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Legal matters and rights

Basic Law and human rights

All people living in Germany must abide by the central principles of the political and legal order.

The most important legal basis for life in Germany is the **Basic Law**. It is the constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany.

According to the Basic Law, every person is a **free and self-determined individual**.

No distinctions may be made **on the basis of gender, origin (descent, language, homeland), skin colour, religion, faith or ideology, disability, age or sexual orientation**.

Germany is a federal state consisting of **16 federal states**.

Germany is a democratic state, which means that all state power emanates from the people.

Catalogue of fundamental rights

Protection of human dignity

Article 1

(1) Human dignity is inviolable. It is the duty of all state authority to respect and protect it.
(...)

Right to liberty of the person

Article 2

(1) Everyone has the right to the free development of his personality insofar as he does not violate the rights of others and does not offend against the constitutional order or the moral law.
(...)

This also includes the right to sexual self-determination. This means that every person may decide for themselves which sexual acts they want to participate in and no one may be forced to do something they do not want to do.

Equality before the law

Article 3

(1) All persons are equal before the law.

(2) Men and women shall have equal rights. The state shall promote the effective realisation of equal rights for women and men and shall work towards the elimination of existing disadvantages.

(3) No person shall be discriminated against or favoured on grounds of sex, descent, race, language, homeland and origin, creed, religious or political opinion. No one may be discriminated against because of their disability.

Freedom of faith, conscience and creed

Article 4

(1) Freedom of faith, conscience and religious and philosophical belief shall be inviolable.
(...)

Freedom of opinion, art and science

Article 5

(1) Everyone shall have the right freely to express and disseminate his opinions in speech, writing and pictures and to inform himself without hindrance from generally accessible sources. Freedom of the press and freedom of reporting by radio and film shall be guaranteed. There shall be no censorship.
(...)

Protection of marriage and the family and of children of unmarried parents

Article 6

(1) Marriage and the family shall be under the special protection of the state.
(...)

🌐 Here you can find the Basic Law in 11 languages: [Arabic](#), [Chinese](#), [English](#), [French](#), [Italian](#), [Persian](#), [Polish](#), [Russian](#), [Serbian](#), [Spanish](#), [Turkish](#) and [German](#).

🌐 This film clearly shows how the German constitutional state works: [German](#), [Dari](#), [Arabic](#), [English](#), [French](#), [Pashto](#), [Urdu](#).

Children have rights

Protection of children and young people

Children, young people and families enjoy special protection in Germany. This protection begins during pregnancy and continues until the child reaches the age of 18. In Germany, for example, it is forbidden to beat children: in Germany, children must be brought up without the use of violence. Every child must go to school.

Children have rights

In detail, this means

- Parental care and non-violent upbringing: every child has the right to grow up with their parents and be brought up by them. Without violence.
- Equality: All children are equally important. No child should be treated less favourably because they have a different skin colour, a different religion or come from a different country.
- Freedom of expression and participation: Girls and boys must be asked if decisions are to be made about them. Children are allowed to express their opinions without being penalised. Whether at home, at school, at a public authority or in court.
- Education: Girls and boys should be able to learn on an equal footing and receive an education that meets their needs and abilities.
- Health: Children should be able to live healthy lives, receive good medical care and be protected from illness, addiction and drugs.

- Protection from violence and sexual exploitation: Children have the right to be protected from violence, abuse and exploitation. Nobody is allowed to touch a child if the child does not want it.

Help with conflicts

When conflicts arise in the family, it can be useful to seek outside help. Especially if children are involved and if violence is being used. Please get in touch:

District of Emsland - Youth Welfare Office

Hauptstelle **Meppen**

📍 [Ordeniederung 1, 49716 Meppen](#)

☎ [05931/441401](tel:05931/441401)

Außenstelle **Lingen**

📍 [Am Wall-Süd 21, 49808 Lingen](#)

☎ [0591/843343](tel:0591/843343)

Außenstelle **Aschendorf**

📍 [Große Str. 32, 26871 Papenburg](#)

☎ [04962/5013139](tel:04962/5013139)

🕒 Monday - Friday: 8:30 - 12:30 and Monday - Thursday 14:30 - 16:00

💡 In urgent cases, the Youth Welfare Office can be contacted outside office hours via the emergency call centre ☎ [\(112\)](tel:112).

Marriage, family, life and educational counselling

Ehe-, Familien-, Lebens- und Erziehungsberatung im Bistum Osnabrück

📍 Versener Str. 30, 49716 **Meppen**

☎ [05931/12050](tel:05931/12050)

@ meppen@efle-bistum-os.de

Ehe-, Familien-, Lebens- und Erziehungsberatung im Bistum Osnabrück

📍 Hauptkanal rechts 75a, 26871 **Papenburg**

☎ [04961/3456](tel:04961/3456)

@ papenburg@efle-bistum-os.de

Psychologisches Beratungszentrum für Eltern, Kinder und Jugendliche; Ehe-, Familien- und Lebensberatung

📍 Bernd-Rosemeyer-Straße 5, 49808 **Lingen**

☎ [0591/4021](tel:0591/4021)

@ lingen@efle-bistum-os.de

🕒 Please refer to the respective locations for opening hours

Counselling centre for violence against children and young people

Deutscher Kinderschutzbund
Ortsverband Emsland Mitte
📍 Emsstraße 1-3, 49716 **Meppen**
☎ [05931/876580](tel:05931876580)
✉ info@kinderschutzbund-emsland-mitte.de
🌐 <https://www.kinderschutzbund-emsland-mitte.de/>
🕒 Monday - Friday: 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Der Kinderschutzbund OV Lingen e.V.
Beratungsstelle LOGO - Kinderschutz-Zentrum
📍 Wilhelmstr. 40a, 49808 **Lingen**
☎ [0591/2262](tel:05912262)
✉ info@logolingen.de
🌐 <https://www.logolingen.de/>
🕒 Monday - Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Number against grief for children and young people

Whether you have worries and problems in the family or at school, with friends or your partner: talking about it can help. Trained counsellors at the nationwide **children's and young people's helpline "Nummer gegen Kummer"** will take time for you, listen to you and show you ways out - anonymously, confidentially and free of charge.

☎ [116111](tel:116111)
🕒 Monday - Saturday: 14:00 - 20:00

Parents' helpline

☎ [08001110550](tel:08001110550) anonymous and free of charge
🕒 Monday - Friday: 9:00 - 17:00 and Tuesday and Thursday: 17:00 - 19:00

Women's rights

Labour and wages

On average, women in Germany earn less than men. They often work in areas that are paid less. But women also often earn less than their male colleagues for the same job. Politicians have been discussing various proposals for years to achieve greater pay equality. So far, however, not much has changed.

Many women's jobs are not perceived as work. They do the housework. They bring up the children. Or they care for sick or elderly family members. These jobs are unpaid. But they are still work. It is often not recognised.

Would you like to find well-paid work in Germany?

Then the first thing you should do is learn German. The BAMF offers courses especially for parents and women. Here you can also get information about childcare and the school system. Where you live, you can obtain information from [migration advice centres](#), [immigration authorities](#), employment agencies, [job centres](#) or directly from the [educational institutions](#) that offer integration courses.

Would you like to return to work after a career break? Perhaps reorient yourself professionally or refresh your skills?


The [Coordination Centre for Women and Business](#) is a place where women, especially those who want to return to work after a break, can find support. It offers help with all career-related questions and helps you to prepare for your return to work. The coordination centre is also the office of the Unternehmensverbund [vereinbar e.V.](#), which means that it is part of a network that is committed to reconciling work and family life.

FGM - female genital mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is prohibited in Germany. Since September 2013, FGM has been punishable by imprisonment. Parents are also not allowed to leave the country to have their daughter circumcised abroad. This is also prosecuted under German criminal law. Girls and young women can apply for asylum if they are threatened with being circumcised.

Many girls die during the mutilation or as a result of it. There are many dangerous after-effects of the mutilation:


- Incontinence,
- pain,
- heavy bleeding,
- complications during sexual intercourse and childbirth,
- infertility,
- Risk of HIV and hepatitis infection,
- blood poisoning and tetanus,
- states of shock,
- psychological trauma,
- depression.


If you are affected or threatened by genital mutilation, contact the helpline at  [08000116016](tel:08000116016). The helpline staff are available day and night and in various languages.


In Germany, it is possible to reconstruct the clitoris. This reconstructive operation can be performed by plastic surgeons. Ask a gynaecologist for advice. A "[Centre for Victims of Genital Mutilation](#)" has been founded in Berlin. Here, not only the physical but also the psychological consequences are treated anonymously and free of charge. You do not need health insurance for this.

Contact point:

baobab - zusammensein e.V.

 Georgswall 3, 30159 Hannover

 [0511/47262677](tel:051147262677)

 info@baobab-zs.de

Throughout Lower Saxony and in neighbouring Bremen, various self-help groups have been formed over the years in which health issues are discussed. There are currently the following

self-help groups [here](#).

Domestic violence

Your family and friends should support and protect you. However, this is not always the case. Sometimes these people can also hurt you. They can inflict violence on you. This violence can take different forms. It can be sexual. Or physical, such as punches or kicks. But it can also be psychological. If someone you know is violent towards you, this is called "domestic violence".

Domestic violence usually takes place in the home, but can also happen in other places. Many people think of domestic violence in terms of physical violence, i.e. sexual abuse or beatings. But domestic violence also takes other forms: If you are insulted, abused, threatened, locked up or controlled, this is also domestic violence. Stalking, i.e. when you are followed and watched, can also be a form of domestic violence. **All forms of violence are punishable in Germany.** You have the **right to a life without violence**. Domestic violence is not a private matter, but a violation of every person's right to physical integrity.

There are numerous contact centres in Germany for victims of domestic violence. Make use of the help centres.

Emergency card in Emsland

[Emergency](#) card for domestic violence with relevant advice centres in the district of Emsland

Violence against women helpline

☎ [08000/116016](tel:08000116016) (free of charge and anonymous)

🌐 www.hilfetelefon.de

Sexual abuse helpline

☎ [0800/2255530](tel:08002255530)

🌐 www.hilfetelefon-missbrauch.de

Counselling and support services on site

Sozialdienst katholischer Frauen e.V. Meppen - Emsland Mitte

📍 Nagelshof 21 b, 49716 Meppen

☎ [05931/98410](tel:0593198410)

@ info@skf-meppen.de

🌐 www.skf-meppen.de

🕒 Mondays - Thursdays 08:00 - 12:00 and 14:00 - 16:00

Fridays 08:00 - 12:30

Sozialdienst katholischer Frauen e.V. Lingen

📍 Burgstraße 30, 49808 Lingen

☎ [0591/800620](tel:0591800620)

@ info@skf-lingen.de

🌐 www.skf-lingen.de

🕒 Mondays - Thursdays 08:30 - 12:30 and 13:30 - 16:30

Sozialdienst katholischer Frauen Esterwegen e.V.

📍 Hauptstraße 50, 26897 Esterwegen

☎ [05955/2871](tel:059552871)

@ info@skf-esterwegen.de

🌐 www.skf-esterwegen.de

🕒 Closed on Wednesdays

Caritasverband für den Landkreis Emsland

📍 Kirchstraße 16, 26871 Papenburg

☎ [04961/94410](tel:0496194410)

📍 LK-Emsland@caritas-os.de

🌐 www.caritas.de

🕒 Mondays - Fridays 08:30 - 12:00

Tuesdays and Wednesdays 14:00 - 16:30

Further information can be found here:

🌐 www.gewaltlos.de

🌐 [ProBeweis network](#) (multilingual) with partner clinics Krankenhaus [Ludmillenstift Meppen](#) and [Marienhospital Papenburg-Aschendorf](#)

Women's and child protection centres

There are ways out of violence and opportunities for a future without violence. Women's shelters are facilities for women and their children who are acutely affected by violence or threatened by violence - regardless of age, income, residence status, sexual orientation or origin. The women's shelters are available 24 hours a day, including weekends and public holidays.

Frauen- und Kinderschutzhaus SKF Meppen

☎ [05931/7737](tel:059317737) (24 Stunden erreichbar!)

@ frauen-undkinderschutzhaus@skf-meppen.de

Frauen- und Kinderschutzhaus SKF Lingen

☎ [0591/4129](tel:05914129)

@ frauenhaus@skf-lingen.de

Die Adressen der Frauenhäuser bleiben zum Schutz der Betroffenen geheim.

Forced marriage

Advice, support and assistance in the event of (imminent) forced marriage and violence in the name of honour

Do you have to get married even though you don't want to? This is called forced marriage.


The Lower Saxony crisis hotline against forced marriage offers free, multilingual and anonymous counselling. You can reach the counselling service at: ☎ [0800-0667888](tel:08000667888).



Further information can be found in the flyer "**I decide whether and who I marry**". The flyer is available in various languages:



- [Forced marriage flyer in Albanian](#)
- [Forced marriage flyer in Arabic](#)
- [Forced marriage flyer in Bulgarian](#)
- [Forced marriage flyer in German](#)
- [Forced marriage flyer in English](#)
- [Flyer Forced Marriage in Kurdish](#)
- [Flyer Forced Marriage in Persian](#)
- [Flyer Forced Marriage in Romanian](#)
- [Flyer Forced Marriage in Serbian](#)
- [Flyer Forced Marriage in Turkish](#)

The [TERRE DES FEMMES](#) organisation has published a brochure for parents in eight languages. It is called: **"Strong families have strong daughters"**. The brochure explains what happens when girls are forced or forced to marry at an early age. It also talks about what laws are in place and where you can get help. The brochure says that no religion allows forced marriage. The brochure is available in Arabic, German, English, Farsi, French, Kurdish, Romanian and Turkish:

- [Brochure Arabic](#)
- [Brochure German](#)
- [Brochure English](#)
- [Brochure Farsi](#)
- [Brochure French](#)
- [Brochure Kurdish](#)
- [Brochure Romanian](#)
- [Brochure Turkish](#)

Papatya helps girls who experience violence in the family, forced marriage or abduction. It offers protection, counselling and help and is aimed at affected girls and those around them, such as their friends. They help on the phone or online :  <https://papatya.org/>

The nationwide help hotline "Violence against women" helps women who experience violence. You can call  116016 or get counselling online at:  <https://www.hilfetelefon.de/>

Men can also be affected by violence or forced marriage. The "Violence against men" helpline helps men. You can call  0800-1239900 or seek counselling online at:  <https://www.maennerhilfetelefon.de/>

Are you affected by the threat of forced marriage, abduction or violence and need a safe place where you can stay anonymously?

In Lower Saxony, there are places where young people can stay anonymously if they are affected by forced marriage, abduction or violence. The **Ada shelter** offers anonymous accommodation for girls and young women aged 13 to 21. Further information can be found here: [Ada shelter](#)

Anti-discrimination and inclusion

Equal rights for men and women

Equal rights for men and women

Women and men have the same rights. This is reflected in the law and in everyday life.

This means, for example:

- Girls and boys go to school together and receive the same lessons. They take part in sports lessons together.
- Women and men are allowed to study or learn a trade. In principle, all professions are open to all genders.
- Women also take on responsibility in society, for example in the police, in the health sector, in schools or in public offices and authorities. Their instructions must be followed.
- Women and men decide for themselves what work they want to do. They can dispose of the money they earn themselves.
- Women do not have to ask their husbands, parents or other family members for permission to work, open an account or conclude contracts.
- Women and men are allowed to dress as they wish.
- Women and men decide for themselves whether, when and whom they want to marry.
- Mothers are particularly protected. They must and may not work for six weeks before and eight weeks after giving birth. They may not be dismissed because of their maternity.
- The tasks and roles in the family are not prescribed.
- Women and men take part in public life. They attend cultural, political or sporting events, restaurants and bars.
- Women and men can vote and be elected to political office
- Women and men are equal in inheritance rights, daughters as well as sons.
- Sexual touching, comments or requests are only permitted if everyone involved agrees. A "stop" or "no" must always be respected.

This is not permitted in Germany, for example:

- Any form of violence in marriage.
- No one may be sexually harassed.
- Rape, even within marriage, is penalised.
- No one may be forced to marry. Coercion into marriage through violence or threats is punished.

Experiences with discrimination

Treating people unequally because of certain characteristics is prohibited in Germany. But it is still widespread. Whether when looking for accommodation, at work, in authorities, schools, doctors' surgeries, in leisure time or with the police. Discrimination can happen in all areas of life. Am I not allowed into the club because I have a disability? Did I not get the job because I wear a headscarf? Are my children treated worse at school because they speak little German? Do the police only check me on the long-distance bus because I have a different skin colour? Does the taxi driver refuse to give me a lift because I am transgender? Experiences like these

lead to anger, powerlessness and a feeling of helplessness. But you don't have to simply accept discrimination. You have the right to defend yourself against it.

All people in Germany have this right. Regardless of their origin or residence status. This is enshrined in the German constitution as one of the human rights. You can take legal action against discrimination.

Have I been discriminated against?

Sometimes you don't know exactly whether you have been discriminated against. You are unsure because other people don't see a problem with an action or don't think the discrimination is bad. This is where counselling can help. The staff at the counselling centre will take your experiences seriously. They can tell you whether your experience is also legally considered discrimination and what legal options you now have. But even if your experience is not legally considered discrimination, the counselling centre can help you. The staff can help you to come to terms with what you have experienced and develop strategies for the future.

The **anti-discrimination counselling centres** support all people who have experienced discrimination and would like advice.

Counselling for those affected in Lower Saxony

The Lower Saxony Discrimination Counselling Centre is there to help if you need support. They listen to you, understand your point of view and take the time to talk to you in detail.

It helps if you

- have been the victim of right-wing, racist or anti-Semitic violence.
- are a family member, friend or acquaintance of a victim
- have witnessed such an attack.
- want to help combat right-wing extremism, racism and anti-Semitism.

Counselling is confidential and free of charge. It is offered in several languages.

Contact details:

Region Northwest-Niedersachsen Exil e.V. | Betroffenenberatung Niedersachsen

📍 [Möserstraße 34, 49074 Osnabrück](#)

✉️ [@nordwest@betroffenenberatung.de](mailto:nordwest@betroffenenberatung.de)

☎️ [+49 \(0\) 54138069923](tel:+49(0)54138069923)

☎️ [+49 \(0\) 15737967272](tel:+49(0)15737967272)

🌐 <https://betroffenenberatung.de/beratung/>

You can obtain advice directly from the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency, for example, by calling [030185551855](tel:030185551855). The advice centre is available at 🕒 on Mondays from 1 - 3 pm and 🕒 on Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 am - 12 pm. The staff speak German. Counselling is free

of charge and anonymous if you wish. You will have to pay the usual telephone charges for the call.

Alternatively, you can also contact a [migration counselling service for adults](#) or the [youth migration service](#). The staff often speak many languages and can help you with all problems relating to life in Germany.

What do I do if I have been discriminated against by the police?

You can also experience discrimination at the hands of the police. One experience that many people in Germany have, for example, is so-called racial profiling. If a person is stopped, questioned, searched or even arrested by the police simply because they appear suspicious because of their skin colour or similar characteristics, this is discrimination. "Racial Profiling". But discriminatory insults, abuse or assaults can also happen. Victims of police brutality or police violence can report police officers.

Police officers are not above the law. What they may and may not do is regulated in the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and police law.

💡 Important: You have the right to ask for the police officer's identity card and to write down their details. This is important if you want to file a criminal complaint later. It is also always helpful to ask passers-by to observe the situation. Then you also have witnesses. Please note: You must file a criminal complaint within three months of the incident. You can do this directly with the public prosecutor's office. You do not have to go to the police.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans* and inter* (LGBTI)

Many different people live together in Germany. They have different religions. They are of different genders. They come from different countries. They have different political views. They have the same rights.

This also applies to people of different sexual orientations or gender identities: these include lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender and intersex people. In short, they are called LSTBI. They have the same rights in Germany as all other people.

There are three genders in Germany. These are "male", "female" and "diverse". People can change their gender in Germany. They can also have their name changed. Women are allowed to love and marry other women in Germany. Men are allowed to love and marry other men in Germany.

👥 Many LGBTI people have fled to Germany because they were persecuted in their home country. Are you a refugee and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex? Then you can contact one of the many LGBTI organisations in Germany. You will find support there. You can find their contact details at the LSVD project "Queer Refugees Deutschland". You will also find further information:

Lesbian and Gay Federation in Germany (LSVD)
Queer Refugees Germany" project

🌐 www.queer-refugees.de

@ queer-refugees@lsvd.de

Trans*Beratung Weser-Ems offers accepting, independent and professional counselling on all issues relating to trans*gender and gender identity.

They provide counselling:

- trans* (transgender, transsexual, transidentical) people
- People who wonder whether they might be trans*
- Relatives and associated persons
- People who are professionally involved with the topic

Trans*Beratung Weser-Ems

 [0160/5889070](tel:01605889070)

 @weser-ems@trans-recht.de

 <https://transberatung-weser-ems.de/>

Individual counselling appointments can be arranged in Lingen and Meppen.

People with disabilities

In Germany, almost one in ten people has a severe disability. Many more people have health impairments. Or they are chronically ill. For example, there are people who cannot see. They are blind. There are people who cannot hear. They are deaf. Some people's bodies are smaller than others. Some things are not so easy for them. You can't walk by yourself. Or it is more difficult to do a certain job. But they should also be able to participate in society. There are inclusion measures for this. For example, they get help at work. Or children receive special support even before they start kindergarten. It's called early intervention.

Early intervention

Early intervention is for young children who have a disability or could develop a disability. It also helps children who develop more slowly than other children in certain areas. Examples of early intervention are Speech support, vision school or movement therapy. Early intervention is available for children from birth to school age. Early support is important in order to avoid disabilities or to minimise the consequences of disabilities.

Your [paediatrician](#) can help you to find early intervention. You can also contact the local [health authority](#).

Severely disabled people

People with a degree of disability of 50 or more can obtain a severely disabled person's pass. There are a number of advantages associated with this card. For example, tax reductions. And reduced or free use of buses and trains. The benefits a person receives depend on the type of disability and the degree of disability. You can apply for a disabled person's pass from the pension office.

The family guide provides valuable information [here](#). You can find out what the degree of disability is. You will learn who determines the degree of disability. And what you can do if you do not agree with your degree of disability.

[Kontaktdaten des lokalen Versorgungsamtes einstellen]

Probleme bei der Inklusion

However, there are still many problems with the integration of people with disabilities. Because people are not disabled - they are disabled: The ATM that is too high prevents them from being able to collect money without any problems. The stairs are off-limits for wheelchairs. And the small font is a problem for visually impaired people. Do you see someone who might need help? Then ask if you can help.

The family guide provides valuable information [.](#)

Religious freedom

Freedom of religion applies in Germany. This is guaranteed by the Basic Law. You can practise your faith as you see fit, as long as you do not violate the Basic Law. You may also not be discriminated against on the basis of your religion, for example when looking for work. Religious freedom also means accepting the beliefs of others. Germany does not have a state church. State and religion are separate.

This means, for example:

- All people are free to choose and practise their own religion and beliefs.
- All people have the freedom not to be religious. Anyone who does not believe in God is allowed to say so publicly.
- People of different religions and beliefs may marry each other.
- Marriage only counts as a legally valid marriage before the registry office. Marriages entered into exclusively within the framework of a religion are not legally binding in Germany.
- Religious laws do not determine the legal system in Germany.

Asylum and refugees

This is just basic information on various topics. There are special rules and situations that must be observed. It is still important to seek advice from experts.

Residence status as an asylum seeker

Everyone in Germany has an ID card. This ID helps to identify people. As an asylum seeker, you also need an ID card. This allows the authorities to recognise your status. Your status determines whether you are allowed to work or not.

There are 5 different documents:

1. proof of arrival

Status: Asylum seeker

Background: You have told the authorities that you need asylum. The authorities have registered you in the system. However, you have not yet applied for asylum. This permit is valid until you submit your application. You submit the application to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF).



2. residence permit

Status: Asylum seeker

Background: You have applied for asylum. A group of people will decide on your application. This often takes a very long time. This permit is valid until the decision is made. The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) decides on the asylum application. Has your application been rejected as unfounded? Then you can appeal against it. You can do this at the administrative court. You are generally allowed to stay in Germany until the administrative court has made a decision.

This permit says whether you are allowed to work. The permit says where you can live.

- Would you like to work? Do you need a permit for this? You can obtain this from the [Foreigners' Registration Office](#). Your employer or you as an employee can apply for this.
- Would you like to find work? Contact the [migration advice centres](#)
- Do you need financial help? Go to the social welfare office in the [municipality where you live](#)



3. fictitious certificate

Status: Recognised refugees

Background: You have submitted an application to the foreigners authority. This application is intended to extend their right to stay. The authority then often issues a certificate. This certificate authorises you to stay. This is important because your application has not yet been processed.



4. residence permit

Status: Recognised refugee

Background: Your application for asylum has been accepted

The residence permit is a temporary residence title. It is issued for a specific purpose.

- You can later obtain a permanent right of residence (settlement permit)
- You have unrestricted access to the labour market
- The [job centre](#) can find you work
- The [local authority can](#) arrange social benefits for you



5. toleration

Status: Tolerated person

Background: Your application for asylum has been rejected

Tolerated stay is granted for a certain period of time. It is granted because deportation is temporarily impossible.

- An employment permit is generally required. You apply for this at the [Foreigners' Registration Office](#).
- Would you like to find work? Go to the [migration advice centres](#)
- Do you need financial help? Go to the social welfare office of your [local authority](#)



Application for asylum

If you are registered in Germany and live in shared accommodation, these are the next steps for you.

1. personal application for asylum

- You apply for asylum at the **Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)**
- Asylum procedure counselling can provide you with important information for the asylum procedure. The Refugee and Integration Counselling Service is responsible for this.
- **Important:** You can only submit your application in person. You cannot send this application by post.
- You will receive the appointment and the responsible BAMF office with your proof of arrival. If you have not been given an appointment, ask your accommodation manager

2. first interview appointment (asylum application)

3. personal interview

The second interview appointment is the actual interview. The BAMF will then decide on your asylum application. They will send you a decision. The decision will be explained in detail.

a) The decision is negative

- If the decision is negative and you wish to contest it (i.e. you do not agree with it), go to your [migration advice centre](#) immediately. They will discuss with you what you can do and can put you in touch with specialised lawyers. For example, you can take legal action against the decision.
- Would you prefer to leave the country voluntarily? Then you can receive financial support for your new start in your country of origin. Go to the [return counselling](#) service or the [foreigners authority](#).

b) The decision is positive, i.e. you are recognised as entitled to protection. The next steps are

Residence permit: You have received the positive BAMF decision. You must then apply for a residence permit immediately. You can obtain this from the [immigration office](#).

Family asylum and international protection for family members

You have been granted asylum in Germany. A member of your family also needs asylum. You can submit an application to the [BAMF](#). The member of your family will be granted the status of a person entitled to protection.

For the purposes of family asylum, family members include

- Spouses or registered partners,
- unmarried children who are minors,
- the parents of unmarried minor children,
- other adults who have custody of unmarried minor children,
- unmarried minor siblings of minors.

💡 Parents must have custody of their children. They must therefore be able to look after their children.

Do you want to bring your husband or wife to Germany? You must already be married in your country of origin. Then your husband or wife can also be granted asylum. The marriage must be recognised by Germany. The application for asylum must be submitted before or at the same time as your application. You must be entitled to protection.

Born in Germany:

You have already applied for asylum? Have you subsequently had a child in Germany? A separate asylum application can be made for your child. Inform the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees about the birth. You can also inform the Foreigners' Registration Office. The asylum application is then automatically deemed to have been submitted. The parents can submit their own grounds for asylum for their child. If they do not do so, the same reasons apply as for the parents. An appeal is also possible in the event of a negative decision by the Federal Office.

Likewise, and for the protection of the child, underage children will not and must not be returned separately from their parents in the event of a negative decision.

Further information can be found directly at the BAMF.

🌐 [Website family reunification \(BAMF\)](#)


Asylum counselling


The asylum counselling service advises people who have applied for asylum. You can also go to the counselling service if you are a new immigrant with permanent residence status.

Asylum seekers and refugees can seek advice on everyday matters. The counsellors help with the following topics:

- Asylum procedure - providing information and answering questions
- Information about German law
- Help and advice with questions about authorities

- Finding local services
- Orientation on site
- Advise and help with everyday problems
- Advice on integration programmes (such as language courses)
- Advice on questions about family reunification
- Refer people to other specialised services
- You are the contact person for volunteers. They answer specialised questions about the asylum procedure

 Would you like advice before your personal interview? Do you have questions about the asylum procedure? You can get advice from the [asylum procedure counselling](#) service.

 Do you have a secure right of residence? Then the [migration counselling](#) service can help you. It advises adults. Families can also seek help there.

 Are you under the age of 27? Then the [Youth Migration Service](#) is the right place to go.