-fluechtlingen](http://www.land.nrw/de/sportvereine-helfen-fluechtlingen)

**Culture**
Many cultural organisations organise music, theatre or dance events, etc. Towns and communities have museums, orchestras and libraries, and organise town festivals or parties. There are more and more multilingual and free events on offer for refugees.

*Cultural opportunities for young refugees*
The “Kultur macht stark – Bündnisse für Bildung” (Culture makes you strong - alliances for education) programme works all over Germany to provide the best possible education opportunities for every child, whether it’s learning German by cooking together, visiting a museum or taking part in a workshop: [www.buendnisse-fuer-bildung.de](http://www.buendnisse-fuer-bildung.de)

“Kulturrucksack NRW” (Culture backpack NRW) is a state-wide programme that wants to open the doors to art and culture as wide as possible for all children and young people between the ages of 10 and 14 with free or reduced-cost cultural activities. Current events and places at [www.kulturrucksack.nrw.de](http://www.kulturrucksack.nrw.de) under “Angebote”.

**Contact persons for leisure activities**
- Youth migration services
- Integration centres
- Sports clubs
- Youth centres
- Museums, cinemas, theatre, etc.
**Emergency telephone**  
with no dialling code. From a landline or mobile phone. Can be called from any network. Free. In an emergency, call the police first.

Police emergency telephone ☏ 110
Ambulance medical emergency ☏ 112
Fire brigade ☏ 112
Emergency doctors ☏ 116 117
Poisoning emergency telephone ☏ 0228 19240
Child and youth “Nummer gegen Kummer” telephone helpline ☏ 0800 1110333

“Gewalt gegen Frauen” (violence against women) helpline ☏ 0800 116 016

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Emergency pharmacy
Pharmacies have a night-time and emergency service. You will know pharmacies even from far away by the large, red A sign. Every pharmacy has a sign on the door or in the window that shows the names and addresses of all those pharmacies that currently have night-time or emergency service.

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Help for girls and women
There is a free help and information service for girls and women who are experiencing or have experienced violence (in 6 languages).

www.hilfetelefon.de

The Germany-wide “Gewalt gegen Frauen” helpline (☎ 0800 116016) is available 24 hours a day and interpreters for various languages are ready to help with your conversation.

Do you need legal support?
The independent human rights organisation Pro Asyl offers help with the asylum process and much more. www.proasyl.de

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Youth migration services
These advice centres support the linguistic, educational, professional and social integration of young immigrants. They will support your participation in all areas of social, cultural and political life, especially for older youths and their families.

Service Office of the Youth Migration Services

Adenauerallee 12–14,53113 Bonn
☎ 0228 95968-0
☎ 0228 95968-30
✉ info@jugendmigrationsdienste.de

www.jugendmigrationsdienste.de
www.jmd-onlineberatung.de

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FURTHER ADDRESSES

» Information on help for refugees in the whole of NRW (in 5 languages)
https://land.nrw/de/fluechtlingshilfe

» Bundesfachverband Unbegleitete Minderjährige Flüchtlinge e. V. (Federal association for unaccompanied minor refugees – in 3 languages)
www.b-umf.de

» Flüchtlingsrat (Refugee council) NRW
www.frnrw.de

» Deutscher Volkshochschulverband (German Adult Education Association)
www.dvv-vhs.de

» NRW Ministry of Education
www.schulministerium.nrw.de

» German Education Server – your gateway to education (in German and English)
www.bildungserver.de

» Bundesagentur für Arbeit (Federal Agency of Employment) – Nordrhein-Westfalen, Regional Office
Josef-Gockeln-Str. 7, 40474 Düsseldorf
☎ 0211 4306-0
✉ Nordrhein-Westfalen@arbeitsagentur.de
www.arbeitsagentur.de/web/content/DE/service/Ueberuns/Regionaldirektionen/NordrheinWestfalen/index.html

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