



6.1. Visa and Entry

Nationals of EU States, the European Economic Area and Switzerland

If you are an EU national or come from Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland you will not normally need a visa. You may enter Germany on your national identity card. If you intend to stay in Germany for more than three months you must register at the "Einwohnermeldeamt" (Residents' Registration Office). You can also already submit proof that you fulfil the Freedom of Movement criteria (see Chapter 6.3). Swiss nationals still require a residence permit for visits of more than 3 months.

Nationals of Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea and the USA

If you are a national of one of these states you do not need a visa to enter Germany. However, for visits lasting more than three months you will require a residence permit which you can apply for once you have entered Germany (see Chapter 6.3).

Online application form

If you only need a visa for a short visit of up to 90 days (Schengen Visa) you can complete the application form online by accessing the address given below. When you have filled in the form completely you must print it out and present it to the German diplomatic mission in person together with all the other application documents required.

<http://visa.diplo.de>



You can find a list of the countries requiring a visa (short stay) as well as the addresses of German missions abroad and information on entry regulations on the website of the Federal Foreign Office:

 www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN

Nationals of all other non-EU States

Short visits lasting up to three months

If your research stay in Germany is not scheduled to last longer than 90 days in a six-month period, a Schengen Visa will usually be all you need to enter the country (C-Visa). However, you should bear in mind that Schengen Visas cannot be extended beyond the period of three months, nor can they be redesignated for other purposes. You will have to leave Germany at the end of three months at the latest.

In order to obtain a Schengen Visa you will have to prove that you will be able to support yourself financially during your stay in Germany. For all Schengen States you will also be obliged to provide evidence of travel health insurance cover amounting to at least 30,000 euro. When completing the application for the Schengen Visa please make sure to state “scientific work” or “research” as the purpose of your stay. The Schengen Visa entitles you to move freely between and stay in any of the so-called Schengen States, i.e. the states that have signed the Schengen Agreement

Visa exemptions for short visits

Nationals of some countries are allowed to enter Germany for visits of up to three months without a visa. You can find a list of these states on the website of the Federal Foreign Office. Please note, however, that you will not be able to apply for a residence title for a longer stay once you have entered Germany and that you will have to leave the country after three months at the latest. If you are planning a longer stay you must apply for a German visa that will allow you to stay in the country for an extended period while you are still in your own country or current country of residence.

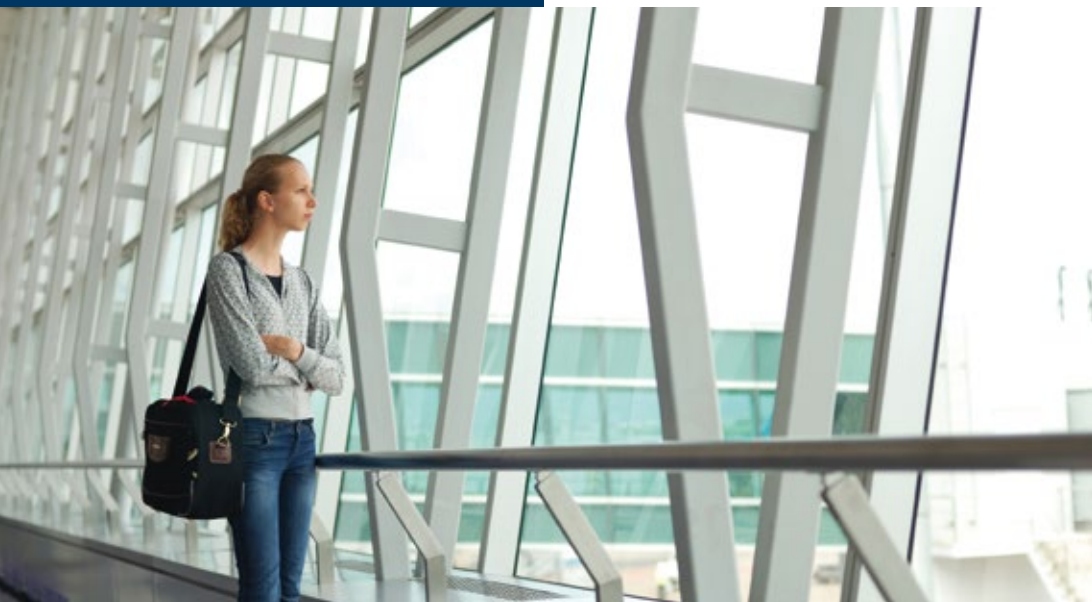
Visits lasting more than three months

If you are planning to stay in Germany for more than three months you must apply for a National Visa for Germany (D-Visa) from the German Embassy or Consulate while you are still in your own country or current country of residence. Please note that this applies even when you are already staying in another European Union country. If your marital partner or children are intending to join you during your research stay it is recommendable to apply for their visas together with your own, even if your family is only intending to enter the country a few weeks after you. Do not under any circumstances enter Germany on a “Visitor’s or Tourist Visa” (Schengen Visa). This type of visa cannot be extended and only entitles you to stay in Germany for a maximum of three months. You would then have to return to your own country at your own expense and apply for the right visa there. The same applies to members of your family. The National Visa entitles you to stay in Germany and travel throughout the Schengen States for up to 90 days within a six-month period.

To apply for a D-Visa you will usually require the following documents:

- Passport (please ensure that your passport is valid for at least three months longer than the duration of your intended stay)
- Proof of your intended activity (e.g. fellowship, employment contract, letter of invitation or hosting agreement from the university)
- Proof that you will be able to support yourself financially if this is not evidenced by the documentation above
- Adequate health insurance cover
- Details of proposed accommodation in Germany
- Marriage and birth certificates of family members
- Application form (available from diplomatic missions)

Depending on the individual Embassy the documents required may differ. Please contact the respective diplomatic mission at the earliest opportunity in order to ascertain which documents you will need for your visa application. National Visas are usually issued for a period of three months. Once you have entered Germany you must present this visa to your local “Ausländerbüro” (Immigration or Foreigners’



The Schengen States

Germany, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain.





Office) to apply for a residence permit (see Chapter 6.3.). A National Visa is linked to a specific purpose. This could be studying (e.g. a doctoral candidate on a fellowship), employment (e.g. a research associate) or research (e.g. a postdoctoral researcher on a fellowship or employment contract).

Inviting visitors

If you would like to invite a guest to visit you in Germany, such as a member of your family who needs an entry visa, it will be necessary to prove in the application that sufficient financial means are available for the duration of their visit. If the guest is unable to provide this proof themselves, you can pledge to cover all the costs ensuing from the stay in Germany. You can submit this formal obligation to the Immigration Office where you will be issued with a document that the visitor can use as evidence of financial support when applying for a visa.



6.2 Registering at the “Einwohnermeldeamt” (Residents’ Registration Office)

Everyone who moves into a house or flat in Germany is obliged to register, including visitors who are staying for more than three months. So within a week of entering the country or moving house you will have to register yourself and any members of your family accompanying you at the Residents’ Registration Office responsible for the area in which you live. One of the questions on the registration form refers to your religious faith. The reason for this is that in Germany religious communities are entitled to use the services of the Tax Office to collect “Church Tax” (see Chapter 9.5.).

To access all the necessary forms for the services provided by the Bochum authorities (“Bürgerbüro”, “Ausländerbüro”, “Standesamt” etc.) please visit the online form service centre.

Bürgerbüro im Rathaus Bochum (Residents’ Registration Office)

✉ Rathaus Bochum
 Willy-Brandt-Platz 2–6
 44777 Bochum
 ☎ Tel.: 0234/910-1950

Bürgerbüro Querenburg

✉ Uni-Center
 Querenburger Höhe 256
 44801 Bochum
 ☎ Tel.: 0234/910-9122

Visit www.bochum.de > Rathaus und Bürger-service online for additional information and the addresses of the “Bürgerbüro” in other districts.



Stadt Bochum online form service centre:

www.bochum.de > Rathaus und Bürgerservice online > Formulare

At the Residents' Registration Office you can:

- acquire a "Meldebescheinigung". This is a paper confirming that you have registered. You will need official proof of registration if you wish to extend your visa, for example, or open a bank account.
- acquire a "Polizeiliches Führungszeugnis" (Police Clearance Certificate). In Germany, this is required for public service employments.
- apply for a "Steueridentifikationsnummer" (Taxpayer Identification Number). This will be sent to you by post after you have registered. If you are in employment you must then forward this number to the regional authority handling salaries and pensions (Landesamt für Besoldung und Versorgung, LBV) via Department 3, Personnel Matters.
- register for freedom of movement (see Chapter 6.3) if you are a citizen of an EU Member State.
- acquire an "Abmeldebescheinigung". This is a paper confirming that you are not registered in Germany anymore. You might need this to close a blocked account or to cancel a contract.

In Bochum, the Residents' Registration Office is located in the "Bürgerbüro". In order to register at the Residents' Registration Office you will need:

- a registration form
- a passport or equivalent document
- for children: birth certificate in English translation



6.3 Residence Permit

Residence title for nationals of Non-EU States

Before your entry visa runs out you must apply for a residence permit at your local "Ausländerbüro" (Immigration or Foreigners' Office). This is issued electronically in the form of a card (eAT). If you are a national of Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea or the USA and not only entered the country without a visa but intend staying

in Germany for a longer period of time you also have to apply for a residence permit within three months of entering the country. We recommend you to submit your application as soon as possible after having registered at the Residents Registration Office (see Chapter 6.2).

You can also visit

www.rub.de/welcomecentre for updated information on the whole topic of residence permits as well as FAQs.

The German Rector's Conference has drawn up a detailed overview of the various residence titles with regard to criteria like target group, conditions for granting a residence permit, duration/limitation, subsequent immigration of spouses and unmarried children etc. Visit www.hrk.de/hrk-international/mobility-and-mutual-recognition/mobility-of-researchers

INSIDER INFO:

If you need help when dealing with the various authorities, please contact the Welcome Centre. We can help you make an appointment, accompany you or translate for you.

You will usually have to present the following documents to the Immigration Office:

- Completed application for a residence title (available at the Immigration Office)
- Valid passport (please ensure that your passport is valid for at least three months longer than the duration of your intended stay)
- Biometric passport photo (please observe the requirements set out by the Federal Foreign Office: www.epass.de)
- Fellowship award letter, employment contract or hosting agreement with the university (stating the amount of the monthly fellowship or salary as proof that you can support yourself financially)
- Proof of health insurance cover valid in Germany
- For marital partners/children: German or English translations of marriage and birth certificates
- Fees vary. Please ask for more details at the Immigration Office

Depending on the purpose of your stay, there are different residence titles which are associated with different rights (e.g. the right to employment). In the research field, residence titles for the following purposes are the most common:

- §16 Higher education studies, language courses, school education
- §18 Employment
- §19 Settlement permit for highly qualified foreigners
- §19a EU Blue Card
- §20 Research

Temporary residence title

It takes about three to four weeks to issue an electronic residence title. Should your residence title elapse during this period, a "Fiktionsbescheinigung" (probationary certificate) must be issued. This is a temporary substitute document that is usually valid for three months.

There are three different types of probationary certificate: "Duldungsfiktion", "Erlaubnisfiktion" and "Fortbestandsfiktion". If you have applied for your extension in good time and now have to wait for the

card to be issued, you will usually be given a "Fortbestandsfiktion" (probationary continuation) (§81 Abs.4) because your old residence permit will continue to be valid until you receive your new card.

It is possible to travel on the strength of this kind of probationary certificate and you will be allowed to re-enter Germany at any time. Whilst you are using a probationary certificate, however, it is recommendable to enquire at the foreign mission (Embassy/Consulate) of the country to which you will be travelling whether you might incur any problems with entry and exit.



Rights of free movement

States in the European Union (EU) and the European Economic Area (EEA)

If you are a national of an EU Member State, Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway you need a recognised, valid passport or equivalent document (personal identity card) in order to enter and stay in Germany. You are not required to obtain a visa or residence title. During the first three months after entering the country you have unrestricted right of residence. After this, you will be asked to prove that you meet the Freedom of Movement criteria.

In Bochum:

The "Ausländerbüro der Stadt Bochum" is responsible for issuing residence permits, settlement permits.

Ausländerbüro der Stadt Bochum

Rathaus, Willy-Brandt-Platz 2-8

Immigration Office Call Centre:

Tel.: 02 34 / 9 10-24 00

Visit

www.bochum.de > Rathaus und Bürgerservice online > Ausländerbüro for additional information.



Freedom of movement applies to:

- individuals in employment (employed or self-employed)
- individuals not in employment (e.g. students)
- family members (including those from non-EU/EEA States)
- long-term residents (in residence more than five years)

If the requirements for freedom of movement are fulfilled, the right of residence exists by law. There is no specific certificate to this effect but the requirements must be fulfilled and proof presented to the Immigration Office or Residents' Registration Office.

Settlement permit

A settlement permit is an unlimited residence permit which allows the holder to pursue gainful employment. In certain cases, if the applicant is highly qualified, a foreigner coming to Germany may be issued with a settlement permit immediately after entering the country. As a rule, however, foreigners are only entitled to a settlement permit if they have spent five years in the country. You can ask at the Immigration Office.

6.4 Employment Law Regulations

As a foreigner, if you want to work in Germany you usually require a residence title which allows you to pursue gainful employment. You have to apply for it at the Immigration Office in the place you are intending to stay, often as part of the visa procedure. In many cases the Immigration Office itself then has to seek the approval of the Federal Employment Agency; however, this does not apply to academic personnel at universities and research institutes, visiting researchers or technical staff employed in a visiting researcher's research team. These positions do not require the approval of the Federal Employment Agency. The Immigration Office itself is entitled to issue authorisation allowing you to pursue academic activity and enter this authorisation in your residence permit.

If your husband or wife is not an academic but would like to work in Germany she or he will usually require the approval of the Federal Employment Agency. You will have to apply at the Immigration Office for the type of residence permit that allows the holder to pursue gainful employment and also present a concrete job offer.

Academic activity during a short visit

If you work at a university in an academic capacity for no more than three months in a twelve-month period this does not count as employment in terms of the residence law. This usually means that you are not obliged to seek the approval of the Immigration Office for this activity.

Nationals of the EU and the European Economic Area

If you are a citizen of the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway you enjoy the right of free movement for workers. You do not need approval in order to pursue gainful employment. Citizens of new EU Member States are usually only given full freedom of movement rights after a transitional period. Like nationals of third countries, they still require a residence permit which allows them to work in Germany. For academics from new Member States (with a degree from a university or university of applied science) special regulations may apply.

