

Entry



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Entry Requirements

EU Nationals

Generally, citizens of the European Union (EU), the European Economic Area (EEA), and Switzerland may enter, stay, and work in Germany without any visa. They only have to register at the local registration office (Einwohnermeldeamt), which issues a declaratory residence permit if their stay in Germany exceeds 90 days.

EU citizens from the new Eastern European EU member states Bulgaria and Romania still require a work permit for taking up employment in Germany, issued by the Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit). This transitional rule will cease by the end of 2013. However, the labor market is open to university graduates from Bulgaria and Romania if they are employed in Germany according to their qualification.

Non-EU Nationals

Citizens of non-EU countries generally require a visa to enter, stay, and work in Germany.

For short-term stays in Germany (stays not exceeding 90 days per six-month period starting from the initial date of arrival) a Schengen visa is needed for entry into Germany. A Schengen visa is generally sufficient for most steps required to establish a business in Germany.

If the duration of the stay exceeds 90 days (per six-month period) or is a (self-employed or gainful) occupation taken up, all non-EU citizens require a residence permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis) or settlement permit (Niederlassungserlaubnis). For this purpose, the German embassies or consulates issue a national visa for entering Germany which is "transferred" into a residence or settlement permit in Germany.

Nationals of certain countries do not require a visa for entry into or short-term stays in Germany. The Federal Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt) provides detailed information on entry requirements into Germany for different countries.

Traveler's Allowances for Alcohol, Tobacco, Coffee and Others

Travelers are generally free to bring goods for private use or as gifts free of duty and usually without any formalities involved, when they enter Germany from another EU-country. However, certain limitations still apply to excise goods like tobacco, alcoholic beverages, and coffee. Exceeding these limits will make customs authorities suspect commercial activities, which can make the traveler liable for import turnover and excise taxes. In such cases, providing proof of personal use of these items can free travelers from this liability.

The general limitations for travelers entering Germany from EU Member States are as follows:

tobacco products	
cigarettes	800 pcs.
cigarillos (cigars with a max. weight of 3 g apiece)	400 pcs.
cigars	200 pcs.
tobacco for smoking	1 kg

Excess quantities of tobacco products brought into Germany will be seized and destroyed - in addition to being taxed retroactively.

alcoholic beverages	
spirits	10 liters
intermediate products (e.g. liqueur wine, vermouth)	20 liters
wine (of which 60 liters may be sparkling wine)	90 liters
beer	110 liters
coffee (instant or roasted)	10 kg

Travelers from non-EU countries (including Overseas Countries and Territories of EU countries), however, are subject to more stringent limitations. Articles intended for personal use, souvenirs and gifts, up to a certain value, can be imported duty-free if travelers accompany the respective goods when clearing customs. It is also of advantage to keep purchasing receipts of these items, in order to prove their trade value and origin. Please note: goods sent by mail are not considered to be accompanied or carried by the traveler. The general limitations from travelers from outside the EU are as follows:

tobacco products	importer must be at least 17 years old
cigarettes	200 pcs.
or cigarillos	100 pcs.
or cigars	50 pcs.
or smoking tobacco	250 g
or proportionate amounts of each	
alcohol and alcoholic beverages	importer must be at least 17 years old
spirits with an alcohol content of more than 22 % by volume or undenaturated ethyl alcohol with an alcohol content of 80 % by volume	1 liter
or alcoholic beverages with an alcohol content of 22% or less by volume	2 liters
or sparkling wine	2 liters

or proportionate amounts of each	
and non sparkling wine	4 liters
and beer	16 liters
medicine	
the quantity required for personal use during the trip	
other goods	
air and sea travelers	up to a total value of 430 EUR
other travelers	up to a total value of 300 EUR
travelers under 15	up to a total value of 175 EUR

The Customs Information Desk can provide further details on questions you may have about specific customs restrictions regarding plant and animal life, endangered species, cash and cultural goods as well as restrictions applicable to transportation personnel (i.e. pilots), those living on the German-Swiss border and those who regularly have a cross border commute to work.

[http:// www.ixpos.de/IXPOS/Navigation/EN/Your-business-in-germany/Marketplace-germany/Your-stay-in-germany/entry.html](http://www.ixpos.de/IXPOS/Navigation/EN/Your-business-in-germany/Marketplace-germany/Your-stay-in-germany/entry.html)

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