

Entry regulations for Germany

2024.03.01 • Article • Migration and residence



Source: © iStock|PeopleImages



Link to the information hotline "working and living in Germany"

Source: © Make it in Germany

If you wish to travel to Germany from a third country, you will normally require a visa to enter the country. You can apply for one from a German diplomatic mission (Embassy or Consulate General).

Short-term stays for up to 90 days (Schengen visa)

Important to know!

If you have entered Germany on a visa for short-term stays, you will not be permitted to work here. What is more, you will not generally be able to have this kind of visa extended.

You require a type C visa (Schengen visa) as a matter of principle for short-term stays of up to 90 days in a 180-day period (e.g. for business trips or tourist purposes). A visa issued for this purpose is valid throughout the Schengen area.

Nationals of specific countries do not require a visa for short-term stays. You can find an overview of the countries which are exempted from the visa requirement on the Federal Foreign Office's website (see Further information/Links).

Entry without a visa is also possible for short stays if you already hold a residence title issued by another EU Member State.

Longer-term stays

Link list

[Federal Foreign Office: Overview of visa requirements for entry into the Federal Republic of Germany](#)

[Make it in Germany: Visa - Quick-Check](#)

[Make it in Germany: Kinds of visa](#)

If you are planning a stay of more than 90 days' duration, or if you are planning to take up work, you must apply to a German diplomatic mission for a national visa type D.

Nationals of certain countries can also apply for a residence title in Germany after entering the country without a visa (see Federal Foreign Office link).

A national visa enables you to move around freely in the Schengen territories for up to 90 days within any period of 180 days.

The visa procedure

Link list

Federal Foreign Office: List of diplomatic missions of Germany.

You can obtain information on the visa process from any German diplomatic mission. You can find an overview of the German diplomatic missions on the Federal Foreign Office's website.

You will generally be required to submit the visa application for longer-term stays in person. You will have to provide information on the purpose of entering and residing in Germany and the location and duration of your intended stay. You can find information on possible purposes of residence on this site under "Work", "Education" and "Family".

You must also fulfil the following general requirements:

- Your subsistence must be covered (including health insurance),
- Your identity must be clarified, as must your nationality, where applicable.
- You must have a valid passport (or passport replacement) with you.
- There may be no interest in your expulsion, and
- Your stay must not compromise or jeopardise the interests of the Federal Republic of Germany.

It may take several months to process an application for a visa for a longer-term stay. Waiting times may also arise for an appointment at the German diplomatic mission. You are therefore advised to obtain the relevant information from the competent diplomatic mission in good time.

After entry

A visa for a longer-term stay is issued for 90 days as a rule, but can also be issued for up to one year for certain purposes of residence such as study or gainful employment. Once you have entered the country, you will need to apply for a residence permit from the relevant immigration authority within the validity period of the visa. You may however already take up gainful employment or study with the visa. You do not need to apply for another residence permit if the visa already covers the entire period of your stay in Germany.

If you are allowed to enter Germany without a visa and wish to stay in the country for longer than 90 days, you will need to apply for a residence title from the responsible immigration authority within 90 days of entering the country. In this case, the intended purpose of your stay (e.g. work or study) may only be pursued after the residence title has been issued.

The legal basis

- Section 3 of the Residence Act
- Section 4a of the Residence Act
- Section 4 of the Residence Act
- Section 5 of the Residence Act
- Section 6 of the Residence Act
- Section 39 of the Residence Ordinance (*AufenthV*)
- Section 41 of the Residence Ordinance (*AufenthV*)
- EU Regulation 2018/1806

Further information

Texts and articles

[First steps](#)

[Mobility in the EU](#)

[Accelerated procedure for skilled workers](#)

Links

[Federal Foreign Office: Overview of visa requirements for entry into the Federal Republic of Germany](#)

Federal Foreign Office: List of diplomatic missions of Germany.

Make it in Germany: Entry visa process

Geo-Information System (Web-GIS)