



# Zeitwohnen Update

The Newsletter for the New Form of Housing Mobility



## Jatin Kumar

Jatin is the CEO of Unmappr, the market leader for flexible housing in Germany. Unmappr has its headquarters in Berlin.

## Dear Readers, Dear Friends of Zeitwohnen,

Germany is facing a strategic decision. Demographic change is exacerbating the shortage of skilled workers, key industries are urgently seeking qualified employees, and international competition for talent is noticeably increasing. Today, highly qualified professionals can choose where they want to live and work. They opt for locations that not only offer career opportunities, but also an attractive, open, and accessible environment.

Whether Germany can meet this demand is therefore not a side issue, but a core economic policy task. In this issue of our newsletter, we analyze how international skilled workers perceive the conditions in Germany, where structural barriers exist, and which policy levers are crucial for sustainably strengthening skilled immigration.

Yours sincerely,

**Jatin Kumar**

# Housing Market and Temporary Rentals

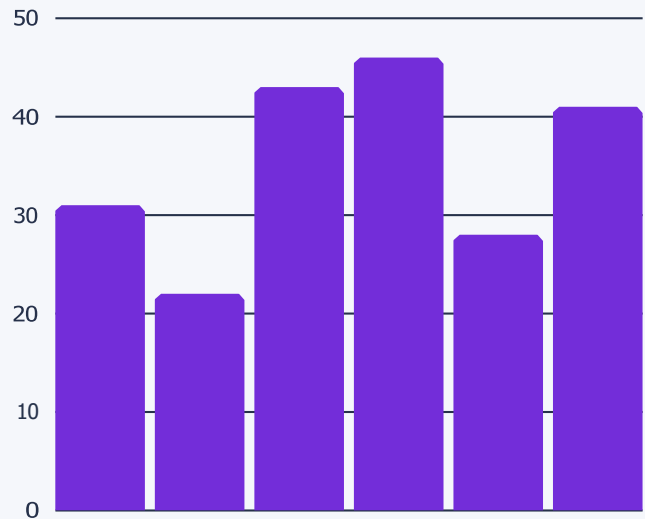
Democratization of housing sustainably eases pressure on conventional housing markets



## Many hurdles for Germany as a location

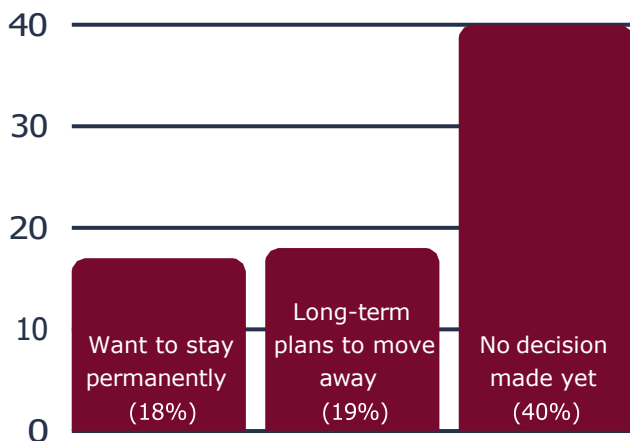
For international skilled workers, their stay in Germany often begins with a series of structural hurdles. Complex administrative procedures, limited availability of digital public services, and a tight housing market make the initial process of settling in particularly challenging. Anyone searching for an apartment from abroad without sufficient language skills or local contacts quickly reaches their limits and faces significant barriers.

Even beyond the arrival phase, integration remains a demanding process. Society is often perceived as reserved, social networks tend to develop slowly, and a genuine sense of belonging usually takes considerable time to emerge. While solid career prospects and stable economic conditions offer important advantages, they can only partially offset this overall experience.



Germany's rating in the individual categories

Germany's ranking in the individual categories of the "Expatriate Insider 2025" study (a total of 46 countries in the ranking)



### Who is coming, who is leaving, who is staying?

Percentage of expats surveyed who can imagine staying in Germany permanently or leaving the country again in the future.

Sources: InterNation "Expatriate Insider 2025".

- 1st place: Panama
- 2nd place: Colombia
- 3rd place: Mexico
- 4th place: Thailand
- 5th place: Vietnam
- 6th place: China
- 7th place: United Arab Emirates
- 8th place: Indonesia
- 9th place: Spain
- 10th place: Malaysia
- ...
- 42th place: Germany

### Latin America scores highly with its attitude to life

The top 10 countries impress with their accessible structures, efficient administration, and high level of social openness—integration happens more quickly there than in many traditional industry nations.

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## Between opportunities and obstacles: How international professionals experience Germany

Germany is dependent on skilled immigration. Attracting international talent to the country is no longer a choice, but a necessity for economic stability. Demographic change is advancing, vacancies remain unfilled, and entire industries are looking for skilled workers. This makes the findings of the "Expatriate Insider 2025" study all the more sobering: Germany ranks 42nd out of 46 countries surveyed. For a country that sees itself as an attractive location for innovation and industry, this is a clear warning sign.

Who are the people who come anyway? On average, they are 42.5 years old, with an almost equal distribution of men and women. Many work in IT or mechanical engineering – areas where skilled workers are urgently needed. The reasons for moving are classic: work, study, training, or love. But when it comes to overall satisfaction, Germany ranks near the bottom. Despite stable economic conditions, it seems to have limited success in creating a positive overall impression among international skilled workers.

A closer look at the individual categories reveals the areas of tension. Germany is certainly appreciated professionally: the working environment ranks 22nd in the middle of the field and is considered structured and reliable. Financially, Germany also ranks in the lower midfield at 28th place – solid, but without any particular appeal. The picture is mixed when it comes to quality of life: the environment and infrastructure are rated positively, while leisure activities and safety aspects are rated more cautiously.

However, the areas that determine integration and retention are particularly problematic. In terms of welcoming culture and basic everyday conditions, Germany is one of the weakest locations in the comparison.

## Germany's rating by category

**Quality of life.** Germany is perceived as well-organized and environmentally conscious; its infrastructure and healthcare system are well developed. However, leisure, cultural, and safety aspects score noticeably lower.

**Ease of settling in.** Germany and its population come across as polite but reserved. Many expats need time to make contacts and really feel like they belong. Accordingly, the country ranks at the bottom of the list in this category.

**Working abroad.** The assessment of the professional environment is positive. Expats report clear structures, stable conditions, and solid development opportunities. Germany does not appear to be a particularly dynamic talent market, but it offers a stable working environment with clear prospects.

**Personal finance.** The financial situation is stable, but not exceptional. Income and living costs allow for a solid standard of living, but are hardly perceived as an advantage, resulting in a mid-table ranking.

**Expatriate essentials.** The biggest hurdles arise when settling into everyday life. Bureaucratic processes, language challenges, and finding accommodation are considered particularly difficult, while digital and administrative services are viewed critically. These factors often have a very negative impact on the initial phase of a stay in Germany.

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## Where Germany needs to take political action

The biggest hurdles are not found in the employment contract, but in everyday life. Germany once again ranks last in the Expat Essentials Index. Digital administration, bureaucratic processes, finding accommodation, and language barriers are rated as highly problematic. For many, their stay begins with lengthy procedures, a difficult search for accommodation, and the feeling of having to navigate a complex system alone in a foreign language.

The arrival phase in particular determines whether a work stay will turn into a long-term prospect. Those who feel supported develop a sense of belonging. Those who encounter structural hurdles early on reorient themselves more quickly. If Germany wants to compete internationally for talent, the arrival process in particular needs to be rethought. Digitization of administration, accelerated procedures, more housing, and a visible openness to immigration are not peripheral issues—they are central to our national competitiveness.

Germany has economic strength, stable institutions, and a high level of innovation. The study not only highlights deficits, but above all concrete starting points for improvement. Digitalization, more efficient procedures, more housing, and an actively practiced culture of welcome are political levers that can be shaped.

If these framework conditions can be developed decisively, Germany will be able to make much better use of its structural strengths and attract international skilled workers in the long term. It is now important for the federal, state, and local governments to jointly accept this responsibility and implement concrete reforms in a coordinated manner. This would benefit not only immigrants, but society as a whole.

## Political Recommendations

### Consistently digitize administration.

Germany ranks last in terms of administrative framework conditions. A central, fully digital immigration portal with status tracking and binding deadlines for the administration would make procedures more predictable and significantly improve first impressions.

### Make housing available immediately.

Finding accommodation is one of the biggest hurdles when starting out in Germany. In addition to additional new construction, there is a particular need for long-term flexible housing that is available at short notice so that skilled workers can start work immediately and do not have to spend months in temporary accommodations.

### Establish English as a secondary working language.

Language barriers make it difficult for many expats to access government agencies and services. Central administrative processes should therefore be consistently offered in English as a minimum requirement to ensure international connectivity.

### Position Germany strategically as a country of skilled immigration.

The location is attractive from a professional perspective, but integration and quality of life remain weak points. In addition to structural reforms, there is a need for active international outreach to skilled workers and clear incentives to strengthen Germany as a long-term place to live and work.

# The Unmappr Team

Shape the future of housing with us



## Join us on the road to the future of housing

Unmappr is a digital platform for flexible housing that brings together the demand and supply of landlords and tenants.

While vacation rentals take away housing space from cities, long-term flexible housing helps relieve the pressure on the traditional housing market. This is because specialists, project workers, and highly specialized experts often request apartments that are rented out temporarily in a manner that conforms to the intended use, but are not currently available to the permanent housing market.

At the same time, long-term flexible housing is still too little known in terms of its importance and the many opportunities it offers, among other things, for a fair housing market and its contribution to economic promotion by solving the shortage of skilled workers.

Therefore, it is necessary to create a framework that recognizes long-term flexible housing as a pillar of support and a solution to the problem.



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As a digital scale-up from the heart of Berlin, Unmappr welcomes any dialogue on digital and housing policy issues.