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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.

Procedure:

1. Carry out the online application.

- Please have all the necessary documents ready for this in PDF format if possible. However, you can also still photograph and upload the documents during the application process using your smartphone or tablet. The following file formats are accepted: PDF, JPG, JPEG, and PNG. The total size of your files must not exceed 100 MB. A single file must be a maximum of 7 MB in size.
- Before you can send off the application, you need to pay the service fee.
- At the end you will receive a PDF document to confirm your application. This document will certify that your current residence title (national D visa or residence permit) remains valid in the federal territory beyond the previous validity date. (This does not apply if you hold a Schengen visa (C visa) for a short-term stay or if your current residence title has already expired on the day of application.)

- Please therefore make sure to save this document and print a copy if possible.
2. Once you have carried out the online application, we will check it and then contact you as soon as possible. Where necessary, we will request further documents.
3. If your application is considered to be successful, you will be given an appointment for an in-person interview. Please bring the originals of all the necessary documents with you to this appointment.

Prerequisites

- **Legal residence**

You are already residing in Germany with a residence permit or another residence title (e.g., a national D visa). Or, based on your nationality, you are entitled to apply for a residence permit after visa-free entry.

- **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**

(<https://eu.daad.de/infos-fuer-hochschulen/programmlinien/infos-zu-programm-und-partnerlaendern/de/45673-erasmus-partnerlaender-/>)

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).

- **Adequate health insurance**

(https://www.berlin.de/einwanderung/_assets/merkblatt_zur_krankenversicherung_englisch.pdf)

Proof of a secure livelihood must also include sufficient health insurance. Those with statutory health insurance are sufficiently insured. Those with private health insurance must consider the type and extent of their health insurance. For more information, please read the leaflet "Information on adequate health insurance".

- **No indications of a threat to public safety or order**
 - Fines alone can prevent the granting of a residence permit.
 - An application for a residence permit may not be processed while investigation proceedings are ongoing.
 - You pose no threat to the free democratic basic order or the security of the Federal Republic of Germany.
 - You are not involved in acts of violence in pursuit of political or religious goals, do not publicly call for the use of violence and do not threaten to do so.
- **Main residence in Berlin during the voluntary service**
- **Current email address**

The Berlin Immigration Office will contact you via your current email address. Please also check your spam folder regularly.
- **For the online application: Consent to the electronic payment process**

The following methods of payment are available to you:

 - Credit card (Visa, Mastercard)
 - Paypal

Documents required

- **Application for a residence permit for participation in a voluntary service**
 - only possible online
 - You will receive a PDF document to confirm your application. This document will certify that your current residence title remains valid in the federal territory beyond the previous validity date. (This does not apply if you hold a Schengen visa (C visa) for a short-term stay or if your current residence title has already expired on the day you apply.)
 - Please therefore make sure to save this document and print a copy if possible.
- **In the case of an application being filed by an authorised representative: power of attorney stating the subject matter of the procedure**
- **If you already have a residence permit or another German residence title for the Federal Republic of Germany: Copy of your residence title**
- **Passport copies (in color)**

Copies of the following pages of your passport are required:

 - Always: Data pages (with your photo and personal details)
 - If you have entered the country and are applying for a residence permit for the first time, additionally: Entry stamp and visa for entry or residence permit from another EU country in your passport (if applicable)
- **Written agreement with the sponsor of the volunteer service or the Federal Office of Family Affairs and Civil Society Functions**

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: Declaration of commitment (Verpflichtungserklärung)**
If a declaration of commitment has been made by third parties (for example, the the sponsor of the volunteer service) to secure your livelihood
- **Possibly: Tenancy 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 your residence in Berlin**
 - Certificate of registration at the main residence (Melde-Bestätigung) or
 - lease and written confirmation of occupancy from the landlord (Wohnungsgeber-Bestätigung)
- **Proof of your health insurance**
 - If you have statutory health insurance: electronic health card (copy front and back) or a current confirmation from the health insurance company
 - In the case of private health insurance: certificate from the insurer regarding the scope and costs of the insurance in accordance with § 257 Para. 2a SGB V. V. Please point out to your insurer that you need the certificate for a residence permit for employment in voluntary service.

Fees

The fee must be paid before you send off the online application (by credit card or PayPal).

- 56.00 euros: for the initial issue of the residence permit as a sticker label
- 49.00 euros: for the renewal of the residence permit as a sticker label
- 100.00 euros: for the initial issue of the residence permit as an electronic residence permit (eAT)
- 93.00 euros: for the renewal of the residence permit as an electronic residence permit (eAT)
- 27.60 euros: for Turkish nationals up to the age of 24 for the initial issue / for renewal
- 46.00 euros: for Turkish nationals aged 24 and over for the initial issue / for renewal
- 6.00 euros extra: for creating a digital passport photo at the self-service terminal on site

A refund is not possible in the event that the application is withdrawn if we have already begun to process the application (by examining the documents you sent or sending you an appointment).

Legal basis

- **Aufenthaltsgesetz (AufenthG) para. 19c sect. 1**
(https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch_aufenthg/englisch_aufenthg.html#p0584)

- **Aufenthaltsgesetz (AufenthG) para.19e**

(https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch_aufenthg/englisch_aufenthg.html#p0606)

Average time to process request

- You will receive an appointment if your application is reviewed positively.
- A residence permit in the form of a sticker label can be issued directly on site during the appointment.
- If issued as an electronic residence permit (eAT), it takes 4 to 6 weeks before it can be collected.

More information

- **Übersicht über die Erasmus+ Partnerländer (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst e.V.)**

(<https://eu.daad.de/infos-fuer-hochschulen/programmlinien/infos-zu-programm-und-partnerlaendern/de/45673-erasmus-partnerlaender-/>)

- **Informationen zu den gesetzlich geregelten nationalen Freiwilligendiensten (Senatsverwaltung für Arbeit, Soziales, Gleichstellung, Integration, Vielfalt und Antidiskriminierung)**

(<https://www.berlin.de/sen/soziales/buergerschaftliches-engagement/freiwilligendienste/>)

- **Informationen zu gesetzlich geregelten Freiwilligendiensten (Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend)**

(<https://www.bmfsfj.de/bmfsfj/themen/engagement-und-gesellschaft/freiwilligendienste>)

- **Certificate of registration at the main residence (Melde-Bestätigung)**

(https://service.berlin.de/dienstleistung/120686/de_plain/)

- **Example: confirmation of occupancy from the landlord (Wohnungsgeber-Bestätigung)**

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

Average time to process request

https://liste-antraege-bc01.bda.service.berlin.de/intelliform/forms/default/bda/LEA/Befristeter_Aufenthaltstitel_zur_Beschaeftigung/index?parameter=330848

Notes on responsibility

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