

## FAQ for Counsellors

### *Who is LEOlingo?*

LEOlingo offers day and overnight language camps to German kids from 7 to 15. The languages taught are English, French, Italian and Spanish. Andrea Bär is responsible for the southern part of Germany (Bavaria). She is situated in Seitzermühle 1, 92369 Sengenthal, near Nürnberg ([baer@leo-lingo.de](mailto:baer@leo-lingo.de)). Sabine Görner is organising camps in the northern part of Germany. She is situated in Werderstr. 35, 19055 Schwerin ([goerner@leo-lingo.de](mailto:goerner@leo-lingo.de)), near Hamburg. Please be aware, that in the northern part, the summer break starts and ends two weeks earlier than in the southern part.

### *How is the application process?*

Prospective counsellors will be sent a detailed application form. You need to fill it out and send it back to Andrea Bär or Sabine Görner (depending on the period or place you would like to work) by e-mail or post, together with a photograph of you and a copy (photocopied or scanned) of your passport. Once you have been chosen as a counsellor, you will need to send us as soon as possible a copy of your valid students' card (if you are still a student), a police check (not older than six months) and a copy of your visa or work permits, if already existing. We will send you a contract once you have sent all documents to us. You will need to sign it and send it back to Andrea Bär or Sabine Görner. In case you need to apply for a work permit (non EU citizens), you can take the contract to apply for it.

### *Do we need any papers / visa?*

If you are a non EU citizen you will need to apply for a work permit or a working holiday visa at a German consulate in your country. US citizens need to apply for a work permit around 5 months in advance. New Zealanders, Australians and Canadians should apply around 2 months in advance for a working holiday visa. We can send you some information on how to apply for the work permit or visa. Please note that some consulates in the US want you to get the work permit in Germany and not in the US. If you can arrive in Germany at least one month before you need to start working, it may be possible to get your work permit or visa in Germany. But if you arrive only some days before you start working, there won't be enough time to get it before you need it. It is always safer to get the work permit in the US or the working holiday visa in your home country before your departure. Please let us know when and how you are planning to obtain your visa or work permit. If you already are a student and will go on studying after the camps and if your university has a break for at least the time you want to work for us, please let us know - there is a way to get an extra allowance for students.

You also need to send us a valid police check, not older than six months.

### *What happens, if I don't pass the training week?*

Almost everybody passes the training week, you are there to learn how to deal with certain situations that may or may not arise. If you are willing to learn and to do the job and if we can see a development of your skills, you don't have to worry. Nevertheless, if you behave in an unacceptable way (hit a kid etc) or you are not able to take appropriate responsibility for the kids (lose a kid etc.) then we cannot take the risk of employing you further. In this unlikely case you would have to cover the board and lodging on your own for the rest of the time as well as your trip

home. We can help you to organise a host family to stay with until your flight home. If we have to send you home right after training, you will receive one week's salary of a Day Camp.

*Are we insured?*

As most of the counsellors have their own insurance, we don't have a general insurance policy for all counsellors. If you need a work permit, you need to have proof of a health insurance for Germany. Here is a link to a cheap one, often used by counsellors (unfortunately in German):

[http://www.reiseversicherung.com/versicherungen\\_auslaendische\\_gaeste.html](http://www.reiseversicherung.com/versicherungen_auslaendische_gaeste.html)

*What is the liability insurance?*

LEOlingo has standard liability insurance for the campsites, which will cover things that get damaged - when nobody knows who has done it. When we know of a kid who has broken something, the kids' families normally have insurance for themselves and we use this insurance (as we have to pay a certain sum on our own).

*Do we work every week?*

In general you will get one or two weeks off during a working period of about six weeks. Many of the counsellors use the opportunity to travel. During this week you won't get paid and you will have to organise your own accommodation and food. If you don't want to travel during that week and you have asked us in advance, it may be possible for you to stay with a host family.

The work can be very exhausting. At the start you may think that you don't need a week off, but from our past experience the counsellors are happy after 3 or 4 intensive weeks to have a break. As we can never anticipate all changes/sicknesses of the counsellors that can happen during our holiday programme, we cannot give a definite answer in advance as to exactly which week you will have free. The best is when you tell us well in advance which week you would like free and we will do our best to accommodate your wishes. You can also tell us if you definitely don't want to have a week off.

*What information do I get before a camp starts?*

Before you come to Germany you receive an arrival information pack (with all addresses, dates, telephone numbers an organisational overview) and a short version of the training handbook.

A few days before each camp you will receive information on your exact place of work, lodging, travel plans from camp to camp, children's names, ages, etc. and some mandatory tasks, such as filling out the feedback papers etc.

*Where do the other counsellors come from?*

They come from everywhere: USA, UK, Canada, India, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Italy, South America, Spain, France etc.

*How old are the other counsellors?*

The counsellors are generally between 20 and 29 years old.



*Will I be working with the same people or do the teams change often?*

Weekly changes between campsites as well as work partners can be expected. All counsellors, even those with no German abilities, are expected to be able to work completely alone if necessary.

*Do we work on the weekend?*

Normally you don't. You will need time to travel to your next campsite and to prepare for the next camp. The camps are 1-2 hours apart. If you have to travel from the Northern Germany to the Southern part, it can take up to 8 hours. All travel due to work will be arranged by Andrea and Sabine.

On one weekend - generally after the first week - you will need to do feedback training, this is mandatory. At the end of the season a farewell evening will take place on the weekend.

*Where do we stay on the weekends?*

In general you will be staying with the host family of the week before or of the following week. You can also book your own accommodation if you prefer, for example when you are travelling somewhere at the weekend or if you want to meet up with the other counsellors. In the latter case, the costs are not covered by LEOlingo.

*What is there to do in the free time?*

There are beautiful towns and areas around, such as the Baltic Sea, the "Mecklenburger Seenplatte" (lake area), Hamburg or Berlin in the North, Munich, Regensburg, Nürnberg, Bamberg, Salzburg, the "Fränkische Schweiz", the "Fränkische Seenland" (lake area) and many pretty little towns in the South. Prague is not so far either; you might need a visa, which costs about €60. Some counsellors spend the weekends with families of whom they have been 'adopted'. Others remain in the area where they are working, just "hanging out" and others even go mountain climbing or head for the museums.

*Which airport do we arrive at?*

This depends on which city you will be doing the training in and upon travel prices. The closest airport to Schwerin (North) is Hamburg or Berlin, the closest one to Neumarkt (South) is Nürnberg, a bit further is München (Munich) or also Frankfurt. You can also ask for flight and rail combination offers or connection flights from Frankfurt or München to Nürnberg.

*Will we be picked up at the airport?*

As every counsellor is arriving at different times and places, we cannot pick everyone up. You will receive the address of the training location. We will send you directions describing how to arrive using public transportation from the nearest major airport(s) as well as the main train station.

*Are the flight costs covered?*

No. We suggest that you take out flight insurance. In the case of accident, illness, death in the family as well as unforeseen changes in plans, we cannot cover any tickets that have to be cancelled. Most counsellors “shop” around for their tickets. Many travel before they start to work and come via various routes. It can often be much cheaper to book a flight to London and then use Air Berlin ([www.airberlin.com](http://www.airberlin.com)) or Ryan Air ([www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com)) to fly to the continent.

*How is the train travel?*

If you are 26 or under, you can purchase a summer train ticket for € 36 which is valid on all regional trains within Bavaria (the state in the South) for the entire summer. You need to have a valid students’ card. Check out the website [www.db.de](http://www.db.de) for train information in Germany.

*Where and how does the training take place?*

Training in summer will take place in Schwerin or Neumarkt, depending on where you will be working. We will be guests in a school. From Friday to Sunday we get to know each other and start with the theoretical part. From Monday till Friday every counsellor will have a group of about 12 (real) kids in the morning. During breaks and in the afternoon we will have time to discuss the morning and do more theoretical training.

During the training week you will stay with host families organised by the training school.

*What other meetings are required?*

You will have to do feedback training. It takes place one Saturday after your first week of work and is mandatory. It is a general meeting of your training team, a good chance to clear up any problems, which might have cropped up and a chance to keep in touch with each other.

*Am I paid for the training?*

No. The school organises a place to sleep and full board.

*How much will I get paid?*

You will get 200 Euro per week plus bed and breakfast (camp time: 9 am to 5 pm). At Overnight Camps you will get full board (you would be off after 5pm but in case of an emergency, you should be available to take over responsibility). If you are responsible only for the evening programme at an Overnight Camp you will get 100 Euro (evening programme from about 7 pm to 10 pm, responsibility for the kids - but free time for the kids (no program) - from 5 pm to 9 am). The training is not paid.

*When will I get paid?*

Payment will be made after every week of work. We will keep 30 Euros each week. This money you will get in the end of your working period, if you have returned the materials and rooms in a reasonable manner.

*What happens if I can not work for the whole duration of the German summer break?*

It is possible to arrange an earlier departure date right from the beginning. But you should be aware that in general you are expected to work until the end of the season (beginning of September). Our counsellor positions are sought after by many university students. We have had the experience that some have to return by the end of August to their university and nevertheless state that they will be able to work the full period, which goes into September. If suddenly 20% of the counsellors leave earlier than expected, the whole team would suffer. It is very difficult to find last minute replacements, expensive to cancel camps and it puts pressure on team members having to take over a double workload in the last week or work with an insufficient partner. In the case of a family emergency, illness etc. it is possible to leave earlier without any penalty.

*Am I required to follow an exact program?*

LEOlingo has a set programme with certain core points/goals, which are mandatory: creative folder, drama, songs, language rally etc. The content will be set in a carefully outlined program. The specific activities used to reach these goals can be exchanged. This will all be discussed in detail during training.

*Do I have a choice where or with whom I work with?*

LEOlingo will try to place counsellors together who prefer so. But be prepared to work at least one week completely on your own as well as with other counsellors if necessary. Sometimes it is important to create a team with different skills. For example, one should speak German, one should be male, one should be good with ball games etc.

*Where do we live during the weeks?*

Generally you will be staying together with host families. When you are doing Overnight Camps you could be staying in simple cabins, in tents or also in castles.

*Can I choose between Day and Overnight Camps?*

You can tell us your preference. We will try to fulfil everybody's wishes as best we can, but the skills of our whole team need to be taken into consideration to create optimal teams.

*Am I responsible for my own meals?*

During Day Camps you will get breakfast from your host family. You can prepare a sandwich for lunch. If you are not staying with a host family and there is no possibility to order breakfast (or lunch at the campsite), you will get 25 Euro extra per working week. The host families are not responsible for your other meals, but most of them like to have dinner together with their guests and they prepare something for you as well. When you are doing an Overnight Camp, you will have full board and you will eat your meals together with the kids. In case you have to follow a certain diet (vegan etc.), please inform us in time. Expect to organise some of your food on your own.

*Can I choose my accommodation?*

No, LEOlingo organises this and generally we do this according to what is possible in the town where you will be working.

### *What if I can't speak German?*

For the camp itself, you don't need to speak German. But LEOlingo will only accept counsellors who feel secure enough to 'survive' in a foreign country - alone and together with a bunch of kids. In general, Germans speak some English.

### *What's different about Germans or Germany?*

This is difficult to say as it is depending on the person who is asking this question. There are some stereotypes that contain some truth. Examples:

- Germans are very punctual. For working conditions German punctuality means at least 15-20 minutes in advance.
- For German host families and landlords cleanliness is very important. They expect you to return rooms and things in the way they have given them to you. They won't understand if you don't and they would be very upset. The landlords might also check during the day how clean you are. You should be sure to leave everything tidy before you go outside or have a break.
- You will be expected to ask before using things of the family, eg. using their computer or phone etc.
- Germans are very straightforward. Don't expect a German to swallow his criticism, to say it in a roundabout polite way. They will tell you straight and directly if they do not agree with something you are doing or saying. They will also tell you positive things - when they really mean it.
- Germans are not used to and tend not to use extravagant compliments. They are at times more reserved and can appear cooler towards you, however you will also find that a German befriended is a friend for life and a very warm friendship can follow.
- Germans are not prudish. Open showers are normal. In schools, sports centres, swimming halls there generally won't be a "view protection". Male and female sections are separated, so that nobody of the other sex will see you naked.
- It is no problem to embrace a little kid and comfort them when they are hurt or crying. In Germany people would be surprised if you did not comfort the kid in such a situation.
- Germans are very ecological and separate their garbage into many different categories. Please make sure you are respectful and do the same during your stay. If you are unsure, please ask either your host family or one of us to clarify how their rubbish system works. There are different rubbish bins; 1. for glass, 2. for paper, 3. for packaging and cartons with a certain sign (the "green point", almost every packing has this sign, so it is quite simple) 4. for organic rubbish, and 5. for materials that can not be recycled (for example ashes, cigarettes).
- Germans are also energy conscious. Lights, heating and water are only turned on during use. Some examples: As soon as they exit the room or the house, lights, radios, TV etc. are turned off. They try to not leave the water running unnecessarily whilst they are showering or brushing their teeth, and they do not take long showers. In a traffic jam Germans often turn off the car motor. So please be aware and careful of what you are doing during your stay in Germany.