

## Information

### Chamber of Skilled Crafts Frankfurt-Rhein-Main Cooperates with Spain

On November 5, 2012, the German Federal State of Hessen (DE) and the Autonomous Community of Madrid (ES) signed a mutual cooperation agreement. The two regions aim to increase their economic, academic and cultural exchange in order to better utilise their shared potential. One of the main focuses of their work is on the employment and training market. The cooperation targets giving young people in Spain career perspectives once again. Recruiting qualified Spanish employees is also a potential solution to the current lack of specialists in the Hessen region. The cooperation agreement additionally intends to support the Madrid region in establishing a dual system of vocational education and training.

The Chamber of Skilled Crafts Frankfurt-Rhein-Main has launched a pilot project as part of the cooperation agreement between the German Federal State of Hessen and the region of Madrid. The Chamber is giving approx. 45 Spanish young people the opportunity to experience the dual system of vocational education and training in Frankfurt. The high degree of practical orientation involved in the dual apprenticeship training course provides the young people with a multitude of career perspectives in both Spain and Germany. Approximately 80 interviews were held in Madrid to determine which candidates would participate in the project. Spanish interest in starting a dual course of vocational education and training in the Frankfurt region is very high. The programme has also attracted a very positive response among small and medium-sized businesses in the Frankfurt region.

48 young people from Spain spent two weeks in Hessen in April 2013, where they gained insight into the different focuses of the individual training courses in the workshops of the Chamber of Skilled Crafts Frankfurt-Rhein-Main' vocational Training and Technology Centres. This work placement also gave the participants the opportunity to get to know their future employers and the working procedures in place at these companies. They also had the chance to familiarise themselves with Frankfurt and the local conditions.

The young visitors from Spain were welcomed at the airport by the Chamber's President, Bernd Ehinger, and Hessen's Minister of Economic Affairs, Florian Rentsch. Over 25 companies in the Chamber's region have offered one or more young Spaniards apprenticeship positions as electronics technicians for energy and building technology, roofers or plant mechanics for sanitary, heating and air conditioning systems. 43 young Spaniards, including two young women, want to utilise of this chance and have already accepted their apprenticeship positions in Germany.

Until their return to Hessen in mid-August, the young Spaniards are completing intensive German courses in Madrid. On May 13, 2013, the Goethe Institute in Madrid also hosted an informative event for the parents, siblings and partners of the future trainees, at which the President of the Chamber of Skilled Crafts Frankfurt-Rhein-Main, Bernd Ehinger, and Hessen's Minister of Economic Affairs, Florian Rentsch, explained the project and invited participants to discuss it. Many parents are pinning their hopes on the dual system of vocational education and training in Germany, and expect it to provide their children with a more secure professional future.

The new trainees signed their training contracts on June 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013 in Madrid. All 43 trainees have been in Frankfurt since August 19<sup>th</sup>. They were welcomed by Bernd Ehinger, President of the Chamber of Skilled Crafts, and Florian Rentsch, Hessen's Minister of Economic Affairs. It was the first opportunity to be in close contact with training companies and vocational schools. In the subsequent period, the trainees were provided with support in dealing with administrative paperwork and formalities, such as selecting health insurance companies and opening bank accounts.

Additional introductory and informational events were held for the trainees at the vocational schools on August 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, where they were introduced to their new teachers and were given a chance to familiarize themselves with their respective curricula. Translators accompany the trainees' classes in the vocational schools to facilitate their entry into the schools.

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The vocational training then began on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. The courses for roofers and electronics technicians commenced at the Training and Technology Centres of the Chamber of Skilled Crafts, and the plant mechanics immediately started their practical training at the companies.

The trainees complete a rotation of industry-wide training courses and special trainings at the Training and Technology Centres of the Chamber of Skilled Crafts. Blocks of vocational school sessions and practical phases are completed at the company. The trainees also attend evening German language courses.

After 3 or 3 ½ years, they will be awarded a state-approved training qualification, known as the "Gesellenbrief". The young trainees will receive constant professional, social and educational support from staff at the Chamber of Skilled Crafts Frankfurt-Rhein-Main during the project.

The project is being financed by funds provided by the Hessian Ministry of Economics, Transport and Regional Development and the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The trainees' language courses and travel costs to Germany for their work placements and the start of their vocational training are additionally being funded by the Mobi-Pro-EU programme run by the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Funding from the Mobi-Pro-EU programme also provides financial support to ensure that the Spanish trainees' living expenses are covered and to finance the costs of additional language lessons and lessons related to vocational school courses.

Additional collaborations with the participating Spanish educational institutions have emerged in the course of the project. The educational institutions are being supported by the Chamber in establishing the dual system of vocational education in Spain. In June and September 2014, representatives from the educational institutions of the Madrid region visited the Chamber of Skilled Crafts Frankfurt-Rhein-Main to obtain first-hand information on the dual system of vocational education in Germany.



The European Commission hosts the Spain project of the Chamber of Skilled Crafts Frankfurt-Rhein-Main as a best practice on the European Web Site on Integration.

<https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/intpract/collaborative-training-for-young-spaniards-in-the-crafts-trade-in-hesse>

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If you have any questions regarding the project, please contact:

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