

Guidance

Living in Germany

Information about moving to, living or retiring in Germany – including visas, working, healthcare and driving.

From: **Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-development-office)**

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Getting help with living in Germany

Help from the German government

For any questions about moving to or living in Germany, you may be able to get help from the:

- [German Embassy in London \(https://uk.diplo.de/uk-en/01/embassy\)](https://uk.diplo.de/uk-en/01/embassy)
- [Federal Office for Migration and Refugees \(https://www.bamf.de/EN/Themen/MigrationAufenthalt/migrationaufenthalt-node.html\)](https://www.bamf.de/EN/Themen/MigrationAufenthalt/migrationaufenthalt-node.html)

You can also read the German government's guidance on [working, studying and living in Germany \(https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/\)](https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/).

The UK government and the British Embassy in Berlin cannot give personalised advice on moving to, living or retiring in Germany.

Professional help in Germany

You can also [get help from English-speaking professionals \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/professional-services-if-you-are-abroad\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/professional-services-if-you-are-abroad) in Germany, including:

- lawyers
- translators
- notaries
- funeral directors

Help from the UK government

Read the [travel advice for Germany \(https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/germany\)](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/germany) to understand the risks you may face if you live in or visit Germany. This includes the latest information on:

- visas and entry requirements
- laws and cultural differences
- safety and security

Read our guidance on [moving, living or retiring abroad. \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad)

[Get help from the UK government abroad \(https://www.contact.service.csd.fcdo.gov.uk/\)](https://www.contact.service.csd.fcdo.gov.uk/), including in an emergency.

Visas, residency and citizenship

Make sure you meet the [entry requirements for Germany \(https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/germany/entry-requirements\)](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/germany/entry-requirements) before you travel.

Visas and residence permits

Check which [visa or residence permit \(https://uk.diplo.de/uk-en/02/visa-information-2441822?isLocal=false&isPreview=false\)](https://uk.diplo.de/uk-en/02/visa-information-2441822?isLocal=false&isPreview=false) you need to live in Germany.

You can get a visa or residence permit to:

- study
- work
- live with family in Germany
- volunteer
- do research

For more information:

- read the German government's [information for UK nationals and their families \(https://uk.diplo.de/uk-en/02/travel-after-brexit-2441830#content_4\)](https://uk.diplo.de/uk-en/02/travel-after-brexit-2441830#content_4)

- read [visa information from the Federal Foreign Office \(https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/visa-service/visabestimmungen-node\)](https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/visa-service/visabestimmungen-node)
- [contact the German Missions in the United Kingdom \(https://uk.diplo.de/uk-en/home-kontakt-channel\)](https://uk.diplo.de/uk-en/home-kontakt-channel)

Registering as a resident

Once you arrive, you must [register your residence in Germany \(https://www.bmi.bund.de/EN/topics/administrative-reform/registration/registration-node.html\)](https://www.bmi.bund.de/EN/topics/administrative-reform/registration/registration-node.html) ('Anmeldung') within 14 days. You can do this at the local registration office ('Bürgeramt') in your state.

If you did not apply for a visa or residence permit before leaving the UK, you'll also need to make an appointment at your local [Foreigners' Authority \('Ausländerbehörde'\)](https://bamf-navi.bamf.de/en/Themen/Behoerden/) (https://bamf-navi.bamf.de/en/Themen/Behoerden/) within 90 days of arriving.

If you move home in Germany, you must also register your new address within 14 days ('Ummeldung').

If you have any problems or questions about registering your residency, contact:

- your local [Foreigners' Authority \('Ausländerbehörde'\)](https://bamf-navi.bamf.de/en/Themen/Behoerden/) (https://bamf-navi.bamf.de/en/Themen/Behoerden/)
- the German [Federal and Foreign Office \(https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/visa-service/buergerservice\)](https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/visa-service/buergerservice)
- an [English-speaking lawyer in Germany \(https://find-a-professional-service-abroad.service.csd.fcdo.gov.uk/find/lawyers?country=Germany\)](https://find-a-professional-service-abroad.service.csd.fcdo.gov.uk/find/lawyers?country=Germany)

Extending or replacing your visa or residence permit

Visit the [Federal Portal \(https://verwaltung.bund.de/portal/EN\)](https://verwaltung.bund.de/portal/EN) or contact your local [Foreigners' Authority \('Ausländerbehörde'\)](https://bamf-navi.bamf.de/en/Themen/Behoerden/) (https://bamf-navi.bamf.de/en/Themen/Behoerden/) for information on how to:

- extend your visa or residency permit
- replace a lost, damaged or stolen visa or residency permit

Permanent residency

You may be able to apply for permanent residency in Germany.

To find out if you're eligible and how to apply, read the German government's guidance on [settling in Germany \(https://www.bamf.de/EN/Themen/MigrationAufenthalt/ZuwandererDrittstaaten/Migrathek/Niederlassen/niederlassen-node.html\)](https://www.bamf.de/EN/Themen/MigrationAufenthalt/ZuwandererDrittstaaten/Migrathek/Niederlassen/niederlassen-node.html).

Citizenship

Germany recognises [dual citizenship \(https://www.gov.uk/dual-citizenship\)](https://www.gov.uk/dual-citizenship) with the UK. This means that you do not have to give up (renounce) your British citizenship to become a German citizen.

To find out if you're eligible for German citizenship, read the German government's guidance on [requirements for naturalisation \(https://www.xn--einbrgerung-whb.de/fragebogen.php?l=en\)](https://www.xn--einbrgerung-whb.de/fragebogen.php?l=en).

If you got German citizenship before 1 January 2021, you'll need to show your German naturalisation certificate as evidence for future benefit claims in the UK. Read our guidance on [benefits and pensions for UK nationals in the EEA and Switzerland \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/benefits-and-pensions-for-uk-nationals-in-the-eea-or-switzerland\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/benefits-and-pensions-for-uk-nationals-in-the-eea-or-switzerland) for more information.

Help with visa, residency and citizenship applications

The British Embassy in Berlin cannot help with German visa, residency or citizenship applications.

For any questions or issues, contact the:

- [Federal Office for Migration and Refugees \(https://www.bamf.de/EN/Startseite/startseite_node.html\)](https://www.bamf.de/EN/Startseite/startseite_node.html)
- [Federal Foreign Office \(https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/visa-service/buergerservice\)](https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/visa-service/buergerservice)
- [German Embassy in London \(https://uk.diplo.de/uk-en/01/embassy\)](https://uk.diplo.de/uk-en/01/embassy)

Residency if you moved to Germany before 1 January 2021

If you moved to Germany before 1 January 2021, and have been legally living there since then, you and your family members have [rights under the](#)

[Withdrawal Agreement \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-europe\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-europe).

Residency documents if you moved to Germany before 1 January 2021

If you were resident in Germany before 1 January 2021, make sure you have the [UK residence document \('Aufenthaltsdokument-GB'\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/germany-residency/residence-documentation-for-uk-nationals-in-germany) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/germany-residency/residence-documentation-for-uk-nationals-in-germany>). The Aufenthaltsdokument-GB shows that you have rights under the Withdrawal Agreement.

Under the new digital [Entry/Exit System \(EES\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eu-entryexit-system) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eu-entryexit-system>), you'll need an Aufenthaltsdokument-GB when entering or leaving Germany. If you have one, you will not have to register with the EES when [entering, leaving or travelling within the Schengen area](https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/entry-exit/non-eu-nationals/index_en.htm) (https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/entry-exit/non-eu-nationals/index_en.htm). Without it, you may be wrongly identified as overstaying in the Schengen area and denied entry to Germany or other Schengen countries.

If you do not have a residence document

If you were living in Germany before 1 January 2021, but do not have a residence document, you must [register for residency](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/germany-residency/residence-documentation-for-uk-nationals-in-germany) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/germany-residency/residence-documentation-for-uk-nationals-in-germany>). You'll need to submit evidence to prove that you met the residency criteria at the time.

If your application is successful, you'll get a biometric residence document called an Aufenthaltsdokument-GB.

If your application is unsuccessful, you may be able to appeal. Consider getting legal advice from an [English-speaking lawyer in Germany](https://find-a-professional-service-abroad.service.csd.fcdo.gov.uk/find/lawyers?country=Germany) (<https://find-a-professional-service-abroad.service.csd.fcdo.gov.uk/find/lawyers?country=Germany>).

For more information on how to apply or appeal:

- contact your local [Foreigners' Authority \('Ausländerbehörde'\)](https://bamf-navi.bamf.de/en/Themen/Behoerden/) (<https://bamf-navi.bamf.de/en/Themen/Behoerden/>)
- read the German government's [information for UK nationals and their family members](https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/faqs/EN/topics/constitution/brexit/faqs-brexit.html#doc15091950bodyText4) (<https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/faqs/EN/topics/constitution/brexit/faqs-brexit.html#doc15091950bodyText4>)

- read the [Brexit information \(https://uk.diplo.de/uk-en/02/travel-after-brexit-2441830\)](https://uk.diplo.de/uk-en/02/travel-after-brexit-2441830) from the German Missions in the United Kingdom

Renewing your residency document if you moved to Germany before 1 January 2021

You'll need to renew your residency document every 5 or 10 years.

Contact your local [Foreigners' Authority \('Ausländerbehörde'\)](https://bamf-navi.bamf.de/en/Themen/Behoerden/) (https://bamf-navi.bamf.de/en/Themen/Behoerden/) for information on how to renew your residency document.

Bringing family members to Germany if you moved there before 1 January 2021

The German government's [information for UK nationals and their family members \(https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/faqs/EN/topics/constitution/brexit/faqs-brexit.html\)](https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/faqs/EN/topics/constitution/brexit/faqs-brexit.html) explains:

- which family members can join you in Germany
- how and when they should apply for their residence document

Passports and travel

Read our guidance on [moving, living or retiring abroad \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad). This covers how to:

- apply for a British passport from abroad
- travel urgently without your British passport

Always carry your passport and residence document when [entering, leaving or travelling within the Schengen area \(https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/entry-exit/non-eu-nationals/index_en.htm\)](https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/entry-exit/non-eu-nationals/index_en.htm). If you're asked to show your passport at border control, make sure you also show your residence document or other evidence of residence status. Your passport may be stamped if you do not.

If you have dual citizenship with an EU or [European Free Trade Association \(EFTA\) \(https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:European_Free_Trade_Association_\(EFTA\)\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:European_Free_Trade_Association_(EFTA)) country, you should enter and leave Germany using your EU or EFTA passport.

Dual citizens travelling to the UK

When travelling to the UK, British citizens must carry a valid [British passport](https://www.gov.uk/browse/abroad/passports) or [certificate of entitlement](https://www.gov.uk/right-of-abode/apply-for-a-certificate-of-entitlement). Read guidance on [dual citizenship](https://www.gov.uk/dual-citizenship).

European Entry/Exit System (EES)

Under the new digital [Entry/Exit System](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eu-entryexit-system) (EES) there are new rules for [entering, leaving or travelling within the Schengen area](https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/entry-exit/non-eu-nationals/index_en.htm). Non-EU nationals will need to have their photo and fingerprints taken or verified at the border. This data will be stored in a digital record and used to monitor how long visitors have spent in the Schengen area.

British nationals legally resident in Germany, and who have a valid biometric residence document, do not need to register with the EES. This includes British nationals who have an Aufenthaltsdokument-GB, or another residence permit or long-term visa.

If you're living in Germany, but do not have a valid biometric residence permit or long-term visa, contact your local [Foreigners' Authority](https://bamf-navi.bamf.de/en/Themen/Behoerden/) ('[Ausländerbehörde](https://bamf-navi.bamf.de/en/Themen/Behoerden/)') for information on how to get one.

For more information about how the EES works, read:

- [EU guidance on the EES](https://travel-europe.europa.eu/ees_en)
- [guidance on the EES for UK nationals](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eu-entryexit-system)

Healthcare in Germany

Read our guidance on [moving, living or retiring abroad](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad). This covers how to:

- plan your healthcare
- take medicine abroad

Health insurance is compulsory for residents in Germany. You must join a German health insurer ('Krankenkasse'). You can often do this through your employer.

You can [choose your health insurer \(in German\) \(https://www.gkv-spitzenverband.de/service/krankenkassenliste/krankenkassen.jsp\)](https://www.gkv-spitzenverband.de/service/krankenkassenliste/krankenkassen.jsp). In some cases, you can choose private health insurance instead of the standard statutory health insurance.

To find out how to get medical treatment, read guidance on:

- [healthcare for UK nationals living in Germany \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-in-germany\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-in-germany)
- [English-speaking medical facilities and doctors for British nationals in Germany \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/germany-list-of-medical-practitionersfacilities\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/germany-list-of-medical-practitionersfacilities)
- [social security in Germany \(https://www.bmas.de/EN/Services/Publications/a998-social-security-at-a-glance.html\)](https://www.bmas.de/EN/Services/Publications/a998-social-security-at-a-glance.html)

Working in Germany

Read our guidance on [moving, living or retiring abroad \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad). This covers working abroad, including documents you may need from the UK government.

To work in Germany, you need a work visa or residence permit. Our guidance on [travelling to Germany for work \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travelling-to-germany-for-work\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travelling-to-germany-for-work) explains the different work visas and permits available to you. You can also read the [visa information from the German Missions in the United Kingdom \(https://uk.diplo.de/uk-en/02/visa\)](https://uk.diplo.de/uk-en/02/visa).

You do not need a work visa or permit if you have been living in Germany legally since before 1 January 2021, as you have [rights under the Withdrawal Agreement \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-europe\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-europe).

As a British national, you can enter Germany as a jobseeker without a work permit. However, you cannot start working until you have a work permit.

To apply for a job, you may need to provide a:

- [UK police certificate \(https://www.acro.police.uk/s/acro-services/police-certificates\)](https://www.acro.police.uk/s/acro-services/police-certificates)

- [German criminal record check \('Führungszeugnis'\) \(in German\) \(https://www.bundesjustizamt.de/DE/Themen/ZentraleRegister/Fuehrungszeugnis/Fuehrungszeugnis_node.html\)](https://www.bundesjustizamt.de/DE/Themen/ZentraleRegister/Fuehrungszeugnis/Fuehrungszeugnis_node.html)

If you live in Germany and were regularly commuting to work in another EU or [European Free Trade Association \(EFTA\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:European_Free_Trade_Association_(EFTA)) (https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:European_Free_Trade_Association_(EFTA)) country before 1 January 2021, read [guidance for frontier workers](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/frontier-workers-in-eu-and-efta-countries) (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/frontier-workers-in-eu-and-efta-countries).

Recognition of qualifications

If you want to work in Germany, you may need to [get your foreign qualifications recognised](https://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/en/index.php) (https://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/en/index.php).

Driving in Germany

Read our guidance on [moving, living and retiring abroad](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad). (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad) This covers how to:

- drive abroad legally
- take your UK vehicle abroad
- get driving licence letters

Local driving authorities ('Fahrerlaubnisbehörde') provide information on driving in Germany.

For more information read guidance on:

- [driving in the EU](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/driving-in-the-eu) (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/driving-in-the-eu)
- road travel in Germany, in [safety and security in the travel advice for Germany](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/germany/safety-and-security) (https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/germany/safety-and-security)
- [road rules and safety in Germany](https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/driving-abroad/road-rules-and-safety/germany/index_en.htm) (https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/driving-abroad/road-rules-and-safety/germany/index_en.htm)

Driving in Germany using a foreign driving licence

You can drive in Germany for up to 6 months using a driving licence issued in:

- the UK
- Gibraltar
- Jersey
- Guernsey
- the Isle of Man

You cannot renew or replace any of these licences if you live in Germany.

Exchanging a UK, Jersey, Guernsey, Isle of Man or Gibraltar licence

To continue driving after 6 months, you must exchange your driving licence. Contact your local driving authority ('Fahrerlaubnisbehörde') to find out how to do this.

You may need to:

- take an eye test
- present a medical certificate

You should apply for the exchange before the 6 months is over. Applications may take time to process, and you'll need your German licence to drive legally.

Disabled drivers

You may be able to apply for a German disabled parking card or an [EU parking card for people with disabilities \(https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/transport-disability/parking-card-disabilities-people/index_en.htm\)](https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/transport-disability/parking-card-disabilities-people/index_en.htm). Contact your local driving authority ('Fahrerlaubnisbehörde') to find out how to do this.

If you have a [UK Blue Badge \(https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/blue-badge-scheme\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/blue-badge-scheme) and live in Germany, you must return it to the original UK issuing authority.

Tax

Read our guidance on [moving, living or retiring abroad \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad). This covers tax, including paying UK tax and National Insurance.

The UK has a [double taxation agreement with Germany \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/germany-tax-treaties\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/germany-tax-treaties) so that you do not pay tax on the same income in both countries.

You will get an income tax ID number ('Steueridentifikationsnummer') by post after you register your address at your local registration office. Your employer will need this number. You may also need to give it to your local tax office ('Finanzamt').

Contact your [local tax office \(in German\) \(https://www.bzst.de/DE/Service/Behoerdenwegweiser/Finanzamtsuche/GemFa/finanzamtsuche_node.html\)](https://www.bzst.de/DE/Service/Behoerdenwegweiser/Finanzamtsuche/GemFa/finanzamtsuche_node.html) for any questions about double taxation relief.

Consider getting professional advice on [paying tax in Germany \(in German\) \(https://www.bundesfinanzministerium.de/Web/DE/Themen/Steuern/steuern.html\)](https://www.bundesfinanzministerium.de/Web/DE/Themen/Steuern/steuern.html).

To do this:

- contact an [English-speaking lawyer in Germany \(https://find-a-professional-service-abroad.service.csd.fcdo.gov.uk/find/lawyers?country=Germany\)](https://find-a-professional-service-abroad.service.csd.fcdo.gov.uk/find/lawyers?country=Germany)
- [find a tax adviser in Germany \(https://steuerberaterverzeichnis.berufs-org.de/?lang=en#form-group-object\)](https://steuerberaterverzeichnis.berufs-org.de/?lang=en#form-group-object)

Declaring your assets

You must:

- declare all assets you hold outside Germany
- file an annual declaration of assets, alongside your annual tax return

You face severe penalties if you do not do this. Contact a tax adviser in Germany for more information.

National Insurance

Check if you need to [pay National Insurance if you're going to work in the EU, Gibraltar, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, or Switzerland \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-insurance-for-workers-from-the-uk-working-in-the-eea-or-switzerland\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-insurance-for-workers-from-the-uk-working-in-the-eea-or-switzerland).

Pensions

Claiming your UK pension

Read our guidance on [moving, living or retiring abroad \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad). This covers:

- how to claim your UK State Pension
- where the UK government pays an annual increase in the State Pension

Your UK State Pension is calculated differently [if you've previously lived in Australia, Canada or New Zealand \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/state-pension-if-youve-lived-in-australia-canada-or-new-zealand\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/state-pension-if-youve-lived-in-australia-canada-or-new-zealand) and now live in the EU.

Claiming a German pension

Contact [German Pension Insurance \(https://www.deutsche-rentenversicherung.de/DRV/EN/Home/home_node.html\)](https://www.deutsche-rentenversicherung.de/DRV/EN/Home/home_node.html) ('Deutsche Rentenversicherung') to find out whether you can [claim a German pension \(https://www.deutsche-rentenversicherung.de/DRV/EN/Leistungen/leistungen_node.html\)](https://www.deutsche-rentenversicherung.de/DRV/EN/Leistungen/leistungen_node.html).

You can also read the German government's [guide to social security in Germany \(https://www.bmas.de/EN/Services/Publications/a998-social-security-at-a-glance.html\)](https://www.bmas.de/EN/Services/Publications/a998-social-security-at-a-glance.html).

Benefits

Claiming UK benefits

Read our guidance on [moving, living or retiring abroad \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad). This covers how to claim UK benefits abroad, including Child Benefit.

You can also read guidance on [benefits and pensions for UK nationals in the EU, EEA or Switzerland \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/benefits-and-pensions-for-uk-nationals-in-the-eea-or-switzerland\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/benefits-and-pensions-for-uk-nationals-in-the-eea-or-switzerland).

Claiming German benefits

You may be entitled to some German benefits.

To find out if you're eligible and how to claim:

- read guidance on social benefits on the [Sozialplattform website \(https://sozialplattform.de/en\)](https://sozialplattform.de/en)
- use the German government's [social benefits finder \(https://sozialplattform.de/en/content/social-benefits-finder\)](https://sozialplattform.de/en/content/social-benefits-finder)
- read the German government's [guide to social security in Germany \(https://www.bmas.de/EN/Services/Publications/a998-social-security-at-a-glance.html\)](https://www.bmas.de/EN/Services/Publications/a998-social-security-at-a-glance.html)

Buying and renting property in Germany

Read our guidance on [moving, living or retiring abroad \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad). This covers buying and renting property abroad.

Contact an [English-speaking lawyer in Germany \(https://find-a-professional-service-abroad.service.csd.fcdo.gov.uk/find/lawyers?country=Germany\)](https://find-a-professional-service-abroad.service.csd.fcdo.gov.uk/find/lawyers?country=Germany) if you're considering buying property or land.

Voting in Germany

UK elections

Read our guidance on [moving, living or retiring abroad \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad). This covers how to:

- vote in UK elections from abroad
- register as an overseas voter

German elections

You cannot vote in German elections unless you hold German or EU citizenship. Read guidance on [foreign nationals' right to vote and stand in](#)

[German elections \(https://www.bmi.bund.de/EN/topics/constitution/electoral-law/auslaenderwahlrecht-en/auslaenderwahlrecht-en-node.html\)](https://www.bmi.bund.de/EN/topics/constitution/electoral-law/auslaenderwahlrecht-en/auslaenderwahlrecht-en-node.html).

You also cannot vote in European Parliamentary elections unless you hold citizenship of an EU country.

Studying

If you plan to study in Germany, you must [apply for a student visa or residence permit \(https://uk.diplo.de/uk-en/02/visa/2448956-2448956\)](https://uk.diplo.de/uk-en/02/visa/2448956-2448956).

You do not need a student visa if you have been living in Germany legally since before 1 January 2021, as you have [rights under the Withdrawal Agreement \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-europe\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-in-europe).

For more information, read guidance on:

- [studying in Germany \(https://www.study-in-germany.com/en/\)](https://www.study-in-germany.com/en/)
- [studying in the EU \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/study-in-the-european-union\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/study-in-the-european-union)
- [travel grants for students studying abroad or on placements \(England\) \(https://www.gov.uk/travel-grants-students-england\)](https://www.gov.uk/travel-grants-students-england)

You can also contact:

- your higher education provider in the UK or Germany
- the [Federal Ministry of Education and Research \(https://www.study-in-germany.com/en/get-in-touch/contact/\)](https://www.study-in-germany.com/en/get-in-touch/contact/)

Children

Read our guidance on [moving, living or retiring abroad \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad). This covers moving abroad with children, including:

- getting permission to take your child abroad
- claiming UK Child Benefit abroad
- child maintenance payments if a parent lives abroad

You can also read the German government's guidance on [financial support for families \(https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/living-in-germany/family-life/\)](https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/living-in-germany/family-life/)

[financial-support-families](#)).

Schools and education

The European Commission provides information about the [school system in Germany](#) (<https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/eurypedia/germany/overview>).

Each German state sets its own compulsory school age. However, in general, all children aged 6 to 18 must attend school in Germany.

For more information, read the German government's guidance on:

- [elementary school registration](https://verwaltung.bund.de/leistungsverzeichnis/EN/leistung/99088050034000/herausgeber/BY-3774/region/090000000000) (<https://verwaltung.bund.de/leistungsverzeichnis/EN/leistung/99088050034000/herausgeber/BY-3774/region/090000000000>) – select the region you live in
- [secondary school registration](https://verwaltung.bund.de/leistungsverzeichnis/EN/leistung/99088069034000/herausgeber/NI-12599149/region/030000000000) (<https://verwaltung.bund.de/leistungsverzeichnis/EN/leistung/99088069034000/herausgeber/NI-12599149/region/030000000000>) – select the region you live in

Childcare

The [federal states](https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/living-in-germany/discover-germany/german-states) (<https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/living-in-germany/discover-germany/german-states>) are responsible for state nurseries and preschools in Germany.

For more information, read the German government's guidance on [childcare in Germany](https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/living-in-germany/family-life/child-care) (<https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/living-in-germany/family-life/child-care>).

Births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships

Births

If your child is born Germany, register the birth with the German authorities. Read the German government's guidance on [what to do after a baby is born in Germany](https://verwaltung.bund.de/portal/EN/info-pages/nachdergeburt) (<https://verwaltung.bund.de/portal/EN/info-pages/nachdergeburt>).

Read our guidance on [moving, living or retiring abroad](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad>). This covers how to:

- register the birth with the UK authorities to get a UK birth certificate

- apply for your child's first British passport

Deaths

Read our guidance on [moving, living or retiring abroad](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad>). This covers:

- what to do after someone dies abroad
- how to register the death with the UK authorities

If someone dies in Germany, read guidance on:

- [what to do when someone dies in Germany](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-to-do-after-a-british-person-dies-in-germany) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-to-do-after-a-british-person-dies-in-germany>)
- [English-speaking funeral directors in Germany](https://find-a-professional-service-abroad.service.csd.fcdo.gov.uk/find/funeral-directors?country=germany) (<https://find-a-professional-service-abroad.service.csd.fcdo.gov.uk/find/funeral-directors?country=germany>)

Marriages and civil partnerships

Read our guidance on [moving, living or retiring abroad](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad>). This covers how to get married or get a civil partnership abroad.

The German government provides information on [marriage in Germany](https://www.germany.info/us-en/service/04-family-matters/marriage-in-germany-922550) (<https://www.germany.info/us-en/service/04-family-matters/marriage-in-germany-922550>) and [rules and recognition of marriage](https://verwaltung.bund.de/leistungsverzeichnis/en/rechte-und-pflichten/102837942) (<https://verwaltung.bund.de/leistungsverzeichnis/en/rechte-und-pflichten/102837942>).

Divorce and separation

Read our guidance on [moving, living or retiring abroad](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad). (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-living-or-retiring-abroad>) This covers how to get a divorce or end a civil partnership.

The European e-justice portal offers guidance on [divorce and legal separation in Germany](https://e-justice.europa.eu/topics/family-matters-inheritance/divorce-and-legal-separation/de_en) (https://e-justice.europa.eu/topics/family-matters-inheritance/divorce-and-legal-separation/de_en).

Consider taking legal advice from an [English-speaking lawyer in Germany](https://find-a-professional-service-abroad.service.csd.fcdo.gov.uk/find/lawyers?country=Germany) (<https://find-a-professional-service-abroad.service.csd.fcdo.gov.uk/find/lawyers?country=Germany>).

Documents for British people in Germany

Read our guidance on [documents for British people abroad](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/documents-for-british-people-abroad). (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/documents-for-british-people-abroad>) This covers:

- legalising and certifying UK documents
- marriage and civil partnership documents
- affirmations and affidavits
- witnessing signatures

Lawyers, translators and notaries

To find an English-speaking lawyer, translator or notary in Germany, read guidance on [professional services if you're abroad](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/professional-services-if-you-re-abroad) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/professional-services-if-you-re-abroad>).

Pets

If you want to bring your pet with you to Germany, read guidance on:

- [importing pets from non-EU states](https://www.zoll.de/EN/Private-individuals/Travel/Entering-Germany/Restrictions/Animals-and-plants-products-containing-animal-or-vegetable-substance/Protection-against-animal-diseases/Provisions-on-the-import-of-pet-animals/provisions-on-the-import-of-pet-animals.html#:~:text=have%20been%20properly%20vaccinated%20against,result%20of%20the%20blood%20test.) (<https://www.zoll.de/EN/Private-individuals/Travel/Entering-Germany/Restrictions/Animals-and-plants-products-containing-animal-or-vegetable-substance/Protection-against-animal-diseases/Provisions-on-the-import-of-pet-animals/provisions-on-the-import-of-pet-animals.html#:~:text=have%20been%20properly%20vaccinated%20against,result%20of%20the%20blood%20test.>), from the German Customs Authority ('Zoll')
- [taking your pet dog, cat or ferret to an EU country](https://www.gov.uk/taking-your-pet-abroad) (<https://www.gov.uk/taking-your-pet-abroad>)

Returning to the UK

Read [returning to the UK permanently](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/returning-to-the-uk) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/returning-to-the-uk>). This includes information on bringing family members back to the UK, tax and access to services.

If the NHS funds your healthcare in Germany through the S1 form, [contact the NHS Overseas Healthcare Team](https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/contact-the-nhs-overseas-healthcare-team) ([https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/contact-](https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/contact-the-nhs-overseas-healthcare-team)

[overseas-healthcare-services](#)) to cancel it.

If you get a German pension, contact the [pension services in Germany \(in German\)](https://www.deutsche-rentenversicherung.de/DRV/DE/Home/home_node.html) (https://www.deutsche-rentenversicherung.de/DRV/DE/Home/home_node.html).

You must also:

- de-register ('Abmeldung') with your local registration office ('Einwohnermeldeamt')
- tell your health insurance provider
- tell local service providers
- tell your bank

Disclaimer

We provide this information as a guide only. For definitive information, contact the German authorities.

Read our [consular information disclaimer](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/foreign-commonwealth-development-office-fcdo-consular-information-disclaimer) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/foreign-commonwealth-development-office-fcdo-consular-information-disclaimer>).

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