RemoteHeR · Module 4 case study · Germany

MODULE 4 CASE STUDY · GERMANY

Someone like the last person

Brücke Dienste GmbH, Leipzig (fictional). One situation, four national versions. This is the Germany version.



DRAFT – partner review

Drafted by the build team from the Module 4 curriculum and Egeria's own lesson materials because this item was not in the partner delivery. Egeria (ES), as build lead, must review it before learners see it.

The situation

You are the only HR person at Brücke Dienste GmbH, a company of about sixty people in Leipzig. Its customer projects team works remotely across the country. Elena, the team's coordinator for nine years, is leaving next month.

The team manager has sent you a draft advert and asked you to "get it out today". The draft asks for "a young, dynamic digital native with a degree in business, at least eight years' experience and native-level German", "based near the office" and "always available". It says "fully remote", but the team meets in the office one day every month. It gives no salary.

The company has just bought an applicant tracking system. The supplier has switched on an AI ranking feature that automatically rejects anyone below a match score of 70. Nobody knows how the score is calculated.

Three weeks later, one candidate who reached interview writes to you. She says the manager asked her whether she had children and how she would cope with "the school run". She was rejected the next day. She asks for feedback, and for a copy of everything the company holds about her.

What this case study is for

Everything in Module 4 meets one situation here: defining the role, the advert, an automated screening tool, an interview question that should never have been asked, and a candidate who wants answers. The same situation plays out differently in each country, and that difference is the point.

What is different in Germany

Before you use any of this

Co-funded by the European Union

Erasmus+ 2025-1-PT01-KA220-VET-000365831 · CC BY-SA 4.0

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

National detail below is a starting point for your own checking, not legal advice. Laws change, and the Pay Transparency Directive is being brought into national law at different speeds. Verify the current position for your country before acting on any of it. Module 6 covers how to do that properly.

Equal treatment in recruitment

What to check	Who to ask, and why it matters here
What does the Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz (AGG) require of job adverts and selection?	Check how the AGG treats job adverts and selection criteria. Gender-neutral job titles such as (m/w/d) are common practice, and the draft's age-coded wording is a risk.
What deadline applies if a rejected candidate wants to bring a claim, and how is the burden of proof shared?	Check the AGG's time limits. Your documented reasons from screening and interview are your evidence.
Who can advise?	The Antidiskriminierungsstelle des Bundes, your company's legal adviser, and the works council if there is one.

Pay transparency

What to check	Who to ask, and why it matters here
How is the Entgelttransparenzgesetz being changed to bring in Directive (EU) 2023/970, and from when do the new recruitment rules apply?	The EU deadline was 7 June 2026. Check the current federal text before you publish the range or update application forms.

Works council and the AI ranking

What to check	Who to ask, and why it matters here
Does the company have a Betriebsrat, and what are its co-determination rights over selection guidelines (Auswahlrichtlinien) and technical systems?	A ranking that rejects candidates may need the works council's agreement before it is used. Ask before go-live, not after.
What does the data protection authority of your Land say about automated decisions and candidate data (GDPR and BDSG)?	The candidate's request for her data must be answered within the GDPR deadline.

One fact to keep in mind

- Germany's unadjusted gender pay gap was 16 per cent in 2024 (Destatis, published February 2026).

Co-funded by the European Union

Erasmus+ 2025-1-PT01-KA220-VET-000365831 · CC BY-SA 4.0

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Practical differences

- "Muttersprache" (mother tongue) in adverts can exclude capable candidates. State the language level the tasks need.
- Many candidates expect a written rejection. Agree what it will say, and keep it to the criteria.

What you are asked to do

1. Stop the advert and rewrite it with the manager, starting from what the role must deliver.
2. Decide what happens to the AI ranking before it rejects anyone.
3. Plan the interviews so that every question links to a criterion.
4. Respond to the candidate: her complaint, her feedback and her data request.
5. Write down what changes in the process, and who checks it.

Questions to answer

- The manager wants the advert out today. What do you say to her, in words, and what is the first thing you change?
- Rewrite the essential criteria. Which of the manager's requirements survive, which become desirable and which go?
- What would you check about the AI ranking before any candidate is rejected by it, and who inside and outside the company would you ask?
- How do you answer the candidate who was asked about her children? What do you do about the manager's question, and what do you send her?
- What has to change in the process so this does not happen again, and how will you show that it has?

Read one other country's version

When you have finished, read the version for one country other than your own and answer: what would you have to do differently there, and which of those differences is legal rather than practical? Write your answer in a few lines. You may share it in the module forum if you want to, but it is not required.

Before you finish

☐ You said what you would tell the manager, in words, and the advert does not go out unchanged

☐ Every essential criterion links to the work, and the remote arrangement and salary are stated honestly

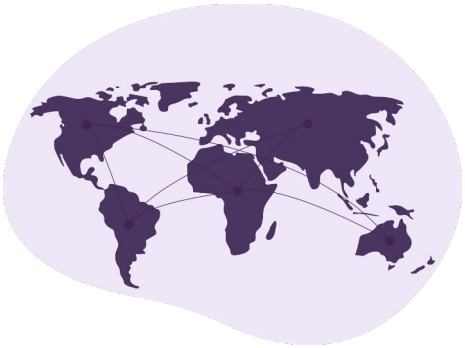
☐ The AI ranking is tested and accountable before it rejects anyone, and you named who you would ask

Co-funded by the European Union

Erasmus+ 2025-1-PT01-KA220-VET-000365831 · CC BY-SA 4.0

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

- ☐ The candidate's complaint and her request for her data are handled separately, each on time
- ☐ You read one other country's version and named one legal and one practical difference



Co-funded by the European Union

Erasmus+ 2025-1-PT01-KA220-VET-000365831 · CC BY-SA 4.0

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.