

Clarification of identity

You came to Germany without a passport?

The authorities in Germany need to know who you are.

You would like to know:

- What is your name
- When you were born
- Which country you come from

This is called identity. To prove your identity, you need documents. The best option is a passport from your home country.

If you do not have a passport, you can also show other documents – for example:

- an ID card
- a birth certificate
- a driver's license

In Germany, all foreign nationals must have a passport (Section 3 of the Residence Act): “Foreign nationals may only enter or stay in the federal territory if they have a recognized and valid passport or passport substitute, unless they are exempt from the passport requirement by legal regulation.”

If you don't have a passport, you must try to get one. Importantly, you must help so that a passport can be obtained.

If you help out well, the immigration authorities can take this into account positively later – for example, when deciding whether you can stay.

Obligations to cooperate

General duty to cooperate (Section 15 of the Asylum Act): “The foreigner is personally obliged to cooperate in clarifying the facts of the case.”

See also Section 82 of the Residence Act (cooperation of the foreigner).

What does that mean?

You must help the authorities obtain the correct information about you. To do this, the following applies:

- You must say your name, when you were born and which country you come from – first verbally, later also in writing.
- You must show your passport if you have one. You must also hand it over if the authorities request it.
- You must show other important documents if you have them. For example:
 - Visas or residence permits from other countries
 - Flight tickets or train tickets
 - Driving license, birth certificate, marriage certificate, certificates

- If you don't have a passport, you'll need to help get a new one.
- If the authorities request it, you must show and hand over your passport or ID card – sometimes only for a certain period of time.

Important instructions :

- Submit all identity documents to the immigration office or the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. Have the office make a copy of your documents and confirm the submission in writing.
- If you don't have any papers, contact parents or siblings in your home country and ask them to obtain them. Alternatively, you can ask a lawyer or other people in your home country to obtain identity documents.
- Write down all steps of your involvement in the identity verification process and collect evidence.
- While the asylum procedure is still ongoing, the German authorities cannot oblige you to appear at your embassy.

Passport requirement in asylum procedures

During the asylum procedure, the immigration authorities cannot demand that you obtain a passport, but the passport requirement still applies; for example, it is fulfilled by the possession of an identity card substitute (Section 3 of the Residence Act).