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Residence permit for participation in a voluntary service

A residence permit may be issued for work at a legally regulated national voluntary service or the European Voluntary Service.

The residence permit is issued for the duration of participation, generally for 12 months. In principle, the work with the voluntary service must be full-time. Other employment or self-employed activities are not permissible with this residence permit.

Differing requirements apply for the individual voluntary services.

Youth Volunteer Service (JFD)

This includes the Voluntary Social Year (FSJ) and the Voluntary Ecological Year (FÖJ). These national voluntary services also offer youths and young adults from abroad the opportunity to engage in civic activities in Germany.

Participation in a Youth Volunteer Service must be for a minimum of 6 months and can be extended to up to 24 months in exceptional circumstances.

When the requirements are met, a residence permit **can** be issued.

Federal Volunteer Service (BFD)

The BFD offers all generations the opportunity to get involved in various social areas once compulsory education has been completed. Participation in the BFD can be shortened to 6 months or extended to up to 18 months.

When the requirements are met, a residence permit **can** be issued.

European Voluntary Service (EVS)

The EVS is part of the Youth in Action programme under the Erasmus+ umbrella.

Fields of engagement include the social, youth, environment and cultural fields.

Participation is for a period of up to 12 months.

If participation in the EVS is for more than 90 days, a residence permit **will** be granted if requirements are fulfilled. A residence permit is not necessary for shorter stays.

Prerequisites

• Age limits

- Youth Volunteer Service: Participation is possible for persons up to the age of 27 who have already completed compulsory education in their home countries.
- Federal Volunteer Service: There is no age limit but compulsory education of the home country must be completed.
- European Voluntary Service: Participation is for persons between the ages of 17 and 30.

• For participation in the European Voluntary Service: citizenship of a partner country of the Erasmus+ programme

A list of these partner countries can be found in the "More information" section.

• Written agreement between the volunteer and the sponsor of the

volunteer service or the Federal Office of Family Affairs and Civil Society Functions (BAFzA)

- **Subsistence is assured during the stay for participation in the voluntary service.**

An assured subsistence can be assumed if the pocket money (possibly plus the value of agreed benefits in kind and subsistence costs or subsidies for subsistence costs) corresponds to the standard rate of SGB II/XII.

It is also possible to prove that you can secure your livelihood by submitting a declaration of commitment (e.g. from the agency responsible for the placement).

- **Main residence in Berlin during the voluntary service**
- **A personal interview is required**

This service can only be taken advantage of in the Berlin Immigration Office (Landesamt für Einwanderung – LEA) at Friedrich-Krause-Ufer. Please book an appointment for this.

Documents required

- **Form "Antrag auf Erteilung eines Aufenthaltstitels" (Application for Issuance of a Residence Permit)**

available in German, English, French, Italian, Greek, Turkish, Vietnamese, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian and Bosnian

- **Valid passport**

- **1 current biometric photo**

(https://www.berlin.de/labo/_assets/kraftfahrzeugwesen/foto-mustertafel.pdf)

35mm x 45mm, frontal shot with neutral facial expression and closed mouth, looking straight into the camera, light background

- **Written agreement with the sponsor of the volunteer service or the Federal Office of Family Affairs and Civil Society Functions (original copy)**

The agreement must contain the following information:

- Description of the voluntary service with information on the duration and working hours
- Conditions of the activity and supervision by the host institution
- Information on the funds/facilities available for subsistence and accommodation as well as pocket money
- Where applicable: information on the training required for proper execution of the tasks during the voluntary work

- **If need be: rental agreement**

A rental contract must be submitted if the volunteer service does not provide accommodation.

- **In the case of minors: Consent of parents/legal guardians for participation in the voluntary service**

- **Proof of main residence in Berlin**

- Certificate of registration at the main residence (Meldebestätigung) or
- lease and written confirmation of occupancy from the landlord (see section "More information")

Forms

- **Antrag auf Erteilung eines Aufenthaltstitels (Application for**

Issuance of a Residence Permit) - in German, English, French, Italian
(https://www.berlin.de/formularverzeichnis/?formular=/labo/zuwanderung/_asets/lea-agen1-antrag_engl_frz_ital-112021.pdf)

- **Antrag auf Erteilung eines Aufenthaltstitels (Application for Issuance of a Residence Permit) - in German, Greek, Turkish, Vietnamese**
(https://www.berlin.de/formularverzeichnis/?formular=/labo/zuwanderung/_asets/lea-agen2-antrag_griech_tuerk_viet-112021.pdf)
- **Antrag auf Erteilung eines Aufenthaltstitels (Application for Issuance of a Residence Permit) - in German, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian**
(https://www.berlin.de/formularverzeichnis/?formular=/labo/zuwanderung/_asets/lea-agen3-antrag_span_port_russ-112021.pdf)
- **Antrag auf Erteilung eines Aufenthaltstitels (Application for Issuance of a Residence Permit) - in German, Serbian, Bosnian**
(https://www.berlin.de/formularverzeichnis/?formular=/labo/zuwanderung/_asets/lea-agen4_-antrag_serb_bos-112021_final.pdf)

Fees

none

Legal basis

- **Aufenthaltsgesetz (AufenthG) para. 19c sect. 1**
(http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch_aufenthg/englisch_aufenthg.htm#p0515)
- **Aufenthaltsgesetz (AufenthG) para.19e**
(http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch_aufenthg/englisch_aufenthg.htm#p0536)

Average time to process request

Around 5-6 weeks

A personal visit four to six weeks before the existing temporary residence title expires is best. If possible you should book an appointment for this.

More information

- **Overview of the Erasmus+ partner countries**
(<https://eu.daad.de/infos-fuer-hochschulen/programmlinien/infos-zu-programm-und-partnerlaendern/de/45673-erasmus-partnerlaender-/>)
- **Information from the Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Services on the legally regulated national voluntary services**
(<https://www.berlin.de/sen/soziales/buergerschaftliches-engagement/freiwilligendienste/>)
- **Information from the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth on the legally regulated voluntary services**
(<https://www.bmfsfj.de/bmfsfj/themen/engagement-und-gesellschaft/freiwilligendienste>)
- **Certificate of registration at the main residence (Meldebestätigung)**

(<https://service.berlin.de/dienstleistung/120686/>)

- **Example: confirmation of occupancy from the landlord**

(https://www.berlin.de/formularverzeichnis/?formular=/labo/zentrale-einwohnerangelegenheiten/_assets/mdb-f402544-20161102_wohnungsgeberbestaetigung.pdf)

Responsible authorities

This service can only be taken advantage of in the Berlin Immigration Office (Landesamt für Einwanderung – LEA) at Friedrich-Krause-Ufer.