



Information sheet: national visa

Visa for a German national Visa

Self employment

(Section 21 Residence Act)

Basic information

- Documents not in the English language must be submitted with a certified German translation. A translation of the personal data page of the passport is, however, not required.
- Certificates, diplomas, etc. must be presented in the original. Your original documents will be returned to you once your application has been processed.
- The visa must be approved by the Federal Employment Agency and, where applicable, the competent foreigners' authority in Germany. The visa can only be issued when these approvals have been received.
- **Processing time is as a rule ca. 3 months** but can take longer in individual cases.
- Flight reservations are not required to apply for a visa – please only book when you have received your visa.
- The mission abroad reserves the right to request further documents.
- Missing documentation delays the procedure and can result in your application being rejected.
- **Please do not contact the Embassy to check the status of your application during the normal processing period.** Such inquiries are extremely time-consuming for the visa section and can thus not be answered.
- **Please do not staple the documents.**

General information

According to Section 21 of the German Residence Act, a foreigner may be granted a visa for the purpose of self-employment, if

1. an economic interest or a regional need applies,
2. the activity is expected to have positive effects on the economy and
3. personal capital on the part of the foreigner or a loan undertaking is available to realise the business idea.

As the competent bodies at the planned business location assess whether the above-mentioned conditions for commercial self-employed activities by foreigners have been met in your case, **you are advised to contact the relevant authorities and enquire about special prerequisites before filing your visa application with us.** The authorities you would need to contact are, for example, the Aliens Authority, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the authority regulating admission to the profession concerned.

Before filling out the application form and booking an appointment, please prepare the following documentation for your application:



Use the following checklist to make sure your application documents are complete. All documents listed here are to be submitted in the requested form and order.

Visa application checklist

The following documents are to be submitted in full with every application.

	Missing
One (1) fully completed and signed application including declaration pursuant to Section 54 Residence Act	
One (1) recent biometric passport photo (see specimen photos)	
Valid and personally signed passport with at least two completely empty pages	
One (1) uncertified copy of the data page of your valid passport	
Complete curriculum vitae in tabular form in German	
Proof of qualification , e.g. university degree, training certificate, experience certificates, reference letters	
<p>Business plan - a well-structured and detailed description of the business idea, covering the following: (1 copy) (for further information on the business plan, please check https://www.existenzgruender.de/EN/Die-ersten-Schritte/Gruendung-planen/inhalt.html and https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/jobs/setting-up-a-business/business-plan/preparation/)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Business concept (e.g. information on products/services, legal form...) <input type="checkbox"/> Financing and investment plan <input type="checkbox"/> Capital requirement plan <input type="checkbox"/> Revenue forecast for the first three years <input type="checkbox"/> Market and competitive analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing strategy <input type="checkbox"/> If applicable: expected number of employees and trainees <input type="checkbox"/> If applicable: explanation of the extent to which the areas of innovation and research will be positively influenced by the project 	
Proof of available capital	
<p>If applicable: documents concerning your (planned) company in, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> deed of association (Gesellschaftsvertrag) <input type="checkbox"/> excerpt from the commercial register (Handelsregisterauszug) or at least the application for registration in the commercial register via a notary public <input type="checkbox"/> business registration (Gewerbeanzeige) with the Trade Office (Gewerbeamt) <input type="checkbox"/> employment contract of the managing director/s (Geschäftsführer/innen-Anstellungsvertrag) 	
<p>If applicable: further supporting documents depending on the specific case (2 copies), such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Rental contract, if already concluded <input type="checkbox"/> Proof of existing business relations in Germany/Europe <input type="checkbox"/> If applicable: degree from a state or a state-recognised higher education institute or comparable training institution in Germany 	
Proof of secure means of subsistence for at least one year	
From the age of 45: Proof of adequate provision for old age (original and one (1) copy (only if salary does not amount to at least 55% of the annual contribution assessment ceiling for the general pension insurance scheme – 2025: 53 130 € gross/per annum))	



Proof of adequate health insurance cover	
If as an employee you are subject to mandatory statutory health insurance, you must bear in mind that this insurance can only begin when you take up residence in Germany and enter into employment. If you enter Germany beforehand, private health insurance must be taken out for the period prior to employment beginning and prior to being eligible for statutory health insurance. In its terms and conditions, travel health insurance can exclude protection if a long-term or permanent stay is planned. So-called incoming travel insurance can also contain such exclusions.	
Applicant of a nationality other than South African	
Proof of residence title/habitual abode by South Africa	
Fee	
Visa fee of 75 €. Payable in Rand.	
Completeness of application	
The application is complete: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No, the information/documents indicated above are lacking.	
Declaration when applications are not complete: I have been informed that my application is not complete. I am aware that submitting an incomplete application can lead to the application being rejected. I would like to submit my application nevertheless.	

place, date, signature	