

The Legal Profession in Germany



Presented by
Roland Borsdorff
312-3715064
RBorsdorff@gmx.net

Overview

- Legal Education
 - Law School
 - Referendariat / Legal Traineeship
- The Legal Profession
 - Law Market
 - Judiciary
- How to find a job?

Law School

- Course of Studies
 - 1st – 3rd year: Taking courses at Law School with exams at the end of each course
 - 4th year: Preparation for the Final Exam
 - ERASMUS
- Final Exam (1st State Exam)
 - Preparation time is at least 1 year
 - The Exam covers almost every part of German Law
 - The Exam is very challenging
- Public Law Schools
 - There are 43 Public Law Schools in Germany
 - They do not charge Tuition
 - The 1st Private Law School opened 5 years ago

Referendariat / Legal Traineeship

- The Referendariat takes 2 years and is divided into 4 parts
 - Court / Prosecution Service
 - Administration
 - Attorney
 - Free Choice: You can choose to work in any area of the Legal Profession and even go abroad, as long as you work for a lawyer
- The Referendariat ends with the 2nd state exam (bar exam)

- Only by successfully passing both State Exams can you work in the Legal Profession
- In total our Legal Education takes about 7 years
- Possible Extra-Qualifications are a PhD thesis or an LL.M. Program

The Legal Profession

- Attorney
- Judge Career / Prosecutor
- Notary
- Administration
- Government
- EU

Attorney / Legal Market

- Solo Practitioner
 - Mostly Private Clients; Typical Areas of Law: Family and Employment Law
- Medium-sized Law Firms
 - Private and Business Clients
- International Law Firms
 - Only Business clients; Attorneys work is highly specialized; Perfect English skills are required; Working on cross-border transactions
 - In recent years many well established medium-sized German Law Firms have merged with larger US or UK based firms

Attorney / Legal Market

- Every Lawyer is admitted to the Trial Court of each state
- Only some Lawyers are admitted to the Court of Appeal and only very few to the Supreme Court
- Each Lawyer has to be a member of the Bar Association
- In total there are 132,569 admitted Lawyers in Germany

Judiciary

- You enter the career of Judge right after your 2nd State Exam
- To be eligible you have to be in the top 10% of your class
- To guarantee their absolute independence they have a life time position
- Internal Evaluation System

How to find a job?

- The best Students enter the Judiciary or work for an International Law Firm
- Criterias: top grades in both state exams (top 15%), PhD thesis, LLM, perfect English skills, optional: additional language skills
- 90% of all fees are earned by only 10% of all Lawyers