

## Living together in Germany

### The Basic Law

In every country, there are rules that everyone must abide by. The most important law for Germany is the Basic Law. It is a collection of 146 articles. Each article stands for a law, i.e. a rule. These rules determine how we live together in Germany. The basic rights protect the freedom of each individual. They are set out in Articles 1 to 19 of the Basic Law (catalogue of fundamental rights).

### Protection of human dignity

#### Article 1

**(1) Human dignity is inviolable. It is the duty of all state authorities 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, provided that 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 take part in and no one may be forced to do something they do not want to do. You can find more information on this [here](#).

### 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.**

You can find more information on this [here](#).

**(3) No person shall be discriminated against or favoured on grounds of sex, descent, race, language, nationality 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 of course in [German](#).

BAMF explanatory videos are available in several languages on the following topics: [Basic Law](#), [gender equality](#), [protection of marriage and families](#), [freedom of opinion](#), [freedom of belief](#), [prohibition of discrimination](#).

## **Rule of law**

Germany is a democratic constitutional state. The Basic Law guarantees human dignity, freedom and justice. There are laws to ensure that human rights are respected.

Political decisions are made by representatives of the people. The representatives of the people are elected by the Germans in free and secret elections.

The laws apply equally to all people in Germany. The state must abide by the law. All people living in Germany must also abide by German laws.

If people believe that other people or the public administration are doing them an injustice, they can appeal to a court. The courts are independent.

The police have the task of ensuring that everyone can live in freedom and safety. The police are also bound by the law. If you need help in the event of danger or conflict, call the police! Vigilante justice is not permitted.

The practice of religion must not violate the law.

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

## **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

Human rights are important rights that always apply to all people all over the world. Human rights are rights that every person has by virtue of being human. They protect the dignity of every human being and are due to all human beings equally without distinction of any kind, such as "(...) colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status." (Article 2 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948)


There are 30 rights. The most important are:

- All people are of equal value.
- Everyone is entitled to their own opinion.

- The right to peace and security.

Visit the Street of Human Rights in our neighbouring city of Nuremberg! Each of the elements in the Street of Human Rights bears a short form of one of the human rights articles in German and another language. The Street of Human Rights is both an indictment of the crimes of the National Socialists and a reminder in stone to people that human rights are still being massively violated in many countries around the world today.

### **Human Rights Road**

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