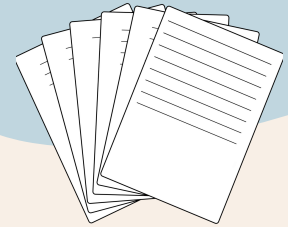


# FIRST STEP IN GERMANY



## Migration laws in Germany

Non-EU citizens are only allowed to enter Germany if they have a valid passport or passport replacement. You need a visa to enter Germany. You must apply for the visa in person at the German Embassy or Consulate. The visa is for a specific purpose, i.e. you must state in your visa application why you want to enter Germany (for example, as a tourist, to take up employment, to marry). In principle, you cannot change the purpose of the visa during your stay in Germany. If you wish to do so, you must return to your home country.

## Work in Germany

**You cannot work in Germany on a tourist visa.**

It is difficult to get an entry visa for purpose of taking up employment in Germany because Germany holds a recruitment stop for many work areas. Working permit a restrictively issued and you need to prove a concrete offer of employment like a certification from the employer or a work contract.



Visa for employment for qualified foreign employees are more easily issued, for example as a specialty cook or as a nurse in hospitals or old age homes. For unqualified jobs, only in exceptional cases permission is granted, for example in the area of seasonal activities like agriculture and hotels or as domestic worker in diplomatic households.

## Residence status in the context of a marriage

Spouses moving to Germany must acquire basic German language skills (A1) before entering the country and prove this by means of a certificate from the Goethe-Institut.



If you marry a German, you can only get a permanent right of residence after 3 years of marital cohabitation. If you or your partner separate before 3 years have elapsed, you must leave Germany unless you can prove that continuing your marriage would cause you undue hardship. This could be the case if your partner has committed physical, psychological or sexual violence against you. Marital rape is a punishable offence in Germany.

## RISKS RELATED TO MIGRATION

Migrants are at risk of sexual and labor exploitation. Make a list of important contact details prior to your departure. This includes numbers of your embassy, NGOs, your family, friends. Keep these contact details with you at all times.

- Make copies of your passport and other important documents that you are taking with you and leave a set of these copies with family or friends.
- Fix a particular time with a family member or a friend at which you will regularly telephone them
- If you do not have any money for the journey and a person or an agency apparently generous offers to take you free of cost abroad where you can then repay the debt, you should be very cautious. Our experience has shown that the conditions under which some women have to repay the debt are very bad for they are in extreme dependence and thereby become vulnerable to blackmail.
- Enquire about the actual costs e.g. arising for the visa, the passport, ticket etc. to prevent an exorbitant price being presented to you.
- It is, likewise, important to know what you will be actually earning in Germany and whether you will be able to settle the payment instalments with these earnings. You must also consider that the cost of living in Germany is very high.



# WHAT TO DO IN CASE YOU EXPERIENCE VIOLENCE

If you, in spite of all preparations find out that you have been deceived in Germany and for example



- Your passport has been taken away from you;
- You have to work under totally different conditions than were promised to you;
- You are only told after arrival in Germany that you have run into debt for the journey and the settlement and therefore a large part of your salary will be withheld;
- You are forced into prostitution or other work;
- You are in a situation of extreme exploitation either in prostitution or in any other activity;
- You have experienced brutality e.g. beaten up, maltreated, raped or imprisoned;
- You are intimidated or made to submit with threats of violence against you or your family;

Then you could be a victim of a crime maybe of human trafficking. You are entitled to receive counselling and support, also if you have no resident status or no documents.

## CONTACTS

The violence against women support hotline

# 116 016

