

Planning your stay and before your departure

- Make plans for the start of your work and coordinate dates with your (host) institute early in the process.
- Visa?**
 - Gather information about whether you need a visa and what documents are required as early as possible. It can take several weeks or months to get an appointment and obtain your visa.
- Appointment with the immigration office/registration authority**
 - Make an appointment with the immigration office in the municipality where you are going to live (the registration authority is responsible in the case of EU citizens) in order to register within the first two weeks after your arrival and apply for a residence permit if necessary. Non-EU citizens must request a residence permit if they are staying in Germany for longer than 90 days. Please note: not all visa or visa waiver programmes qualify for such permits.
- Accommodation**
 - Gather information about the housing market at your new place of residence early on. In order to register with the municipality, you need a '*Wohnungsgeberbescheinigung*', a confirmation from your landlord that you will have a place to stay. Make sure that your future landlord is willing to provide this document. With leases of less than three months, this is often not the case.
- Health insurance**
 - Take out health insurance (also for accompanying spouses or children). This is usually already required to obtain a visa and will definitely be needed when applying for a residence permit.
- Daycare/school**
 - If needed, start enquiring early about childcare/schools in the area. In Germany, there are set registration dates for kindergartens and schools. It is possible to have a child join during the school year but it might take longer to find a place in a suitable facility.

After your arrival

- Got your *Wohnungsgeberbescheinigung*?
- Have you made an appointment to **register** with the municipality and apply for a **residence permit**? If you haven't, you need to do so now. You may have to wait for an appointment for several weeks (also register your accompanying spouse and children).

Check list for Researchers

- Open a **bank account**
 - You usually need at least a confirmation of your registration with the municipality and your tax ID number. If you have not yet received either, you can try to open an account with your *Wohnungsgeberbescheinigung* and your employment contract.
- If this is not covered in your rental agreement, sign up with an **energy provider** and a **phone company**. When doing so, look at minimum terms and notice periods in the relevant contracts!
- Gather information about further insurance options and potential rights to claim a pension. Please find basic information about this on our website.
- TV and radio licence fees:** You will receive a letter from the GEZ licence agency. The fees are for the public radio and television broadcasting service and paying them is mandatory. You can register or cancel your contributions using an online form.
- At the University:** If you have not yet done so, sign your employment contract and contact your institute or faculty. They should be able to help you regarding access to the Internet, your staff or guest ID card, library access, etc.

Important documents

Documents from other countries must be submitted in the form of certified German translations. They either need to be presented as originals or certified copies.

- Passport (validity: entire duration of your stay + 3 months)
- Visa if required
- Letter of invitation from the University, grant confirmation and/or hosting agreement, employment contract with the University if applicable
- Biometric passport photo, potentially further passport photos (please note the requirements regarding passport photos from the Federal Foreign Office). This is needed for the residence permit.
- Birth certificates of all members of your travelling party
- Marriage certificate if applicable
- Officially certified copies of your doctoral diploma or diplomas of other academic degrees
- Vaccination record (for children, make sure it includes vaccinations against measles as this is obligatory for kindergarten and school)
- Medical history, required medication if applicable (pharmaceuticals may be imported if required for your personal use but only up to the quantity required for three months. For everything beyond that, a doctor's certificate is required.)
- An international driving licence or a driving licence from your country (depending on the country) if needed. If you would like to drive in Germany for longer than six months, you may have to exchange your licence or pass another driving test.