

VISA AND RESIDENCE PERMIT FOR GERMANY FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND Ph.D. STUDENTS

Entry and visa obligation

The **entry regulations** for the Federal Republic of Germany differ depending on the country of origin. Please check to which of the following four country groups you belong.

1. Citizens from the European Economic Area (members of the European Union as well as Liechtenstein, Iceland, Norway)

If you belong to an EEA member state you do not need a visa for entry but only a **valid identity card**.

2. Citizens from countries not requiring a visa

If you belong to a country mentioned below you do not need a visa but only a **valid passport**.

Australia
Honduras
Israel
Japan
Canada
New Zealand
Republic of Korea
United States of America

3. Citizens from countries not requiring a visa for staying in the Federal Republic of Germany any longer than three months

If you belong to a country mentioned below and your stay in the Federal Republic of Germany does not exceed three months you only need a **valid passport** for entry.

If you intend to stay longer than three months in Germany, it is absolutely necessary to have a visa for educational purposes. If you enter Germany without a visa you will have to return to your home country after three months and apply for a visa for educational purposes.

Andorra
Argentina
Bolivia
Brazil
Brunei
Chile
Costa Rica
El Salvador
Guatemala
Malaysia
Mexico
Monaco
Nicaragua
Panama
Paraguay
Singapore
Uruguay
Vatican City
Venezuela

4. Citizens of all other countries need to have a visa for educational purposes when entering the Federal Republic of Germany.

You must apply for a student visa personally at the relevant German mission abroad (German Embassy or Consulate) in your home country. It can often take several months before a visa is issued. Prospective students should apply for a visa for educational purposes immediately after having received the letter of admission.

For **applying**, you will have to present the following documents

- Completed application form for issuing a student visa (the German embassy in the country of origin specifies the language in which it must be filled in).
- Photo
- Letter of admission from the university or, for Ph.D students, proof of acceptance of supervision of their research
- Health insurance policy¹
- Proof of sufficient financial resources²
- Certificates of education until today
- Proof of German language skills. Not necessary, if you apply for an English course of study in Germany

Information is also available on the website of the Foreign Office, but only in German: <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/de/WillkommeninD/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/Visabestimmungen.html> as well as on the website of the German Embassy in your native country

Do not enter as a tourist. A tourist visa / Schengen visa cannot be transformed into a visa for educational purposes. You will have to return to your home country to apply for a new visa

¹ For registration it is necessary to take out a German health insurance policy, so travel health insurance when applying for the visa will do.

² You must prove that you have 7020 € at least per year at your disposal. The German mission abroad specifies which documents have to be presented, e.g. proof of scholarship, banking guarantee

Obligatory registration and residence permit

Registration of residence

Within the first week of arrival you must report to the Registration Authority (Einwohnermeldeamt / Bürgerbüro) of the city or district you live in. This has to be done by everybody including Germans.

Residence permit

1. Citizens from the European Economic Area (members of the European Union as well as Liechtenstein, Iceland, Norway)

If you belong to an EEA member state you **do not need a residence permit**. If required the Foreigners Authority (Ausländerbehörde) will issue a Freedom of Movement certificate for EU-citizens.

2. Citizens of all other countries need to have a residence permit if they intend to stay longer than three months in Germany.

Application for the first authorization for a residence permit:

The residence permit for the purpose of studying or a doctorate must be applied for at the Foreigners Authority of your district.

The following regulations are effective for the **Foreigners Authority in Stuttgart:**

For the first authorization for the residence permit you must contact any Bürgerbüro in your district. There you can do the residents registration, certificate for the Studi-ticket and the **first authorization for the residence permit** at the same time.

The following documents have to be submitted:

- Complete registration form (resident in Stuttgart!)
- Valid entry visa either for educational purposes or for participation in language courses and subsequent studies.
- Valid national passport
- Proof of admission from the university
- Health insurance policy
- 1 biometric photo, see [photo examples](http://www.stuttgart.de/sde/menu/frame/top.php?seite=http%3A//www.stuttgart.de/sde/item/gen/51411.htm) on the website of the Foreigners Authority Stuttgart
<http://www.stuttgart.de/sde/menu/frame/top.php?seite=http%3A//www.stuttgart.de/sde/item/gen/51411.htm>

A fee of 50 € is charged for a **one-year** residence permit.

Residence permit extension

The **residence permit extension** has to be applied for at the Foreigners Authority of your place of residence.

For students and Ph.D students resident in Stuttgart the following regulations of the **Foreigners Authority in Stuttgart** are effective:

For your residence permit extension you will receive a letter in time informing you about the necessary documents. At the same time you will get an appointment date. If you have not have received this letter before expiry of the residence permit please contact the Foreigners Authority for an appointment as soon as possible.

The following documents have to be submitted:

- current proof of study (current certificate of registration), non-degree students must prove reason and duration
- proof of sufficient means for living and studying in Germany
 - statements of account of the last three months indicating regular payments received
 - or
 - current bank statement
 - or
 - current declaration of commitment (financial payment guarantee)
 - or
 - current proof of scholarship
- valid national passport with valid residence title
- health insurance policy
- Ph.D students must prove status of doctorate
- after graduation proof of job-hunting
- 1 biometric photo, see photo examples on the website of the Foreigners Authority Stuttgart
<http://www.stuttgart.de/sde/menu/frame/top.php?seite=http%3A//www.stuttgart.de/sde/item/gen/51411.htm>

A fee of 30 € is charged for a two-year-extension.

Please note that your application or the residence permit extension can only be handled if you submit all the necessary documents. Normally the staff of the Foreigners Authority only speak German. If you do not speak German or if you have only a basic knowledge of the German language please ask the course coordinator or the supervisor of your doctoral thesis to be accompanied by a German speaking person, i.e. a student assistant (HiWi).

What else has to be done?

In your passport (in the residence permit) the name of the university resp. the study place and the course of study you are registered in must always be noted. If you want to change your course, you need the approval of the Foreigners Authority.

If you leave Germany for more than six months, i.e. for field research or for studying abroad, your residence permit becomes invalid. For re-entry you must apply for a new visa for educational purposes. It is convenient to inform the Foreigners Authority in advance and in writing that you intend to re-enter. The supervisor of your Master's- or doctoral thesis can give you confirmation of the field research or if studying abroad you can contact the International Office (Akademisches Auslandsamt).

Your residence permit entitles you to **travel to other Schengen countries** and you can stay up to three months.

- Belgium
- Germany
- France
- Greece
- Italy
- Luxembourg
- The Netherlands
- Austria
- Spain
- Portugal
- Denmark
- Finland
- Iceland
- Norway
- Sweden
- Estonia
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Malta
- Poland
- Slovak Republic
- Slovenia
- Czech Republic
- Hungary

Even though Iceland, Norway and Switzerland do not belong to the Schengen countries they are subject to the same regulations.

For all other countries you need to have a visa. Information is available at the embassy of the corresponding country.

Gainful employment beside studying or beside a doctorate

Students from the European Economic Area (members of the European Union as well as Liechtenstein, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland) do not need a work permit and are allowed, like German students, to work a maximum of 20 hours per week.

Nationals from the new EU-member states (Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary) are subject to special regulations for a transitional period. They are allowed to work for a maximum of 90 days full-time or 180 days part-time per year. If you have to prove to your employer that you are allowed to work 90 days full-time resp. 180 days part-time per year please report to the Employment Agency. You may additionally carry out study-integrated activities, i.e. HiWi, to a maximum of 20 hours per week. It can happen, however, that the personnel department of the university requires confirmation from the Employment Agency that you are allowed to carry out this work!

Nationals from non-EU-member states are only allowed to work a maximum of 90 days full-time or 180 days part-time per year. Study-integrated activities, i.e. HiWi, are additionally possible, up to a maximum of 20 hours per week, this must be entered, however, as a condition in the passport. Automatically with the residence permit for educational purposes the Foreigners Authority in Stuttgart consents to study-integrated activity (HiWi). Students who do not live in Stuttgart must apply for approval to study-integrated activities at the relevant Foreigners Authority.

Internship

Internships which are voluntary and not compulsory count as normal work and will be deducted from the maximum of 90 days. There is the possibility, however, that the internship is approved separately. For approval please report to the Foreigners Authority. Necessary documents are the contract of the internship and a letter of confirmation from the university that the internship is recommended.

Residence permit for job-hunting after completion of studies

Since October 2007 international students may take up, after completion of studies, gainful employment relevant to their education without an individual priority check, that means it will no longer be checked whether Germans or other privileged foreigners are to be considered for gainful employment. International students have one year after finishing their studies (date of the certificate) to find gainful employment. The relevant **residence permit for job-hunting** is issued by the responsible Foreigners Authority. During this year gainful employment is allowed up to a maximum of 90 days full-time or 180 days part-time.

Initially the residence permit for job-hunting is issued for six months and can be extended for a further six months. In some cases the job-hunting has to be proved (applications). It is not possible to extend the residence permit for job-hunting for more than one year.

More information can be found on
www.fachkraefte-bw.de