How much will I earn?
A mandatory minimum wage of Euro 8.50 per hour (gross) was established by law in Germany in January 2015. Claims for payment of the minimum wage are regulated by collective bargaining agreements. Most temporary work agencies pay wages in accordance with collective bargaining agreements; however, these agreements are negotiated between trade unions and employers. Two collective bargaining agreements are currently in force: the DGB-iGZ and the DGB-BAP¹.

The current minimum wage for temporary work agency employees as specified by the applicable collective bargaining agreement is Euro 8.80 per hour (gross) in the western German states and Euro 8.20 per hour in the eastern states.

Your hourly wage may be higher, however, and depends on your classification in a specific wage category. Collective bargaining agreements also contain provisions covering remuneration for overtime or on weekends. The payment of plus or minus hours introduced in 2015 would not exist. Unions have organized strikes and negotiated collective bargaining agreements with employers. Without this involvement in politics, the minimum wage of Euro 8.50 per hour introduced in 2015 would not exist. Unions are independent, but not apolitical. They represent the interests of different occupational groups. Most of the approx. 100 unions are members of a union in Germany.

What about working hours and the working-time account?
Most temporary work agencies have a 35-hour work week. However, your actual working hours often depend on the shift schedule of the company to which you actually work. If you work more or fewer hours than specified in your employment contract, the difference is recorded in a working-time account. This means that you can accumulate plus or minus hours. The maximum number of plus hours you can carry on your account is limited, however; 150 hours under the DGB-iGZ agreement and 200 under the DGB-BAP¹. You may apply for additional time off. If you have more than 105 plus hours on your account, you may demand payment for the excess hours. Some temporary work agencies pay out plus hours immediately with your regular pay. Others will pay for plus hours only after the maximum limit has been reached or once your contract expires.

What can you do if your pay slip is incorrect?
As a temporary agency worker, you are also entitled to take action in response to incorrectly calculated working hours or unjustified deductions from your pay. If you believe you have not received the pay to which you are entitled, you must demand payment of the unpaid amount from your employer within three months; otherwise your claim will not be recognized.

Temporary agency work – Do you know your rights?

You have fled your home country and are now working in Germany. You are employed by companies known “Zeitarbeitsfirmen” or “Leiharbeitsfirmen”). Loan their workers to German labour market. It tells you what you need to know about temporary agency work.

What is temporary agency work?
More and more people in Germany are employed as temporary agency workers today. Companies known as temporary work agencies (in German: “Zeitarbeitsunternehmen e. V.”) or “Leiharbeitsunternehmen e. V.”) loan their workers to other companies for specified periods of time.

Please note:
As a temporary agency worker, you sign an employment contract with the temporary work agency. The agency is your employer and has all corresponding rights and obligations. The agency pays your wages. Questions regarding such matters as working hours or vacation entitlements must be addressed to the agency. However, you receive specific working instruction from the company at which you actually work. If problems arise, you can seek advice from the works council or “Berufsverband”. A works council is an elected body that represents the interests of employees-va employers.

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How can trade unions help?
They fight for fair pay, better working conditions, fair working hours and social justice. They can organize strikes and negotiate collective bargaining agreements with employers. Without this involvement in politics, the minimum wage of Euro 8.50 per hour introduced in 2015 would not exist. Unions are independent, but not apolitical. They represent the interests of different occupational groups. Most of the approx. 100 unions are members of a union in Germany.

We recommend that you become a union member on your first day of employment in Germany. Union members receive legal advice and assistance in cases involving labour disputes or other occupational issues. They participate actively in politics. Unions provide you with great care and attention. No claim of completeness. Specific provisions may change over the course of time.