





We hope you enjoy your new assignment to the Tri-Border Area. This document is intended to provide you with the information most needed before and during your PCS. Your assignment to Geilenkirchen NATO Air Base will be a unique experience different from any military assignment you've ever experienced. This is a remote location where you live completely immersed among the local villages and culture. You have the opportunity to work alongside many other internationals. Please don't hesitate to ask your sponsor for any additional information you need or contact the Geilenkirchen Military & Family Readiness Center at Comm: 02451-9151-2372, DSN: 314-458-4015, or 470abs.dpf@us.af.mil



Join us on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/GKAFRC

We look forward to meeting you soon!

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Sponsorship

Has your sponsor contacted you yet?

Your sponsor can be your best connection to Geilenkirchen, both before and after your arrival, and during your transition into our unique community. We suggest sharing your personal email with your sponsor, so they can contact you after you leave your current base.

Please complete the Newcomer Needs Assessment at the end of this document and send it to your sponsor as soon as you can. This will allow the sponsor to tailor things to your needs.

If you have not heard from your sponsor or have not been assigned a sponsor, please contact the Military & Family Readiness Center (M&FRC) so we can assist you. We can be reached at 470abs.dpf@us.af.mil.

Are you a spouse who would like your own sponsor?

The Spouses Sponsoring Spouses program will connect you with a spouse at Geilenkirchen who can help answer the questions you have about moving here. Please email the Military & Family Readiness Center at 470abs.dpf@us.af.mil to request a spouse sponsor. We need your name, phone, email, # children/ages (if applicable), and your expected date of arrival at GK.

Temporary Lodging

Making Reservations

There is no on-base housing or on-base lodging at Geilenkirchen. Your sponsor will help you make reservations with a local guest house or hotel accommodation.

Length of Stay

You are authorized TLA for a period of 30 days; extensions must be requested in writing with <u>sufficient</u> justification to the 470th Air Base Squadron Commander.

Please check with the US Housing Referral Office within two workdays after arrival for a TLA briefing according to USAFE Instruction 65-104, para 4.d.

Paying

Double check to see if your accommodation accepts credit cards, as not all of them do. Also be sure to ask if they accept the VAT form, which will save you 19% tax. Your sponsor can assist you with contacting the US VAT office on Geilenkirchen, Building 87, DSN: 314-458-4114 Comm: 02451-63-7219. Monday, Wednesday, Friday 0830-1530. Please call for an appointment.

Getting to Geilenkirchen NATO AB

Local Airports

The most common point of entry for Geilenkirchen incoming personnel is the Düsseldorf International Airport, one hour from the base. The alternate airport is in Brussels, Belgium, about 1.5 hours and 139 kilometers away from Geilenkirchen. You can discuss other options with your travel office.

Transportation to Geilenkirchen

Düsseldorf, Brussels, and some guest houses have taxi/shuttle services to the Geilenkirchen area. Please send a copy of your travel itinerary to your sponsor so they can arrange transportation for you. Some guest houses will arrange taxi travel and include it in your bill—please have your sponsor discuss this ahead of time with the guest house owner.

Not all taxi services accept credit cards. If you will be paying for the taxi to be reimbursed on your travel voucher, make sure that they either accept cards or that you have ample cash on hand for the trip. Be sure to get a receipt, especially if you must use cash.

In addition, you could catch a train from the Dusseldorf Airport to the Geilenkirchen train station. You will not be reimbursed for a rental car.

Exchange contact information with your sponsor

You and your sponsor should exchange emergency contact information, so you can stay in touch during your travel. Remember that although you may not have phone service, your smartphone can use wi-fi where it is available. Many people in this area use a variety of apps including WhatsApp for instant messaging via their phones using data or wi-fi.

**** You CANNOT skip portions of your itinerary. DFAS requires justification and will only reimburse the used portion of the trip (or will limit the taxi reimbursement to the cost of the last leg, which is rarely equal).

Shipping Your Vehicle

Shipping Your POV

Your primary vehicle (one vehicle per PCS orders) will be shipped to USAG Benelux-Brunssum, NL. If you have two vehicles, you can ship the second vehicle at your own expense. If you ship a vehicle privately, the most common port for Geilenkirchen is Bremerhaven, Germany. https://www.pcsmypov.com/

What vehicles should you bring?

European roads and parking spaces tend to be much narrower than those in the states. Fuel can also be more expensive. Most Europeans in this area drive smaller cars. Larger cars (SUVs, trucks) are less common in this area. Although larger vehicles like SUVs and trucks are less common, you can still bring a larger car; just realize that parking and driving may be a little more difficult. If you have questions, you can ask your sponsor or contact us here at the M&FRC.

Please note that vehicles with after-market tint on the driver's and passenger's front windows will not be allowed to pass inspection. Other windows may be tinted. For more information, see the "Army in Europe Regulation 190-1, Chapter 22, C-27, WINDOW TINTING.

Picking Up Your POV

You must pass the USAREUR drivers test and receive a U.S Forces Certificate of License before you can pick up your vehicle at USAG Benelux-Brunssum.

Once your vehicle is registered at Geilenkirchen, you can go to any participating AAFES locations within Germany to receive your monthly gas rations/pre-paid gas card for use at German Esso gas stations. Tell the clerk if you have a diesel vehicle, as the Esso cards for diesel and gas are different.

Registration

When your vehicle arrives, you will need your title, shipping document (DD Form 788 if shipped via VPC, Bill of Ladening if privately shipped) and proof of German insurance. Hand carry these documents to the POV Office in Building 297, and they will assist you with registration. You will receive a set of temporary plates (valid for up to ONLY 30 days) to conduct a safety inspection on your vehicle. (This can be done at the NATEX Garage or any local German inspection station, i.e. TUV/DEKRA). After passing the inspection you will go back to the Registration Office to receive your permanent German license plates.

Driving in Germany

This rule applies to rental cars, guest house cars, and USAREUR registered vehicles.

To obtain a U.S. Forces Certificate of License, the newcomer must pass the JKO Driver Training Program Tests, have a valid stateside DL or POV license by another US Forces command in Europe, and pay a \$30 per DL fee (payable with Credit/Debit card, check, or money order).

Motorcycle endorsement requirements: in addition to the above USAREUR DL requirements the member must have the motorcycle endorsement on their stateside license, a MSF BRC card valid for 1 year, or a MSF ERC/MSRC card valid for 5 years.

Eligibility:

- US Forces personnel assigned in Germany.
- Spouses of US Forces personnel assigned in Germany.
- Dependent children ages 17-23 (restrictions may apply).
- DoD employees, contractors, and their dependents on SOFA status.
- NATO Military and Civilian personnel and their dependents from entitled countries.

Completion of the JKO US Certificate of License Test (CAC Holders):

Go to the following link: https://jkodirect.jten.mil/Atlas2/page/login/Login.jsf and login or create an account with or without CAC.

Click on the Course Catalog and Search for "U.S. Forces Driver's Training Program.

2 options will appear (USA-007, USA-007B), complete U.S. Forces Driver's Training Program for Europe first followed by U.S. Forces Driver's Training Program for Europe – Final Course Exam. To receive credit and obtain a DL you must complete **BOTH** CBTs and tests prior to applying for a DL at the POV office on GK.

The tests must be completed a minimum of 2 days and a maximum of 60 days prior to your arrival at GK for the test scores to show up in our systems and to be valid.

JKO non-government personnel/sponsored account registration for U.S. Certificate of License testing (non-CAC Holders):

- Go to the following link: https://jkodirect.jten.mil/Atlas2/page/login/Login.jsf
- Click on Non-Government Personnel/Sponsored Account Registration.
- Complete the application with the non-governmental/sponsored personnel and Sponsor Information.
- Once completed click on the "Submit" button. An email will be sent to the sponsor for them to verify and validate that you are their sponsor.
- After sponsor verification JKO will create the new account and will email the account login information to the applicant.

International Driver's License

Before coming to Germany, it is a great idea to obtain an international driver's license. When stationed in Germany, the USAREUR license is required to drive your car in Germany. The International Driver's License is required when driving outside of Germany and obtaining rental cars in various countries within Europe. You can achieve this by going to your local AAA office or mail in your information (to AAA) if you have enough time. https://www.aaa.com/vacation/idp.html.

To obtain the International Driver's License in Germany (Valid for 3 years) you will need these items:

- NATO ID card
- Passport
- Valid USAREUR license (Permanent Hard copy license)
- o Passport photo (you can get pictures done there, 6€ for 6 pictures, bring coins)
- 13.80€

Go to:

District administration Heinsberg Valkenburger Straße 45 D-52525 Heinsberg

See their website for hours of operation

https://www.kreis-heinsberg.de/buergerservice/schlagwortindex/?ID=102

Contact Information

For any questions or concerns, please contact the 470 ABS Vehicle Registration Office at DSN 314-458-4476 or Commercial at +49 (0)2451-9151-4476.

Bringing Pets to Germany

Shipping/Flying Your Pets

Bringing pets to Europe can be complicated. The military does not pay to ship pets, and airlines limit the number of animals on airplanes. Furthermore, most airlines will not take pets in cargo during hot months.

Preparation

You must also have a health certificate, no more than 10 days old, for each animal to travel outside the country. Rabies vaccinations must be older than 30 days, but no more than 1

year and must be given after your pet is micro-chipped with a European-spec chip. Your local veterinarian should be able to provide additional information.

Pets are generally allowed to be shipped to Ramstein Air Base on Military Air Flights, Frankfurt Airport, Dusseldorf, Brussels, or Amsterdam. Dogs shipped into Ramstein, or Frankfurt may be subject to a veterinary inspection fee. You must call the airline to book your pet on your flight.

More Information

- Army Vets:
 - http://ervc.amedd.army.mil/AnimalMedicine/PCSEU.html
- Ramstein Fact Sheet for Pets:
 - https://www.ramstein.af.mil/About/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/303601/pets/
- SPCA Operation Military Pets grant program to ship pets: http://www.spcai.org/get-involved/military-support/operation-military-pets/
- Pet PCS Assistance through AFAS
 - Assistance for dog/cat pets only
 - Must apply prior to PCS move
 - Member eligible to apply 60 days prior to PCS
 - o Up to \$1000
 - Apply to www.afas.org click on" Standard assist".

There is no quarantine for pets that meet regulation requirements. However, there are new requirements for all dogs living in and coming to Germany. Contact your sponsor or the Geilenkirchen Legal Office (DSN 314-458-4060) for more information. Please refer to the link below for guidance on dangerous dog breeds.

Restrictions on dogs considered to be "dangerous breeds"

Certain breeds--including Pit Bull Terriers, American Staffordshire Terriers, Staffordshire Bull Terriers, and other dogs descended from one of these breeds—are restricted in Germany.

Please see the following links for more information:

Ramstein Guidelines for Dangerous Dogs https://www.ramstein.af.mil/About/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/303686/dangerous-dog-guidelines/

 German Customs page on dangerous dog regulations: http://www.zoll.de/EN/Private-individuals/Travel/Entering-Germany/Restrictions/Dangerous-dogs/dangerous-dogs.html

Schools

Schools

Most school-aged children attend AFNorth International School in Brunssum, NL, about fifteen minutes from the base. More information about the school can be found at http://www.afnorth-is.com/, Click on the "National Sections" link on the left side of the page. Choose the American Offices, then the Elementary or Middle/High School links, where you will find more comprehensive information. Registration can be started online, once the SM has orders, https://dodeasis.myfollett.com/. It is recommended to start the registration process as soon as possible to encourage continuity of academic services.

School Liaison

The School Liaison Officer (SLO) at your current base should be able to help you manage this transition. A comprehensive list of School Liaisons can be found at http://www.dodea.edu/Partnership/schoolLiaisonOfficers.cfm.

The Geilenkirchen SLO can be reached at Comm: 02451-9151-2372 or DSN: 314-458-4015 or via email at 470abs.slo@us.af.mil.

Childcare

Childcare

Both Geilenkirchen NATO AB and JFC Brunssum have a Child Development Center and School Age Program. JFC Brunssum also offers a Youth Center for grades 6-12. There is no Family Child Care Program at Geilenkirchen, as there is no base housing. Request child care at www.militarychildcare.com

You can contact either CDC to discuss pre-registration prior to your PCS.

- **Geilenkirchen CDC/SAP**: Comm 011-49-2451-9151-4017 or DSN 314-458-4017.
- JFC Brunssum Child, Youth, and School Services (CYSS): Comm 011-31-45-526-3121 or DSN 314-364-3121.

Childcare for PCS Vouchers

Air Force members are eligible for the Air Force Aid Society's "Childcare for PCS" program at both their current base and their gaining base. Contact your Military & Family Readiness Center to get your voucher, which will pay for up to 20 hours of free childcare per child. Childcare is available on a space available basis.

Getting to Know the Area



Where is GK?

NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen is situated four kilometers west of the city of Geilenkirchen, population 28,000 approximately. This is in the most western part of the Federal Republic of Germany, adjacent to the Netherlands border. NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen is home to NATO's E-3A Component and is often referred to as "the Component". Brunssum, NL and USAG Benelux is 8 km west of the base and is the location of Joint Force Command (JFC) Headquarters Brunssum and Army Garrison.

AMSTERDAM BRUSSELS 200 km TO km COLOGNE FRANKFURT PARIS STUTTGART MUNICH

Nearby Locations

Geilenkirchen is only 25 km north of Aachen and 70 km west of Köln. The E-3A Component is located only a 10-minute drive from the Dutch border, a 30-minute drive from Belgium and another two hours from the French border. Some of the major cities within a couple of hours drive include Brussels, Luxembourg, Paris, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Bonn. Also the world-famous wine-growing Rhein and Mosel areas are only a two-hour drive from Geilenkirchen. Our central location allows easy and quick access to many favorable destinations in Europe.

Housing

Where to live

USAF active duty personnel assigned to Geilenkirchen NATO AB may choose to live in either Germany or the Netherlands. Personnel assigned to JFC Brunssum must live in the Netherlands. Since there is no on-base housing, personnel and families live in nearby cities or villages, providing a great opportunity for immersion in the German lifestyle.

*Protip: Go to your local military library before PCSing and sign up for the FREE Mango language app! Then you can confidently say "Guten Tag!" to your neighbors.

Housing Referral Office

When you arrive at Geilenkirchen NATO Air Base, you must visit the Housing Referral Office in Bldg 87 within 2 days of arrival. This visit is necessary to obtain housing, verify your eligibility for Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA), and receive counseling and guidance before entering any written lease or rental/sales contract for housing. Do not secure housing prior to your arrival at Geilenkirchen NATO AB.

The Geilenkirchen housing office can be reached at Comm: 011-49-2451-9151-4663 or DSN 314-458-4033.

If you choose to live in the Netherlands, you will also need to coordinate with the USAG Benelux-Brunssum housing office after your arrival.

Finding Housing

- Geilenkirchen: The 470 ABS Housing Referral Office lists houses as they come available on <u>www.homes.mil</u>. Search Air Force Geilenkirchen AB. They also have a Sharepoint site with great information, including an updated listing of local houses available (CAC-only): https://ice.usafe.af.mil/sites/52MSG/470ABS/470MSF/HRO/SitePages/Home.aspx.
- Some houses can be found listed on Facebook groups, posted on flyers, or on other
 websites. If you rent a house you must go through the housing office, you need to make
 sure the house will be approved and inspected by the GK Housing office

Furniture/Appliances

Housing in the Tri-Border area tends to have fewer (if any) closets and can also feature narrower staircases. Think about the size of your furniture—a king-sized sleigh bed may not fit up the stairs to the bedroom, for instance. The USAG Benelux-Brunssum Furnishings office will provide you with wardrobes ("Schrank"), refrigerator, and washer/dryer for the duration of your stay, in addition to loaner furniture while you're waiting for your household goods.

If you need loaner furniture, contact USAG Brunssum Furnishings directly at DSN 314-597-4154 or Comm: 00 31 45 534 0154

Electricity is 220v in Europe. Most 110v lamps will work here, you just have to use an adaptor plug and German light bulbs. Some travel appliances and most computer electronics will work with just an adaptor. Other items may be "dual voltage," check the label on the item to find out—which can be used here in Europe.

For other items, such as vacuum cleaners, microwaves, or sewing machines, you will either need to buy new or used 220v items once you get here, or you can run them using a transformer. This can cause extra wear and tear on some items and costs more for electricity, so it's an individual choice.

Medical and Special Needs Information

On-Base Services

The U.S. medical services at Geilenkirchen are limited in their facilities and manpower. The US medical facility has two family practice physicians and a flight surgeon, four general practice dentists, two social workers and a psychologist. Services include family health, mental health, dental, lab, Pharmacy, and x-ray. Patients are seen by appointment only; there is no urgent or Emergency care at the US clinic. Walk-in services are limited; however, access to care is great and most patients can be seen same or next day.

Off-Base Services

The clinic refers patients off-base to Dutch and German medical facilities for emergency care as well as specialized medical and dental care. While the off-base care is very good, it differs from the care received in the United States. There is a 24/7 tri-lingual Patient Liaison available to accompany patients during medical appointments and assist in easing the cultural differences during an emergency. They can be reached by contacting the TRICARE number listed below. This is the primary support for active-duty family members, and civilian employees.

Mental Health Services

The clinic provides basic mental health counseling services for adults but is not able to provide services to children 17 years of age and younger. Adult psychiatric evaluations, for medications, are available at Spangdahlem (approximately two hours away); however, that facility is also prohibited from providing psychological care to minors.

Military Family Life Consultants (MFLC)

There are two adult and one child MFLC available for active-duty and their dependents. The MFLC's provide short-term, non-medical counseling services to service members and their families.

Dentistry

Dental services are provided at the US Dental Clinic. Service members and dependents are entitled to one dental cleaning per year at the clinic. There is no sedation dentistry available at Geilenkirchen Air Base for children, so if your child has dental anxiety or other special needs they will be seen on the economy or referred to another military treatment facility.

Optometry

An optometrist from Spangdahlem Air Base visits the clinic on a quarterly basis to see active-duty members. Dependents will utilize off-base optometry services. Tricare reimburses dependents for their annual eye exam appointment. For more questions about Tricare, Geilenkirchen Air Base patients can call +011-49-2451-99-3373.

Special Needs

Please make the time to thoroughly complete your AF Form 1466, Request for Family Member's Medical and Education Clearance for Travel and ensure you document all family medical or educational needs. Turn this form in as soon as possible! This will allow our clinic staff to determine if your medical needs can be met at this location. If the active-duty member or any family member has specialized medical needs, please work closely with your PCM and ask them to verify that the Geilenkirchen clinic has the capability to appropriately support those medical needs. It is important to know that the Air Force Personnel Center makes the final determination on any EFMP assignment.

Banking

Choosing a Bank

You will need a bank that can pay European bills. This generally means that you either choose a local German or Dutch bank (depending on where you live) or Andrews Federal Credit Union or Community Bank, both located on USAG Benelux-Brunssum. Some people also choose online banks like Service Credit Union; we recommend you do your own research if this is the route you decide to take.

Debit and Credit Cards

Some vendors in this area do not accept US credit cards. Their equipment is set up for "chip and pin" cards, which your US bank may be able to provide you with. Any European bank you use will issue you a chip and pin card.

Cash

Most of the European Union countries use the Euro for currency. You will carry and use cash more frequently and you should bring some Euros with you from the States or change it at the airport. Most airports have ATMs that will use your US debit card and give you Euros. There is an ATM on GK NATO AB for your convenience.

Spouse Employment

Employment Opportunities

Paid opportunities in the Tri-Border area are limited. As a spouse, you may not be able to find a job in your career field. In addition to seeking employment, many spouses choose to work on their education or volunteer on career-related projects for their resume.

Job Listings

There is a job listing board in the M&FRC. We also post vacancies on our Facebook page. Most jobs in our area can be found on:

- www.usajobs.com
- https://natex.de/employment/
- https://awacs.nato.int/contract/civillian-personnel-branch/job-vacancies
- https://jfcbs.nato.int/jfrcbrunssum/vacancies
- https://www.jfcbrunssum.com/jobs/
- https://www.dodcommunitybank.com/home/careers/application-process
- https://www.andrewsfcu.org/Learn/Inside-Andrews/About-Us/Careers

Resources

The Military & Family Readiness Center and Army Community Service office offer classes monthly, as well as one-on-one resume assistance. Contact us when you get here!

Online Resources

Official Websites

- 470 ABS:
 - http://www.spangdahlem.af.mil/units/470thairbasesquadronindex.asp
- Military Installations Website:
 - https://installations.militaryonesource.mil/ (search for Geilenkirchen or United States Army Garrison Benelux-Brunssum)
- Geilenkirchen NATO Air Base:
 - http://www.nato-e3a.de
- US Army Garrison Benelux:
 - http://www.usagbenelux.eur.army.mil/
- Plan my Move:
 - https://planmymove.militaryonesource.mil/
- How to Save Money (COLA & UTEP Information, Energy & Money Saving and NEW Energy & EWV Setup Guide):
 - https://www.spangdahlem.af.mil/Units/470th-Air-Base-Squadron.aspx

Other Helpful Sites

- M&FRC Facebook:
 - https://www.facebook.com/gkafrc
- USAG Benelux Facebook (Tri-Border Community): https://www.facebook.com/TriBorderCommunity
- Commander, NATO Airborne Early Warning & Control Force:
 https://www.facebook.com/ Commander, NATO Airborne Early Warning & Control Force
- 470 ABS Public Affairs https://www.facebook.com/470 ABS Public Affairs
- Geilenkirchen U.S. Clinic 852d Medical Squadron https://www.facebook.com/Geilenkirchen U.S. Clinic – 852 Medical Squadron
- JFC Brunssum Happenings <u>https://www.facebook.com/JFC Brunssum Happenings</u>
- U.S. Army Garrison Benelux <u>https://www.facebook.com/U.S. Army Garrison Benelux</u>

AF Connect App

- Go to App Store and search for USAF Connect
- Install App to phone
- Once installed go to Favorites and add 52nd Fighter Wing
- Go to 470 ABS

Appointment System QR Codes for Geilenkirchen Services:

• Vehicle Registration



MPS/CSS



VAT



• Housing Office



MFRC ICE Comment



Newcomer Responsibilities

As an incoming Geilenkirchen NATO AB or 470 ABS member, you are responsible for assisting us to ensure you have a smooth transition to your new duty station. Keeping your sponsor informed about your exact itinerary and relocation needs will make it easier for them to help you.

Your sponsor will send you a "Newcomer Needs Assessment". Please fill it out and return to your sponsor. They are responsible for assisting you during your relocation. Please help them out by providing the information as soon as possible (via FAX, telephone, mail, e-mail—whichever best meets your needs).

Keep your sponsor informed with your departure plans. Any subsequent changes must be coordinated with your gaining unit/sponsor immediately. If you have delays or problems inroute, contact your gaining base and/or your sponsor.

The sponsorship program is designed to efficiently provide your gaining unit with mission ready personnel. Your active and timely involvement is critical. Please document your sponsor's effort, both good and bad, as you will be asked to provide feedback upon your arrival.

Welcome to Geilenkirchen NATO Air Base!

Other Considerations

- Do you have **pets**? How many? Type/Breed? How big? Do you need kennel arrangements? Be sure to read the letter about German Dog Laws on Sponsor CD.
- Temporary lodging reservations will be made by sponsor.
- Transportation arrangements will be made by sponsor.
- You will be living off base. Your sponsor should take you to base housing office within two duty days of arrival. You cannot make any arrangements in advance. Your sponsor can pick up a housing list a day before you arrive to show you what is currently available.
- Have you contacted the **Military & Family Readiness Center** (M&FRC) to get information about Geilenkirchen?
- Have you attended or plan to attend a **"Smooth Move"** Seminar to help ensure a pleasant transition from your current location?
- Have you checked out the Child Care for PCS Program at the M&FRC (20 hours of free child care
 per child for all ranks who are within 60 days of PCSing)? It is available for both your current
 location and at Geilenkirchen.
- Will you be requesting Child Development Center (CDC) services (ages 6 weeks 5 years)? If so, please provide your sponsor with a copy of your orders, and a create an account on www.militarychildcare.com in advance of your arrival so that the CDC may place you on the waiting list. Please provide any additional information concerning your child(ren) such as special needs, etc.
- Any special needs or concerns? If so, what are they? (e.g.), Special Needs Identification and
 Assignment Coordination Process (formerly EFMP), first-termer, overseas, humanitarian,
 colleges, family member employment, sports sign-up dates, foreign-born family member, etc.)
 NOTE: Special needs issues must be coordinated through the Medical Clinic prior to departure.

NOTES FOR SPONSOR:		