Spouses Joining Non-EU Citizens

Why not live together with your family in Germany? Find out what you need to know if your spouse from outside the EU wants to come and live with you.

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As a national of a **third country**, you may move to Germany together with your spouse. The applicable regulations depend, among other things, on your spouse's nationality.

Would you also like to live in Germany with your children in addition to your spouse? Find out about the applicable regulations in the section "**Family reunion for children**".

Spouse joining you is a citizen of the EU or an EFTA member state

If you are from a third country and your joining spouse is a citizen of the EU or an **EFTA** member state, he or she benefits from the right of free movement. This means that the joining family member may live and work in Germany without any restrictions. For entry into Germany, he or she only needs a valid identity card.

Spouse joining you is a not a citizen of the EU or an EFTA member state

You can look forward to a future together in Germany, even if your partner comes from a third country. The following requirements must be met for a spouse to join their **skilled worker** from a third country:

- **Residence title**: as an employee, you have a **residence permit**, a **settlement permit** or an **EU Blue Card** for Germany.
- Health insurance & money: you have adequate health insurance coverage and resources to care for your family. If you are a citizen of another EU country with an EU Blue Card and would like to live in Germany with your family members on a long-term basis, you only need to provide proof of health insurance coverage for yourself and your family.
- Legal age: your spouse is of legal age, i.e. at least 18 years old

No proof of German language skills is required for family members joining a skilled worker with a valid residence title in Germany. However, to ensure that they feel at home in Germany and are able to cope with everyday life, your family members should be able to communicate independently in German. To find out how this can be achieved, see our "**Learning German**" section.

We made it: Spousal reunification to Germany

Joining a registered civil partner

Unmarried partners can also benefit from **family reunification** if they meet the conditions for spousal reunification. It is important that the civil partnership entered into under foreign law essentially corresponds to the types of civil partnership that were possible in Germany until 2018. In principle, this means that:

- the civil partnership must be registered in the respective country, i.e. the civil partnership declarations must be recorded in official files or registers
- and the partnership must give rise to legal effects and obligations.

The same applies to civil partnerships between two people of the same sex or where at least one person is neither female nor male.

Family reunification for spouses: Residence permit after visa-free entry

Nationals of Andorra, Australia, Brazil, El Salvador, Honduras, Israel, Japan, Canada, Monaco, New Zealand, San Marino, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America who come to Germany for the purpose of family reunification may enter Germany without a visa and then apply for the required residence permit directly at the **competent** **foreigners authority**.

How to apply for a visa for family reunification for spouses

If your spouse requires a **visa** to enter Germany, he or she must apply for a visa for family reunification for spouses. The visa can be applied for online via the **Consular Services Portal** of the **Federal Foreign Office** or directly at the German embassy . A list of all missions of the Federal Republic of Germany abroad can be found under **Advisory and Contact Services**.

To apply for a visa for the purpose of family reunification, you will generally need to produce a passport and a marriage certificate, civil partnership certificate or registered partnership certificate. Check with your local German embassy to find out what other documents are required. As the processing of your application may take some time, we recommend that you find out in advance what documents are required for your application and that you submit your application well in advance.

Once your family has arrived in Germany, you will need to register your family members with the **Residents' Registration Office**. Before the visa expires, you must apply for a residence permit from the local **foreigners**

authority. Book well in advance as there are often long waiting lists for appointments. To apply for a residence permit, you will need to provide the relevant passports, birth and marriage certificates, pay slips or tax statements, rental evidence and any other documents that may be required depending on your family's specific situation.
As soon as the residence permit is issued, your spouse (registered civil partner) is immediately entitled to take up employment in Germany without restriction.

Bringing parents to Germany and family visits

If your visa or residence permit for gainful purposes was issued for the first time after 1 March 2024, you have the option of bringing your parents or parents-in-law to Germany. To find out what rules apply to parental reunification, contact the relevant German embassy or foreigners authority in Germany.
In addition to the option of parental reunification, your family members are permitted to enter Germany for temporary family visits. Information on visas for family visits can be found on the websites of the German embassies.

Information on the web

Federal Ministry for Education, Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMBFSFJ)

Family portal

Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)

Important information about family reunification

Federal Ministry for Education, Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMBFSFJ)

ESF federal program "Stark im Beruf" supports mothers with a migration background in getting a job

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