

Immigration To Germany -- This Is Your Chance

Germany lies in the heart of the European Union and is therefore quite naturally open to visitors both temporary and permanent from all neighboring countries.

However, increasingly in recent times visitors from third world nations and the US, as well as other parts of the world have found various reasons to come to Germany.

Visitors from outside of the European Union do need to go through formal channels in order to successfully carry out their immigration to Germany.

It's a surprising fact that Germany did not even consider it necessary to have an immigration policy until the early 1990s. Perhaps it was the 80 million strong population that prevented the authorities from even considering the question of immigrants.

But today about 10% of the population are immigrants ranging from overseas students to multi-national employees. And clearly this means certain laws are in place to smoothen the process for those considering immigration to Germany.

Accordingly, immigration to Germany requires travelers to hold a residence permit to legally live and work in the country. This can be of different types. Generally speaking this can be in the form of a visa that is issued by the German embassy in your country. Then there is the limited residence permit, and finally the unlimited settlement permit which grants you permanent residency status.

Other than these there is also the *Duldung* or tolerance permit issued to illegal immigrants who are unable to be deported due to various reasons.

I strongly recommend you apply for a German visa in your home country, **not** here in Germany. Why? Simple... If you do apply for it in Germany, the likelihood is huge that the German government will send you back home sooner rather than later. There were too many who thought they could just stay here and wait for approval after they helped during the FIFA World Cup 2006. The surprise was huge and they started crying once they held the *Good Bye* letter in their hands.

Immigration to Germany entails all travelers other than EU residents to have a valid passport. EU members only need to present an identity card. Along with your passport you should have a valid visa authorizing you to enter Germany. This has to be applied to and issued by the embassy in your country.

Once you received your German visa, you enjoy the freedom of traveling through European countries without having to apply for yet another visa. In other words, a German visa is valid in all countries of the European Union.

The type of visa would depend on your reason for travel whether work, study, marriage or something else. Any stay longer than 3 months warrants a national visa which is of the long-term or permanent category.

If your immigration is for employment purposes, you need to show proof of employment and the details of your German employer. Normally your work permit would be of 3–5 years duration. According to the new German Immigration Act of January 2005 highly qualified persons with a guaranteed job offer are granted permanent residence status with permission to work.

If you're here for studies you need to produce evidence of enrollment. Once you've done your graduation, you have a year's time to find a job if they intend to stay on in Germany. You can be self-employed and migrate to Germany but you would need to bring in about a million euro and provide employment to at least 10 people.

Another important criterion for immigration to Germany is health insurance. You should provide proof of insurance in order to get a German visa. Medical treatments here are pretty expensive and the authorities have to be satisfied that you are able to afford them. Once you're here and have been employed you should choose a local health insurance.