

Notes on applying for confirmation of German nationality

– for applicants living outside of Germany –

(last updated: June 2018)

1. How does the confirmation process work?

When you apply for confirmation of German nationality, the Federal Office of Administration investigates whether or not you are a German national. It checks when and how you acquired German nationality and whether or not you have lost it since then.

If the Federal Office of Administration finds that you do have German nationality, you are then issued with a certificate of nationality to prove it.

2. What application forms are there?

Application form F: Form for applicants aged 16 or over
In questions of nationality, minors aged 16 or over are treated as adults; they are responsible for providing their own information.

Application form FK: Form for children under 16
This form must be signed by all persons with parental responsibility for the child as its legal representatives.

Appendix V: Form for detailing descent from a German family member
If you acquired German nationality by descent or adoption, you need to submit this form with your application.

Vollmacht: Form to give another person a power of attorney to complete the application process on your behalf

These forms are available

- on the Federal Office of Administration's website at www.bundesverwaltungsamt.de > 'Staatsangehörigkeit' > 'Feststellung der deutschen Staatsangehörigkeit'
- directly from the Federal Office of Administration on request
- directly from German missions abroad on request

3. How do I complete my application form?

Please complete your application form clearly (using block capitals where possible), carefully and completely. You need to submit your application in German using the German forms, though English translations of the forms are available to help you understand them. Any further correspondence you have with the Federal Office of Administration should be in German too.

Selected areas of application forms F and FK are explained below. If these notes do not answer all your questions, please consult your local German mission abroad.

Sections 1.9-1.15: Child's personal details: persons with parental responsibility (only in Application form FK for children under 16)

Please give details of all persons with parental responsibility for the child (those people who are legally entitled to represent it). These will usually be the child's mother and / or father. To keep the application procedure as simple as possible, you should nominate one of these persons to correspond directly with the Federal Office of Administration and name him / her in section 9.2.

If neither the mother nor the father has parental responsibility for the child, please explain this in the 'Addition information' section.

Sections 2.1-2.4: German nationality documents / identity cards / passports previously issued to the applicant / child

Please give details here of any German nationality documents which have in the past been issued to you as an individual or to your parents with you included (including any issued by another German authority).

Please also give details of any German identification documents (e.g. passports, identity cards, children's identity cards, diplomatic passports) you have been issued with.

Sections 3.1-3.8: Applicant's / Child's acquisition of German nationality

You will find a summary of the most important ways of acquiring German nationality in the appendix to these notes.

If you acquired German nationality in one of the "other ways" listed there, please give details in the "Additional information" section at the end of your application form. That is also where you should explain if you do not know how you acquired German nationality but have some reason for believing you have it – e.g. if you have always been treated as a German.

If you acquired German nationality by descent (including legitimation) or adoption through your German parent(s), you also need to complete Appendix V (see also section 4 below: Appendix V – Important notes).

Section 5.1: Where applicant / child has lived since birth

Please list as accurately as possible all the places (with dates) in which you have / the child has lived. You do not need to include holidays, business trips, etc. of less than three months' duration.

Sections 6.1-6.4: Applicant's military service (only in Application form F for applicants aged 16 or over)

If you have served in the armed forces or comparable armed organisation of any country other than Germany, you need to distinguish here between conscripted service (doing the military service required by law) and voluntary service (e.g. choosing a job as a professional soldier). Staying in the armed forces after you have completed the military service required by law, even if you only stay for one more day, counts as voluntary service.

Sections 8.1-8.2: Applicant's / Child's local German mission abroad

Please give your local German Embassy or Consulate here, even if you are submitting your application directly to the Federal Office of Administration or have granted someone else a power of attorney to submit it for you.

4. Appendix V – Important notes

You need to submit Appendix V with your application if you acquired German nationality by descent (including legitimation) or adoption through one or both of your parents being German.

If your German parent(s) themselves acquired German nationality by descent, legitimation or adoption, then you need to complete a copy of Appendix V for your German grandparent(s).

You need to complete Appendix V for every generation of your family until you get to a relative who

- possesses / possessed a certificate of nationality / native country issued by a German authority

or

- was born in Germany before 1914 or was a German who emigrated from Germany before that date

or

- acquired German nationality not by descent or adoption but by another way (e.g. naturalisation).

You need to complete a separate copy of Appendix V for each one of the people relevant to your application. On the front page of each copy, indicate which member of your family it is about by placing a cross on the family tree. The German terms used in the family tree are translated as follows: *Urgroßmutter* = great-grandmother; *Urgroßvater* = great-grandfather; *Großmutter* = grandmother; *Großvater* = grandfather; *Mutter* = mother; *Vater* = father; *Ich (Antragsteller)* = the applicant.

Example:



If other members of your family – e.g. your parent(s), child(ren) or sibling(s) – are applying for confirmation of German nationality at the same time as you, all of you can use the same Appendix V for your applications, instead of submitting several copies about one and the same relative. Any Appendix V submitted in this way will apply equally to all of your family’s simultaneous applications.

5. What documentation do I need to enclose with my application?

You always need to enclose

- one copy of your most recent German and (if you have one) non-German passport / identification document (showing the page(s) with your photograph and personal details)

➔ **Documentation of descent and marital status**

- any relevant birth certificates or certificates of parentage, marriage certificates and (if possible) family registers for yourself and for all those members of your family through whom you trace your German nationality back to a relative who either
 - possesses / possessed a certificate of nationality
 - or
 - can be proved to have become German (e.g. by naturalisation)
 - or
 - was treated as a German from 1914 or earlier
- any relevant adoption papers (adoption certificates, court orders, documentation of the adoption being recognised in Germany)
- any relevant divorce papers (final divorce decrees and, if applicable, certificates of recognition by the department of justice of a German federal state)

➔ **Documentation relating to your German nationality**

Documentation relating to acquisition of German nationality

any relevant certificates of naturalisation, certificates attesting to German nationality acquired by declaration or option, certificates of repatriate status issued under Section 15 of the Federal Expellees Act, papers of appointment as a civil servant, and certificates confirming German nationality on the basis of military service performed in the former German Wehrmacht or similar organisation

Documentation relating to inclusion in a group which has been the subject of collective naturalisation

any relevant documents which identify displaced persons (Vertriebenenausweis), attest to inclusion on an ethnicity list (Volkslistenausweis), certify ethnic origin (Volkstumsbescheinigungen) or otherwise indicate German ethnicity, documentation of (former) homeland rights, citizenship rights and periods of residence in the relevant territories, and certification that the right to refuse an inheritance was waived

Documentation relating to possession of German nationality or previous legal status or treatment as a German

any relevant certificates of German nationality, certificates of native country and papers attesting to legal status as a German; passports, identity cards and other identification papers (including old ones); extracts from (former) family registers, electoral rolls or other registers of citizens, documentation attesting to military service or work as a civil servant; documentation of registration in a place of residence; certification authorising maintenance of German nationality, expellee documents, (old) refugee papers, and registration certificates (one copy).

➔ **Other documentation possibly required**

You may also need to include some of the following documents:

- your authorisation to live in the country you are currently in (e.g. a permanent resident card (green card) or a residence card for foreigners)
- documentation of giving up the right to hold the nationality of another country
- documentation attesting to any other nationalities held / acquired
- records of change of name
- records of civil partnership
- authorisation from the Federal Ministry of Defence or Federal Office of Defence Administration to serve in another country's armed forces
- documentation of who has parental responsibility for a child (only in applications for children under 16)

6. In what form should I enclose my documentation?

You need to provide all certification either in the original or as photocopies certified by a state authority or a solicitor. All photocopies must be complete, meaning that you need to provide photocopies of the front and back of every piece of documentation. Uncertified photocopies and any other type of copy will not be accepted.

Photocopies can only be certified by the following:

- a solicitor
- or
- a registrar in the office which made the relevant entry in the civil status records
- or
- a German authority (e.g. registration office, registry office, diplomatic or consular mission abroad).

Photocopies certified by anyone else will not be accepted.

Please note that what is certified in this process is that the photocopies are identical in content to the original documents.

If you are submitting certified photocopies, you need to provide

- the original stamp of the office where they were certified and
- the original signature of the person who certified them.

It is not enough to submit a photocopy of the certifier's signature and stamp, not is it enough to have documents just signed by a translator.

Non-German public documentation (e.g. documents concerning civil status) usually need to be legalised, i.e. accompanied by an apostille issued under the Convention of 5 October 1961 Abolishing the Requirement of Legalisation for Foreign Public Documents.

The following types of document are exempt from this requirement:

- documents concerning civil status issued by an EU member state or Switzerland
- international multilingual documents (birth certificates, marriage certificates, death certificates) from Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia or Turkey.

You can find out more about the legalisation process from your local German mission abroad.

All non-German documents must be submitted together with a translation by a certified translator, with each document clearly paired up with its translation. Translations by anyone other than a certified translator will not be accepted.

NB: You can only get your original documents back once the whole process is completed and you request them specially. We therefore recommend only submitting certified photocopies rather than originals. If, exceptionally, we do need the original of a particular document, we will ask for it.

7. What are the fees?

Applying for confirmation of German nationality does incur a fee.

The fee for having your German nationality confirmed and being issued with a certificate of German nationality is 25 euros, payable once the decision on your nationality is taken. If the application is refused, there is a fee of 18 euros. If you withdraw your application after we have started working on it, there is also a fee of 18 euros.

8. Data protection information pursuant to Articles 13 and 14 of the EU General Data Protection Regulation

Under Section 31 of the Nationality Act, the Federal Office of Administration as the citizenship authority responsible for people abroad is entitled to collect, store, modify and use personal data insofar as this is necessary to discharge its duties (purpose).

You can find detailed information on processing personal data pursuant to Articles 13 and 14 of the EU General Data Protection Regulation on the Federal Office of Administration's website > 'Staatsangehörigkeitsverfahren in Bundeszuständigkeit' (general information) and on the more in-depth information page for the relevant process. There you can also find the contact details of the Data Protection Commissioner.

9. Contacting the Federal Office of Administration

Postal address

Bundesverwaltungsamt
50728 Cologne
Germany

Internet address

www.bundesverwaltungsamt.de

Email address

staatsangehoerigkeit@bva.bund.de

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Telephone numbers

+49 (0)228 99 358 4488 or +49 (0)221 758 4488 (inquiries service for people from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, the Republic of Moldova, Poland, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Belarus)

+49 (0)228 99 358 4486 or +49 (0)221 758 4486 (inquiries service for people from all other countries)

available Monday to Thursday, 8 a.m.– 4.30 p.m. and Friday, 8 a.m. – 3.00 p.m.

Fax numbers

+49 (0)228 99 358 2846 or +49 (0)221 758 2846

APPENDIX

Summary of the most important ways in which German nationality is and used to be acquired

German nationality is / used to be acquired by

• **descent**

→ Complete Appendix V
for the German parent

from a German father

- by children born in wedlock on or after 1 January 1914
- by children born out of wedlock on or after 1 July 1993

from a German mother

- by children born out of wedlock on or after 1 January 1914
- by children born in wedlock between 1 January 1964 and 31 December 1974
(if the child would otherwise have been stateless)
or on or after 1 January 1975

• **adoption as a minor**

on or after 1 January 1977 by at least one German adoptive
parent (father and / or mother)

→ Complete Appendix V
for the German
adoptive parent

• **being born in Germany**

on or after 1 January 2000 to non-German parents, at least one of whom meets
certain further conditions relating to residence law

• **naturalisation**

by being issued with a certificate of naturalisation

• **declaration**

by being issued with a certificate attesting that German nationality has been acquired by
declaration

- **by being issued with a certificate of repatriate status under Section 15 of the Federal Expellees Act**

on or after 1 August 1999

Other ways in which it is / used to be possible to acquire German nationality are as follows:

- **legitimation**

when a person's parents married (after that person was born)
between 1 January 1914 and 30 June 1998, and the father was German

→ Complete Appendix V
for the German parent

- **marriage to a German**

which took place between 1 January 1914 and 31 March 1953

→ Complete Appendix V
for the German spouse

- **being appointed as a civil servant in the German system**

if the appointment papers were issued before 1 September 1953 (this only applies to
certain timeframes and varies regionally)

- **option**

in connection with the post-First World War changes to the territories of the following
states:

- Belgium (Eupen-Malmedy, Moresnet)
- Lithuania (Memel Territory)
- Denmark (Northern Schleswig)
- Poland (Upper Silesia, Posen-West Prussia) and Gdansk
- Czechoslovakia (Hultschin area)

- **service in the former German Wehrmacht and other organisations**

where a certificate attesting that German nationality had been acquired was issued before
26 February 1955

- **collective naturalisation**

in connection with the 1938-1943 changes to the territories of the following states:

- Yugoslavia (Lower Styria, Carinthia, Carniola)
- Lithuania (Memel Territory)
- Poland and Gdansk (incorporated eastern territories)
- Ukraine (Reich Commissariat of Ukraine)
- Czechoslovakia (Sudetenland, Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia)

- **acquisition of GDR citizenship**

- **succession as a person with the status of being German, with effect from 1 August 1999**