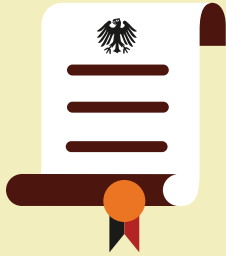


How can I become a German citizen?

As a rule, after 8 years of living legally in Germany (or under certain conditions, after 3 or 6 years) you may apply for German citizenship.



It is very important that you get informed about your own possibilities to remain in Germany as early as possible.

Please do seek advice at a counselling centre.

More information can be found at:
www.einfachmeinrecht.awo.org

My right to remain

People have a right to stay in Germany. Which conditions must they meet in order to do this?

How can I remain in Germany?

There are different possibilities to stay in Germany: For example, to work, to study, to learn German, to go to school or to live together with your own spouse or children.

How can I enter Germany?

If you want to enter Germany, you usually need a visa. You must apply for this at the German embassy in your home country beforehand. Whether you will be granted a visa depends on certain factors.



What requirements must I fulfil?

This will depend on your reason for entering Germany, on how long you would like to stay and on your own country of origin.

For example, you must prove that you have enough money to live on and that you will leave the country after the visa expires.

Can I also remain in Germany without a valid visa?

If you have entered Germany without a valid visa and wish to remain here long-term, normally you must still go through the visa application procedure before being allowed to stay.



What are other options to remain in Germany?

You also have the possibility to seek protection from persecution or to remain here for humanitarian reasons. This will be examined in the context of an asylum procedure

If the application is approved, you get a residence permit.

If the application is denied, it may be that for a certain length of time, you will not be permitted to enter the Schengen area. For this reason, it is very important to get advice from a counselor before applying for asylum.

How do I get a residence permit?

To apply for a residence permit, you must go to the Foreigners' Registration Office [Ausländerbehörde]. All residence permits are granted on a temporary basis at first. In order to extend your permit, over time, you must repeatedly prove that you still meet the permit requirements.

How do I get an unlimited residence permit?

In order to apply for an unlimited permit, you must have been living and working in Germany with permission for 5 years, as a rule. But there may be exceptions, for example for refugees, legal spouses and students.

If you hold an unlimited residence permit in another EU country, you may also be granted an unlimited residence permit in Germany.