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1 Education – Career opportunities – Professional fields (Example: Germany)

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1 Home economics – a versatile professional field

A Introduction

Domestic services are far more than cooking, cleaning, or laundry. They encompass all activities that contribute to providing for people and creating a clean, safe, and comfortable living environment for them. Domestic service professionals take responsibility for nutrition, hygiene, cleaning, laundry, organization, and care. They work efficiently, sustainably, and according to high quality standards.

The importance of domestic services is constantly increasing. Due to demographic change, the rising demand for care and support services, and the growing requirements for quality and hygiene, qualified domestic staff are urgently needed in many areas.

B Goals of Home Economics

The goal of home economics is to...

- To provide people with reliable and needs-based care,
- To promote health and hygiene
- To improve quality of life and well-being,
- Use resources responsibly and
- To organize work processes economically and sustainably.

C Where do domestic workers work?

Domestic service professionals work in many areas, for example in:

- Senior and nursing care facilities
- Hospitals and rehabilitation clinics
- Daycare centers and schools
- Facilities for people with disabilities
- Hotels and guesthouses
- Catering and canteens
- Private households
- Outpatient services
- Farms and holiday farms
- Domestic service companies

Key point

Home economics combines provision, organization, hygiene, and sustainability. It makes an important contribution to the quality of life of people in all phases of life.



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2 Introduction to home economics

There are various ways to enter the field of domestic science. Depending on prior education, professional experience, and personal goals, interested individuals can first gain practical experience or directly begin a recognized vocational training program.

A Entry as a domestic helper

Many people begin their careers as domestic helpers. Formal vocational training is often not required for this work. The necessary skills are usually acquired through on-the-job training or short courses.

Typical tasks include:

- Cleaning and maintenance of living and working areas
- Laundry care and laundry supply
- Assistance with food preparation and serving
- Compliance with hygiene regulations
- General domestic services

Domestic helpers work, for example, in:

- Senior and nursing care facilities
- Hospitals and rehabilitation clinics
- Daycare centers and schools
- Facilities for people with disabilities
- Hotels and guesthouses
- Private households
- Domestic service companies

Working as an assistant provides a good insight into the professional field and can be a preparation for later vocational training.

Internship and qualification

An internship or training program allows you to experience the daily work routine and gain initial practical experience. Many educational institutions, social service agencies, and employment agencies offer such programs. They facilitate entry into the workforce and can support the transition to vocational training.



B Training as a domestic manager

The recognized dual vocational training program to become a domestic service professional typically lasts **three years**. It takes place at two learning locations:

- In the training company (practical training)
- In vocational school (theoretical training)

During their training, trainees acquire comprehensive knowledge and skills in the following areas:

- Nutrition and food preparation
- Cleaning and hygiene
- Textile care and laundry services
- Inventory management and purchasing
- Organization of work processes
- Support and service
- Sustainable and economical practices
- Communication and teamwork
- Quality management

Upon successful completion of their training, domestic service professionals receive a state-recognized vocational qualification. This opens up diverse employment and development opportunities in various institutions and companies.

Key point

There are various ways to enter the field of domestic services. A recognized vocational training provides the foundation for diverse career prospects and opportunities for further development.



3 Professional development and career opportunities

After completing their training, domestic service professionals have numerous opportunities for career development. Through professional experience, further training and education, they can take on more responsibility, assume leadership roles or specialize in specific areas.

A Skilled worker in domestic science

After successfully completing their vocational training, domestic service professionals work as qualified specialists. They plan, organize, and carry out household tasks independently. In doing so, they pay attention to quality, hygiene, cost-effectiveness, and the needs of the people they care for.

Their duties include, among other things:

- Planning and organization of household work processes
- Meal planning and catering management
- Cleaning and hygiene monitoring
- Laundry service and textile care
- Inventory management and material procurement
- Support and service
- Compliance with quality and hygiene standards

With increasing professional experience, skilled workers often take on the task of guiding new employees or trainees.

B Team leadership in housekeeping

With professional experience, domestic service professionals can take on management tasks within a team. They coordinate workflows and ensure that domestic services run smoothly.

The responsibilities of a team leader include:

- Guiding and supporting employees
- Coordinate work and duty schedules
- Organize workflows
- Monitoring quality and hygiene standards
- Planning material and goods usage
- Coordinate collaboration with other professional groups

Team leaders work, for example, in senior citizens' and nursing homes, hospitals, rehabilitation clinics, hotels or social institutions.



C Further training to become a state-certified domestic manager

A recognized further education qualification is the qualification as **a state-certified domestic manager specializing in domestic science**.

This advanced training provides in-depth knowledge in the following areas:

- Business organization
- Personnel planning
- Quality management
- Business administration
- Project planning
- Employee management

Graduates often take on responsible specialist and management roles or participate in the organization of larger domestic service areas.

D Master of home economics

Further training to **become a master of domestic science** represents one of the highest professional qualifications in the field of domestic science.

Master craftspeople possess comprehensive expertise and assume responsibility for personnel, organization, and quality. Furthermore, they are authorized to train apprentices and to professionally manage businesses.

Typical tasks include:

- Head of housekeeping departments
- Personnel management
- Quality and hygiene management
- Organization of operational processes
- Training of young professionals
- Consulting for institutions and companies



E An alternative path to a professional qualification: The external examination

Not every professional qualification is obtained through a traditional apprenticeship. People with several years of practical work experience can, under certain conditions, be admitted to the final examination even without formal training. This route is called **an external examination**.

Generally, several years of relevant professional experience are required. The final examination requires demonstrating the same theoretical and practical knowledge as trainees completing a regular vocational training program.

Upon passing the exam, participants receive the same state-recognized professional qualification.

Even for advanced qualifications, such as the **master craftsman's examination**, many years of professional experience and proven professional skills can, under certain conditions, grant access.

Advantages of external examination

- Recognition of many years of professional experience
- State-recognized vocational qualification
- Better opportunities on the job market
- Higher earning potential
- Basis for further training and professional development

Key point

Professional experience is valuable. Those with several years of practical experience can, under certain conditions, obtain a recognized professional qualification even without traditional vocational training.

F Further development opportunities

Even after further training, numerous opportunities for professional development remain. Depending on their interests, domestic staff can specialize in specific areas or take the step into self-employment.

Possible ways are:

- Quality management
- Hygiene management
- Nutrition and catering management
- Sustainability management
- Adult education and training
- Advice
- Independent domestic services

Key point

Domestic science offers diverse development opportunities. Through professional experience as well as further training and education, skilled workers can take on responsibility, perform management tasks, or specialize in various fields.



G Salary examples in domestic services (Germany)

Actual compensation depends on factors such as the federal state, the employer, professional experience, and whether a collective bargaining agreement applies. The following table shows **approximate average values** for a single person (tax class I, no children, no church tax). The net amounts are for guidance only.

Professional or career level	Gross salary per month	Net salary (approx.)
Domestic helper	€2,300–2,600	€1,650–1,850
Domestic worker (vocational qualification)	€2,700–3,200	€1,900–2,200
Skilled worker with professional experience	€3,000–3,500	€2,050–2,350
Team Leader / Department Head	€3,400–4,000	€2,250–€2,650
State-certified business manager	€3,800–4,500	€2,450–2,950
Master of Home Economics	€4,300–€5,200	€2,700–3,300
Head of housekeeping for larger institutions	€4,800–€6,000 or more	€3,000–3,700

Training allowance (example)

During dual vocational training, trainees typically receive a training allowance. Depending on the training company and collective agreement, this can amount to, for example:

training year	Gross salary per month	Net salary (approx.)
1st year of training	approx. €900–1,050	approx. €800–930
2nd year of training	approx. €1,000–1,150	approx. €880–1,000
3rd year of training	approx. €1,100–1,300	approx. €960–1,120

Notice

Salaries can vary significantly depending on the region, employer, collective bargaining agreement, professional experience, and area of responsibility. In public sector institutions or large welfare organizations bound by collective agreements, compensation is often higher than in small private companies.

Further training and increasing responsibility also increase earning potential.

What is taken for granted in Germany?

Legal regulation	Meaning
health insurance	It provides protection in case of illness; covers most costs in case of illness, as well as for medication and preventative care.
pension insurance	Retirement provision: monthly payments "pension" from the time of reaching retirement age
Unemployment insurance	Unemployment support: wage replacement payments
Long-term care insurance	Long-term care insurance: covers part of the costs
Income tax	Financing of government services, e.g. schools, roads, public transport, police, etc.



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H Cost of living in Germany

Monthly living expenses (example) – Single person without children

expenditure	Average per month
Basic rent (1-room apartment, approx. 40–50 m ²)	600 €
Additional costs (heating, water, etc.)	€180
Electricity	50 €
Internet and mobile phone	45 €
Groceries	€300
Clothing and shoes	60 €
Personal care and hygiene	40 €
Liability and household insurance	20 €
Broadcasting fee	18 €
Leisure and personal expenses	150 €
Public transport (Germany ticket)	approx. €60
or: Car (fuel, insurance, tax, maintenance)	approx. €300–500

Example calculation: Income - Cost of living	
Net income	€2,000
Cost of living (excluding car)	approx. €1,520
Available for reserves and larger purchases	approx. €480

Notice

The actual costs depend heavily on location and personal circumstances. Rents, in particular, vary considerably across Germany. Those who own a car should expect to pay several hundred euros more per month.



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4 Specializations and self-employment

After completing their training and gaining initial professional experience, domestic service professionals can specialize in various areas. Specializations allow them to acquire specific knowledge and open up new career prospects.

A Possible specializations

Food and catering

Specialists plan menus, organize catering for different groups of people, and ensure a balanced, healthy diet. They take into account special dietary requirements as well as hygiene and quality standards.

Hygiene and quality management

This area focuses on the development, implementation, and monitoring of hygiene and quality standards. The goal is to ensure a safe and smooth workflow.

Senior and everyday support

Domestic service professionals support elderly people in their daily lives and help them maintain their independence for as long as possible. This includes household services, care, and social support.

Sustainability

Sustainable practices are becoming increasingly important in household management. This includes the conscious use of energy and water, the avoidance of food waste, and the responsible handling of resources.

Education and training

Experienced professionals can pass on their knowledge to trainees, employees or participants in further training courses and conduct training sessions.

Self-employment

Domestic services also offer good opportunities for self-employment. With professional qualifications, work experience, and entrepreneurial skills, you can offer your own services.

Examples include:

- Domestic services for private households
- Senior services
- Family support services
- Holiday apartment and guest service
- Catering and event services
- Consulting and training
- Hygiene management

Key point

Specializations and further training expand career opportunities. Self-employment is also possible in domestic services.



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5 Professional fields in domestic science

Domestic service professionals work in many different settings. Their skills are needed wherever people are cared for, supported, or where services are organized.

Professional field	Typical workplaces	Typical tasks
Senior and nursing care facilities	Retirement and nursing homes	Catering, cleaning, laundry service, care
Hospitals and rehabilitation clinics	Clinics, rehabilitation centers	Food service, hygiene, bed preparation, laundry service
Facilities for people with disabilities	dormitories, workshops	Domestic care and daily support
Daycare centers and schools	Daycare centers, schools	Food service, kitchen organization, cleaning
Youth welfare institutions	Group homes, boarding schools	Household organization and provision
Hotels and guesthouses	Hotel industry	Housekeeping, room cleaning, guest services
Community catering	Canteens, cafeterias, company restaurants	Food preparation, food service, hygiene
Private households	Family households	Household management, cleaning, laundry care
Outpatient services	Mobile social services	Support in the home environment
Agriculture and holiday farms	Farms, holiday farms	Guest services, catering and organization
Domestic service companies	Service companies	Professional services for individuals and institutions

Key point

Domestic service professionals work in many areas of life and make an important contribution to people's care and quality of life.



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6 Typical household tasks

The tasks in housekeeping are varied and depend on the specific workplace. However, many activities are part of the daily routine in almost all institutions.

The most important tasks include:

- Planning and preparing meals
- Store food properly
- Cleaning and maintaining living and working areas
- Cleaning, caring for and preparing laundry
- Planning and organizing work processes
- Purchasing goods and storing them professionally
- Observe hygiene regulations
- Supporting people in everyday life
- Working sustainably and economically
- Maintaining documentation and controlling work processes

Domestic service professionals work carefully, responsibly and with a customer-oriented approach. They contribute significantly to people's well-being and the smooth operation of an institution.

Key point

Home economics combines practical work with organization, service, and responsibility.



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7 Important skills

In addition to professional knowledge, domestic workers need various personal and social skills.

The following are particularly important:

- Sense of responsibility
- Reliability
- Organizational talent
- Teamwork skills
- Communication skills
- Friendly and respectful interaction with people
- Hygiene awareness
- Care
- Working independently
- Flexibility
- Resilience
- Economic thinking
- Sustainable practices

These skills help to perform daily tasks safely, reliably and professionally.

Key point

Professional expertise and personal skills together form the basis for successful work in domestic science.

8 Summary

Domestic services is a diverse and future-oriented profession. Domestic service professionals are responsible for nutrition, hygiene, cleaning, laundry, organization, and care. They work in many different settings and make a significant contribution to people's health, safety, and quality of life.

Entry into the field is possible both through work as a domestic helper and through recognized vocational training. Further training and professional development open up numerous career paths – from specialist positions to management roles and even self-employment.

The combination of specialist knowledge, organizational talent, sense of responsibility and social competence makes domestic science a varied profession with diverse future prospects.



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9 Long-term perspectives and life planning

This training is not just the first step into a career. It can also be the first step on a longer professional path.

Those who work reliably, gain professional experience, receive good references, and learn additional languages expand their career opportunities step by step. This can lead to new opportunities over the years – initially in Greece and, subject to the applicable legal requirements, potentially also in other European countries.

The opportunities that actually arise always depend on the applicable legal regulations, language skills, professional experience and personal development.

Therefore, it's worthwhile not only to think about the next job, but also to consciously shape your own life path. Every qualification, every language, and every good reference can open new doors later on.

Vocational training is therefore more than just acquiring specialist knowledge. It strengthens personal responsibility, expands personal options, and creates the foundation for a self-determined life.

Every step of learning creates new opportunities. Education, professional experience, and personal development open up possibilities – today, tomorrow, and in the future.