

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 addresses people who apply for asylum in Saxony-Anhalt. It provides initial orientation to the most important processes about

- the first reception,
- the asylum procedure and
- possible life in Germany.

Please note: This edition includes the latest changes until 10/2016. We raise no claims for completeness of the information. In order to provide further detailed and individual information, the manual names contact persons in the particular sections.

You can find all important information about orientation in the federal state reception center (LAE) in Halberstadt in the booklet of this brochure.

The online version of the brochure is also available in Arabic, English, French, Afghan (Pashto), Persian (Farsi), Russian, Serbian and Tigrinya via the integration portal of Saxony-Anhalt (www.integriert-in-sachsen-anhalt.de).

New: You can also use our web app <http://erstinfos.de>!

The publishers would like to thank the employees of the asylum procedure consultation at the central contact point Halberstadt as well as Mr. E. Stein, manager of ZAsT, for their friendly support in making the manuscript. We would like to thank the Refugee Council Saxony-Anhalt for their hints and critical comments.

Welcome to Saxony-Anhalt!

You have reached a federal state reception center and you are at the beginning of the asylum procedure. 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 (as of 10/2016).

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 LAE you can contribute to a successful cooperation of people of different nationalities and cultural backgrounds. This might not always be easy, however, experience has shown: Many problems can be solved with respect and mutual consideration. We hope that this info guide answers your important questions and introduces to you contact points, which will provide further guidance.

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

Federal State Reception Centers (LAE)

If you have come to Germany seeking protection and wishing to apply for asylum, public authorities will allocate you by law and quota system to a temporary residence in a federal state, the so-called **federal state reception center (LAE)**.

Your initial reception (registration) as asylum seeking person takes place in the LAE. 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.

In the LAE you receive accommodation, food and other necessary requirements for living. You will be accommodated here until you are allocated to a municipality and transfer.

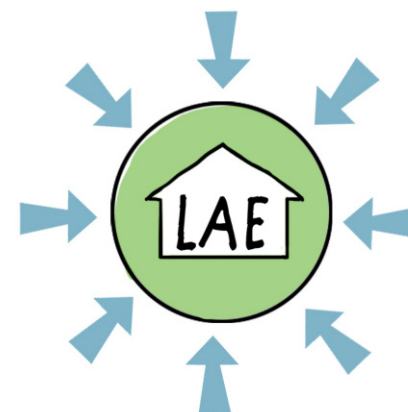
! The arrival center is located on the premises of the LAE in Halberstadt. Here, you will undergo all the stages of your asylum process. A branch of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) is located in the arrival center. At BAMF, you file your asylum application.



You have to remain on site

In the course of your initial reception, a residential obligation (**Aufenthaltsverpflichtung**) applies, often called Residenzpflicht. 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. It is valid at least three months or as long as you are obliged to remain at the federal state reception center.

If you want to visit relatives or if you need to leave your initial reception area for other reasons, you need permission (**leave pass - Urlaubsschein**). You can apply for permission at the Federal Office. 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

According to the law, the length of residence in initial reception centers is a period of up to six months. At the moment, the actual period depends on the state of your asylum process.

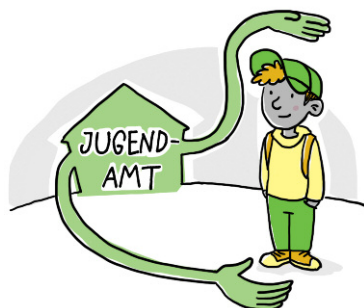
If you come from a safe country of origin as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ghana, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Senegal or Serbia, there is only a small chance of your asylum application being recognized. In this case, you usually remain in the federal state reception center until the asylum procedure has been concluded.

Accommodation

We strive to provide you with the best possible accommodation in the LAE. Mostly, you will live in rooms of collective accommodations. If the local capacities are insufficient, you can be accommodated temporarily in transition accommodations. Anyway, your accommodation will be winterproof.

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 rural districts

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.

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

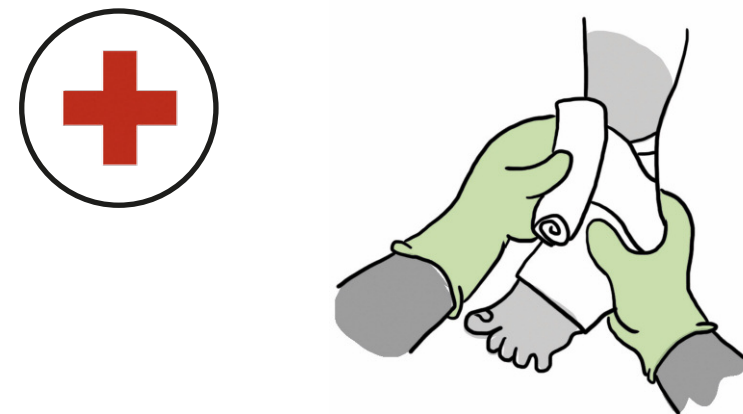
Besides, you receive **pocket money** for your individual demand. It is paid cash and it is calculated for one person of legal age (18 years). Only one member of a family receives the full sums. Other family members receive reduced sums.

Hygiene products are part of the initial fitting-out. After having received pocket money, you will have to buy them yourself. You will receive vouchers for clothes from the social welfare office, which allow you to do shopping in the city. Urgent supply of clothing is secured by means of a clothing store.



Health Care

In case of acute illness, please go to the medical supply point (MediCare) of your facility.



There, you will always find a doctor during the day. If it is not possible to treat your condition in the LAE, this doctor may prescribe further treatment with another doctor. For that, he issues a **letter of referral** (Überweisungsschein).

In case of non-acute diseases, you always need a treatment certificate (Behandlungsschein). You must apply for this certificate and pick it up at the social welfare office before the doctor's visit.

If certain experiences depress you, if you sleep badly or if your body reacts unaccustomedly, you might suffer a trauma. Support (as far as existing in the LAE) is provided by the **Psychosocial Office** (Psychosozialer Dienst) and the **Psychosocial Centers** (Psychosoziale Zentren) of the Federal State in Halle and Magdeburg. If necessary, make an appointment there.

If you need support regarding **HIV** (or other sexually transmitted diseases), please contact the **HIV-supports** (AIDS-Hilfen) in Halberstadt, Halle or Magdeburg. These will advise you anonymously and will name specific contact points.

Offers in the initial reception center

Organizing the time in the LAE

Allow sufficient time and tranquility for your **asylum procedure**. 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.

For children, fleeing is worse than for parents. Therefore, provide your children with the opportunities to play together. In all initial reception centers, there are offers for the leisure time of your children. Encourage your children to participate.

Please note: As legal guardian you are principally responsible for the welfare and actions of your children. That means, in the initial reception center you should always know where your child is. 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.

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 your professional qualification is needed on the labor market, you will receive a **quick labor market consultation** and you will be placed in recognition consultation. In case your professional qualification meets the requirements of the local labor market, you might also be allocated to the respective municipality.

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

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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
 - your asylum application has been rejected in another European country,
- 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 receive your "proof of arrival" ("Ankunftsnachweis") from the LAE staff if you have not received it at another point yet. The proof of arrival substitutes the certificate of registration as an asylum seeker ("Bescheinigung über die Meldung als Asylsuchender" – BÜMA). The proof of arrival or the certificate provides personal data and a 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. In this identification document, it is noted in which area you are allowed to stay. As soon as you might transfer to an adopting municipality in Saxony-Anhalt, the change of your address will be reported to the Federal Office immediately.

Consultation on the asylum procedure - preparation of the hearing



There are counseling centers regarding the asylum procedure in the initial reception center (Caritas). You can catch up on your rights and duties concerning all steps of the asylum procedure in the counseling centers. You might also get personal advice on the options of voluntary return to your home country or migration to a third country. These consultations are free of charge, anonymous and regardless of faith or ideology.

BAMF's info video on the asylum procedure (in 10 languages) also prepares for the hearing. Ask in your initial reception center where it is screened.

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 the capacities of BAMF, the interview takes place some time after filing the application. You will receive a written invitation to the "Hearing according to § 25 of the Asylum Procedure Law" (Anhörung gemäß § 25 Asylverfahrensgesetz). An interpreter will be present. Inform the Federal Office early on in which language the hearing should be accomplished. As asylum seeker you are entitled to a hearing in your mother tongue. Particular wishes such as a female translator/interpreter should be announced in time.

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 Federal Office will notify you about the decision on your asylum application in writing (official decision – Bescheid). The official decision includes reasons for the decision as well as **notice of appeals (Rechtsbehelfsbelehrung)**, which inform you about if and how you can reconsider the decision and file an appeal.

You will receive a positive notice in case of:

- acknowledgement of entitlement to asylum (Art. 16a para. 1 of the Basic Law), 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 notice establishes a legal status. It involves a **residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis)**. Depending on the reason, the residence is initially granted for a period of one to three years.

In case of a negative notice, you will receive a demand for departure and a threat of deportation that obliges you to leave the country. If deportation is not possible, the foreigners' registration office might temporarily issue a **Duldung** (temporary suspension of deportation). Duldung is a provisional document which identifies you as registered person. It is not a legal status.



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. **Caritas' asylum procedure counseling center (Asylverfahrensberatung der Caritas)** as well as the **Refugee Council (Flüchtlingsrat)** provide independent consultation on lawyerly protection.



Filing a follow-up or second application

You can file a follow-up application if you have received a negative notice in your initial asylum procedure. 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.

For persons entitled to subsidiary protection, family reunification is suspended until March 15, 2018 (as of 10/2016). After this period, you can also apply for the easier subsequent immigration of your family at the Federal Foreign Office.

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. They provide competent support with regard to the asylum procedure, legal aspect for foreigners, social benefits as well as offers of language promotion and other questions of everyday life, education and labor. 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 the countries Syria, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Somalia can attend an integration course while the asylum procedure is pending (as of 10/2016). To do so, they have to direct an application to 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 **Network IQ**. 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), **Network IQ** 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.

Child Care

In Germany every child has the right to a place in a day care center (Kita), where children are looked after while learning and playing with other children. The same is true for your child the moment it is allocated to a rural or urban district. Attending a day care center promotes the acquisition of the German language and communication with other children. Your social worker will assist you in filling the application for admission to the day care center.

Formal Education

In Germany, all children have a right to education. Girls and boys are required to attend school at the age of six by law. School attendance is compulsory for your children, too. In many cities of Saxony-Anhalt, there are schools, which provide specific language support classes. Your child can acquire German in these classes in order to follow lessons with other children after that. Support your child on learning German. Your social worker will inform you about the closest offers and assist you with the application.



Schule = school

In Germany, all children first attend primary school. Afterwards, they graduate from secondary school. There are different types of graduation. These are the prerequisites for the further education of your child. With a secondary school degree or certificate (Haupt- oder Realschulabschluss), your child can start a vocational training, with a high school diploma he or she can start studying. Without any degree it is difficult to find a good job.

Further information about the German school system is provided by the regional network of migrant organizations in Saxony-Anhalt.

Vocational Training

In Germany, qualification for many professions takes place via the "dual vocational training" (duale Ausbildung). This training usually lasts three years and is compensated. It pairs hands-on learning in a company with theoretical knowledge in the vocational school.

There is also educational training. Educational training usually lasts up to three years and aims at imparting theoretical knowledge. It is not compensated.

You can take advice on the different training possibilities in job centers. Please also ask, if you can apply for financial support regarding your intended training. A further contact point is the regional network of migrant organizations. The regional network supports young migrants searching a trainee position and accompanies them in the course of the training.

Studies

You can study at the universities of Saxony-Anhalt if you obtain a university entrance certificate (Abitur) or if you already started studying. Depending on which university course you are interested in, please address the International Offices of the universities in Saxony-Anhalt.

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Consultation and support for particular life situations

Specific protection of women

In Halle, there is an accommodation (**FlüchtlingsFrauenHaus**) for women and their children who experienced violence or those with specific protection needs. Admission requires a residence permit or Duldung (suspension of deportation). This place provides shelter from assaults as well as assistance in building an autonomous life, in case of personal crisis intervention and coping with everyday life.

If you wish anonymous support, you can also contact the "help line" ("Hilfetelefon"). Women provide counseling for women in 15 languages.



Schutz für Frauen = Protection of Women

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 Magde-

burg 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.



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!**



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 Charter 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 contact points

Residence

- **Migration Counseling Saxony-Anhalt (Migrationsberatung Sachsen-Anhalt)**
Website: www.integriert-in-sachsen-anhalt.de/netzwerke/beratungsstellen/migrationsberatung-fuer-erwachsene-mbe/
- **Residence Permit Counseling and Support of Self-organization (Aufenthaltsrechtliche Beratung und Unterstützung in der Selbstorganisation)**
Flüchtlingsrat Sachsen-Anhalt e.V. | Magdeburg
Webseite: www.fluechtlingsrat-lsa.de
Phone: +49 391 5371281
- **Procedure Information of Caritas for Asylum Applicants in Saxony-Anhalt, [Asylum Procedure Consultation Center] Halberstadt (Verfahrensinformation der Caritas für Asylbewerber in Sachsen-Anhalt)**
Webseite: www.caritas.de
Phone: +49 3941 609300
- **DRK Tracing Service for Separated Families due to conflict (Suchdienst für vom Konflikt getrennte Familien des DRK)**
German Red Cross – State Association Saxony-Anhalt
Website: www.sachsen-anhalt.drk.de
Phone: +49 391 6106890 (MD)
- **Voluntary Return (Freiwillige Rückkehr)**
Competence Center Return. Consultation Point for Voluntary Return of Third Country Citizens
Website: www.magdeburgerstadtmision.de/arbeitsgebiete/kompetenzzentrum-rueckkehr/

Labor and Training

- **Network IQ – Recognition and Qualification Counseling (Netzwerk IQ – Anerkennungs- und Qualifizierungsberatung)**
Halle / Magdeburg
Website: www.sachsen-anhalt.netzwerk-iq.de
Phone: +49 345 686948-23/-15/-21 (HAL) / +49 391 40805-15/-10/-13 (MD)

- **Professional in Focus (Fachkraft im Fokus (FiF))**
Welcome Service for Foreign Professionals in Labor
Website: www.fachkraft-im-fokus.de
Phone: 49 152 537 729 43 (HAL), +49 173 8498 196 (MD)
- **Job Bridge PLUS (Jobbrücke PLUS)**
Integration of Asylum Applicants and Refugees in Labor and Training
Magdeburg
Website: www.jobbruecke-chance.de
Phone: +49 391 7279882

Health and Protection

Consultation and support for 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
- **Help-Line „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

Support in case of xenophobic assaults

- **Mobile Counseling for Victims of Right-wing Violence**
(Mobile Beratung für Opfer rechter Gewalt)
Halle / Magdeburg / Salzwedel / Dessau-Roßlau
Website: www.mobile-opferberatung.de
Phone: +49 345 2267100 (HAL) / +49 391 6207752 (MD) /
+49 3901 306431 (SAW) / +49 340 6612395 (RSL)

Consultation on questions of sexual identity and health

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

Orientation and Social Integration

Networks and support for everyday life

- **Consultations Services and Networks for the Support of Refugees and Arrivals**
Website: www.integriert-in-sachsen-anhalt.de/netzwerke/
- **Welcome Initiatives Saxony-Anhalt**
Website:
www.integriert-in-sachsen-anhalt.de/willkommen/willkommensinitiativen/
- **Welcome Haunt of the Volunteer Agency**
Website:
www.freiwilligen-agentur.de/themen-und-projekte/engagiert-fuer-fluechtlinge/
- **Regional Network of Migrant Organizations Saxony-Anhalt Halle**
(LAMSA) e.V. Halle
Website: www.lamsa.de
Phone: +49 345 17164890
- **Migration Guides „Welcome to Halle“ and „Welcome to Magdeburg“**
Website: www.willkommen-in-halle.de und
www.willkommen-in-magdeburg.de

Consulation and support in particular life situations

- **Consultation Center for Heraing Impaired Persons**
(Beratungsstelle für Hörbehinderte e.V.)
Halberstadt / Magdeburg / Stendal
Phone: 03941 612545 (HBS), +49 391 6272916 (MD),
+49 3931 712736 (ST),
- **Association of Blind and Visually Handicapped Persons**
(Blinden- und Sehbehinderten-Verband Sachsen-Anhalt e.V.)
Landesgeschäftsstelle
Magdeburg
Website: www.bsv-sachsen-anhalt.de
Phone: +49 391 2896239

Support with language barriers

- **Translation/Interpretation for Immigrants in Saxny-Anhalt by Phone**
(telefonische Sprachmittlung für Migrantinnen in Sachsen-Anhalt (SiSA))
Halle
Website: www.lamsa.de
Phone: +49 345 21389399
- **Federal State Association of Sign Language Translators**
(Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft für Gebärdendolmetscher (LAG) Sachsen-Anhalt e.V.)
Halle
Phone: +49 345 6890010
E-Mail: ldz.leps@gmx.de oder lbst.traut@gmx.de

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**WELTOFFEN
WILLKOMMEN**
Sachsen-Anhalt



This brochure (with inlay) will also be published in
Arabic, English, French, Afghan (Pashto), Persian (Farsi),
Russian, Serbian and Tigrinya

on the following website:

www.integriert-in-sachsen-anhalt.de/willkommen/erstinformationen-fuer-fluechtlinge/

on the mobile website and as web app:

www.erstinfos.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/

