



## **General information on applying for a long-term (national) visa as a non-Turkish citizen in Turkey (last updated February 2021)**

*This information sheet contains all relevant information in order to apply for a national visa as a non-Turkish citizen at the visa sections in Turkey. Besides important advice on the procedure, it also contains answers to frequently asked questions. The information was put together with utmost care, nonetheless it cannot be exhaustive. The visa sections assume no liability.*

### **What is a national visa and when do I need it?**

A national visa (also: Type D visa) is necessary whenever you plan a stay of more than 90 days in Germany (i.e. for studies, family reunion, employment). For shorter stays, kindly apply for a Schengen visa. The necessary information can be found on our [website](#).

### **When can I apply for a national visa as a non-Turkish citizen in Turkey?**

You can apply for a national visa at the German visa sections in Turkey without Turkish citizenship if your permanent residence is in Turkey. This means that the main focus of your life is in Turkey. It is not sufficient to have a Turkish residence permit or shares in a Turkish company and live elsewhere.

Permanent residence is usually established by living in Turkey uninterruptedly for at least 6 months without longer stays in another country at the date of your visa application.

Permanent residence is also established without a stay of 6 months minimum if you have a long-term right of residence in Turkey (i.e. as a registered refugee or with a residence permit for family reunion). The Turkish short-term residence permit ("Kısa Dönem / Short Term") – even if issued for 6 months or longer – does not establish permanent residence. In this case, the directive mentioned above for a stay of 6 months minimum applies.

Please provide proof of permanent residence in Turkey when applying for your visa.

### **Attention, special remarks for applicants from Syria and Afghanistan:**

- Applicants whose permanent residence is in Syria can apply for a national visa at the visa section of the Consulate General in Istanbul as the German Embassy in Damascus is closed
- Syrian nationals whose permanent residence is outside of Syria or Turkey must apply for a visa at the German visa section responsible for their country of residence. It is not possible to apply at the German Consulate General in Istanbul.
- Applicants whose permanent residence is in Afghanistan can only apply for Schengen (short-term) visa at the German Consulate General in Istanbul. In order to apply for national visa, please only contact the German visa sections in Islamabad and New Delhi.



## Which German visa section in Turkey is responsible for my visa application?

Only the visa section that is responsible for the consular area including your province of residence is responsible for your visa application.

The visa section of the German Embassy in Ankara is responsible for the provinces listed below:

Adana, Adıyaman, Ağrı, Aksaray, Amasya, Ankara, Ardahan, Artvin, Bartın, Batman, Bayburt, Bingöl, Bitlis, Çankırı, Çorum, Diyarbakır, Elazığ, Erzincan, Erzurum, Gaziantep, Giresun, Gümüşhane, Hakkari, Hatay/Antakya, İçel (Mesin), Iğdır, K'maraş, Karabük, Karaman, Kars, Kastamonu, Kayseri, Kilis, Kırıkkale, Kırşehir, Konya, Malatya, Mardin, Muş, Nevşehir, Niğde, Ordu, Osmaniye, Rize, Samsun, Şanlıurfa, Siirt, Sinop, Şırnak, Sivas, Tokat, Trabzon, Tunceli, Van, Yozgat oder Zonguldak

The visa section of the German Consulate General in Istanbul is responsible for the provinces listed below:

Balıkesir, Bilecik, Bolu, Bursa, Çanakkale, Düzce, Edirne, Eskişehir, İstanbul, Kırklareli, Kocaeli, Tekirdağ, Sakarya, Yalova

The visa section of the German Consulate General in Izmir is responsible for the provinces listed below:

Afyon, Antalya, Aydın, Burdur, Denizli, Isparta, Izmir, Kütahya, Manisa, Muğla, Uşak

### **Exceptions:**

- Syrian nationals can only apply for a national visa at the German Consulate General in Istanbul, irrespectively of their residence in Turkey
- The same applies for all non-Turkish nationals who want to apply for a visa for family reunion and whose family member in Germany was granted a protection status (residence permit according to section 25 or 26 of the German residence law). This group of applicants also can only apply at the German Consulate General in Istanbul

## Do I need an appointment in order to apply for my visa and how can I get this appointment?

It is not possible to submit an application without booking an appointment in advance. Therefore, please book an appointment leaving sufficient time in advance.

Appointments are only scheduled by the call center of our external service provider iDATA.

The call center can be reached from Turkey via 08504608493 (0850460VIZE) and from abroad via 0090-212-970 8493 from Monday to Friday between 8 and 12:30 as well as between 13:30 and 17:30 (Turkish time; time difference to Germany +1 hour in summer, +2 hours in winter). The call center staff can take your call in German, Turkish or English.

For the appointment booking, iDATA charges a fee of 7,80 euros. The fee can be paid by credit card or advance deposit at every YapıKredi Bankası in Turkey. Depending on the payment method and the respective bank, additional charges may occur. The fee payment can also be done at the iDATA offices. The appointment booking still needs to be done by phone.

Booking an appointment via email, online or any other way is not possible.

### **Exceptions:**

- Syrian nationals who want to apply for visa for family reunion must book their appointment not through the call center but the specially set up iDATA website [nationalvisagermany.idata.com.tr](http://nationalvisagermany.idata.com.tr)  
The website is available in Arabic, Turkish and German.
- Family members of all nationalities who want to apply for family reunion with a person with subsidiary protection status cannot book an appointment through iDATA. They need to register first with the Federal Foreign Office and will then be contacted and counselled by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). After this advance counselling, an appointment will be scheduled.  
[Please click here for registering.](#)

### **Which documents do I need?**

The required documents depend on the purpose of your planned stay. On our website you can find document lists for most purposes. If you are unsure which list is the correct one for your application, kindly contact the responsible visa section in advance by email.

When booking an appointment via iDATA you will receive a list of necessary documents together with your appointment confirmation.

Providing complete documents does not constitute a legal claim for a visa. Instead, it enables the visa section to check the individual legal requirements. Additional documents not listed on the document lists may need to be provided. You will be informed after applying if that is the case in your application and will receive adequate time for preparing the requested documents.

For foreign civil status certificates and other public certificates please check on the website of the German mission in the issuing state whether any formal steps must be taken in order for the document to be accepted by German authorities (i.e. legalization, apostille).

We only accept legalizations done by German missions abroad. Legalizations of foreign, non-Turkish documents by Turkish authorities are not accepted.

The legalization can only be done by the German mission in the country where the document was issued. The German missions in Turkey cannot legalize any non-Turkish documents.



The contact information and websites of all German missions can be found on the website of the [Federal Foreign Office](#).

#### **Exceptions:**

- The Visa section at the German Consulate General in Istanbul is authorized to legalize certain Syrian civil status certificates if submitted in a visa application for family reunion to persons with protection status. Legalizing other documents or legalizing documents outside of the visa application procedure is not possible.
- When applying at the visa section of the German Embassy in Ankara or the German Consulate General in Izmir, Syrian documents must be legalized in advance by the German Embassy in Beirut.

#### **When is my foreign academic degree recognized in Germany?**

In order to check whether your foreign academic degree is assessed as equivalent or corresponding to a German academic degree in the visa application process, you have two options:

##### Option 1: Assessment of your degree(s) in the Anabin database

Many degrees and the issuing universities can be found in the ANABIN database (filled by the ZAB, see below).

In order to be seen as equivalent / corresponding in the visa application, both your degree and your university must be listed and assessed in ANABIN.

If your university is assessed as „H+“, it is sufficient for the purposes of the visa application process if your degree is assessed either as „equivalent“ (gleichwertig) or “corresponding” (entspricht) to a German academic degree.

If your university is assessed as „H+/-“, your degree must be assessed either as „equivalent“ (gleichwertig) or “corresponding” (entspricht) to a German academic degree and additionally must be listed in the degrees awarded by your specific university.

In all other cases or if only your university but not your degree are found in ANABIN, your degree cannot be recognized solely based on the information in the ANABIN database. You need to turn to the Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB) for an individual “Statement of Comparability for Foreign Higher Education Qualifications”. Please note that the visa section has no discretion in that case.

Please always present current excerpts of ANABIN regarding your university and your degree. Older assessments in ANABIN are irrelevant for the review of your degree in the course of the visa application, the information at the time of your application is relevant. The ANABIN database can be found [here](#).



## Option 2: Individual “Statement of Comparability for Foreign Higher Education Qualifications”

You can have your degree checked for equivalency to a German academic degree by the Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB). In that case you will receive a written confirmation after the review is finished. Please submit this confirmation together with your other application documents.

All other information on this procedure can be found on the [website of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany \(KMK\)](#). The visa sections cannot counsel you in that regard or apply for the necessary statement of comparability in your place.

### **What are regimented professions and what do I need to keep in mind for them in the visa procedure?**

Regimented professions are professions where a special permit is necessary for a person to be allowed to work in this profession. This applies irrespective of the citizenship of the person and the country where the qualification was obtained.

In Germany, especially professions in the health care sector are regimented professions (i.e. doctors, nurses) but also i.e. lawyers, tax advisors and auditors.

In these cases, you need to prove that you are allowed to work in a regimented profession for the visa application. For regimented professions, it is not sufficient to have a German university degree, a German vocational training certificate or a recognized foreign university degree or vocational training certificate.

Vice versa, the fact that you have received the permit to work in a regimented profession does indeed mean that your foreign qualification has been assessed as equivalent to a German qualification.

You can find the responsible authority for your permit [here](#).

### **What does „recognized“ vocational training qualification mean?**

Since 1 March 2020 when the Skilled Immigration Act came into effect it has become easier to immigrate to Germany especially for applicants with a German or recognized foreign vocational training. Members of this group can now also enter Germany to look for a job.

For a German vocational training to fall into this category, it is necessary that the training took at least 2 years.

Applicants with a foreign vocational training must fulfill the condition that a recognition procedure for their training is undertaken by the relevant body in Germany and it

concludes that the training is equivalent to a German one. The written confirmation about this is a requirement for a successful visa application.

You can find detailed information on that topic and how to find the relevant body in Germany on the [official website](#).

### **How high is the fee for a national visa?**

The fee for a national visa currently amounts to 75 euros for adults and 37,50 euros for minors. The fee must be paid when submitting the application in cash and in euros.

Exempt from the visa fee are spouses and minor children of German or EU citizens and parents of minor German children or children with an EU citizenship.

Researchers, guest scientists and students who are financially supported by a scholarship from German or EU public funds are also exempt from the fees if they can present proof at the time of application.

### **Where do I apply for the visa?**

In most cases you can only submit your application directly at the visa section.

Since 1 March 2020 when the Skilled Immigration Act came into effect it has become possible to submit your visa application for certain visa purposes directly with our external service provider iDATA. This ensures short waiting times for an appointment. You will receive the information where to file your application when contacting the iDATA call center in order to book an appointment.

If you can submit your application at iDATA, you will pay a service fee and the visa fee and will submit all documents there.

iDATA will then forward your application to the visa section to be reviewed there. iDATA only checks whether your documents are complete. The responsibility for checking your documents and the next steps lies only with the visa section. iDATA has no influence on the decision of any visa application. For any questions regarding your application, kindly only contact the visa section.

### **What do I need to keep in mind when submitting my application?**

Your individual appointment confirmation will contain detailed information regarding that issue. You will receive it after booking an appointment via iDATA. In it, you will find all necessary documents for the purpose of your planned stay and information which languages are spoken in the visa section. If you are not able to communicate very well in one of the languages mentioned there, you will need to bring a translator.

Filing a visa application at the visa section or the iDATA offices is only possible in person.

For minor children both parents and the child must come in person to the appointment. If one parent cannot come to the appointment, he / she must present a notarized power of attorney for the other parent.

This does not apply for visa applications for family reunion to a parent living in Germany, if the other parent (living in Turkey) applies for a visa to join their spouse at the same time together with the child.

**What happens after the application has been submitted? How long will it take until a decision can be taken?**

The visa section will check your application. If we have questions for you or need additional information, we will contact you usually in the first 2 weeks after the application has been submitted.

If we notice already at the counter that there are documents missing, your application will only be checked once the missing documents have been submitted.

Please EITHER send us additional requested documents via email / fax OR via post OR hand it in in person at the gate. Submitting it multiple times will delay the processing time. If we specifically request an original document, it is only possible to submit it in person or via post.

After the visa section has undertaken a first check of your application, the necessary authorities in Germany will be consulted, depending on the planned visa purpose.

The visa section cannot influence the processing periods at these authorities. As soon as the necessary feedback has arrived, the final review and decision will be done by the visa section.

The table below provides an overview of the usual processing periods:

| Visa purpose   | Usual processing period (starting as soon as the documents are complete)                               |
|--|--|
| Family reunion   | 10-12 weeks  |
| Employment without a pre-approval („Vorabzustimmung“) issued by the Federal Employment Agency (BA) – except for Blue Card EU, researchers and guest scientists | 4 weeks  |
| Studies (without scholarship)  | 5-7 weeks (if the Aliens Authority interrupts the waiting period for student applications: 9-12 weeks) |
| Language classes (if not connected to university studies)  | 10-12 weeks  |



|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Recipients of scholarships, researchers, guest scientists, Blue Card Eu, other employment with a pre-approval („Vorabzustimmung“) issued by the Federal Employment Agency (BA) | 2-3 weeks |
|--|-----------|

We advise you to apply for your visa as soon as possible.

We also recommend not to book a flight until you have received the necessary visa and have double-checked it.

As soon as we have taken a decision regarding your application, you will receive your passport together with all original documents you submitted and the final decision. Information how to pick up your passport or how to have it sent back to you will be available during your visa appointment.

If a positive decision has been taken, you will find the requested visa in your passport. If your application had to be denied, you will receive a written notification explaining the main reasons for this decision together with your passport.

#### **The visa has been granted. What do I need to keep in mind?**

Please check the visa sticker carefully. If you find any mistakes or inconsistencies, please inform the responsible visa section straight away. We advise you not to book a flight in that case before the issue has been solved.

If the visa is correct, please travel to Germany during the validity period indicated on the visa sticker and register with the local residents' registration office („Einwohnermeldeamt“) after your arrival.

While your visa is still valid, you will need to apply for a residence permit at the Aliens Authority responsible for your place of residence. As every Aliens Authority has its own organizational structure, you will need to check for procedures and appointments on your own, the visa section cannot provide any support on that matter.

#### **My application has been denied. What can I do?**

Please check the rejection letter carefully. If it contains a paragraph on your legal rights of appeal, you can find an explanation of your legal rights and the respective deadline there.

If the rejection letter does not contain any paragraph on your legal rights of appeal, the deadline for legal rights of appeal is one year after receiving the rejection letter. The possible legal rights of appeal are the so-called remonstrations and filing a court case.

A remonstrations must be submitted at the responsible visa section. It must be in writing and signed by you. The remonstrations must be in German or come with a German translation. It can only be handed in by the applicant, his / her legal guardian or an



authorized representative (with a written power of attorney) and must reach the visa section before the end of the deadline

After the deadline has ended, legal steps against the rejection are not possible anymore and a new visa application must be filed.

We recommend you to substantiate your remonstrations and to provide suitable documents. In the course of the remonstrations the application will be reviewed again, factoring in the reasoning of your remonstrations.

If the remonstrations are granted, the visa you applied for will be granted. If the remonstrations cannot be granted, you will receive a new formal rejection notice that replaces the former rejection notice and contains detailed explanations of the reasons for the negative decision. The notice will also contain information on possible legal rights of appeal.

### **What do I need to keep in mind when sending enquiries to the visa section?**

As we receive a lot of enquiries on the phone, we advise you to contact us via email. On the phone, only general enquiries can be answered. More complex information can only be given in writing.

We can only answer enquiries if an application has been submitted with us or if we are responsible in case an application is submitted.

Please always state the planned visa purpose, the planned duration of the stay, the citizenship of the person requiring a visa and the current residence of this person. We can only assess your enquiry quickly if this information is provided.

If an application was already submitted, please always indicate the complete name and date of birth of the applicant and the file number received during the appointment in the visa section. The file number is the number written on the top right corner of the receipt for the visa fee that you received during the appointment.

Due to data protection regulations, we can only answer enquiries from the applicant him- / herself, the legal guardian (for minors) or an authorized representative. The authorization must be proven to the visa section with a power of attorney, signed by the applicant personally. The authorization cannot be granted by the reference person in Germany (i.e. the spouse or employer).

To enable processing of all visa applications with as little delay as possible, we kindly ask for your understanding that questions on updates concerning your application will only be answered once the usual processing period (mentioned above) has passed.

A detailed check of an application is only possible once the personal appointment has taken place and the documents necessary in the individual case have been provided. This is due to legal reasons and our limited personnel capacity.



In advance, only general enquiries on the procedures can be answered. General counselling on legal questions cannot be provided by the visa sections. Please turn to the authorized institutions in Germany for that.

The contact information of the visa sections can be found [here](#) on our website.

### **What is the task of IOM in the visa procedure?**

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) supports family members of persons with a protection status in Germany on behalf of the Federal Foreign Office. They provide information on the necessary documents and where and how these can be obtained. The service provided by IOM is free for the applicants. IOM cannot procure any documents for applicants.

If you are interested in the services provided by IOM, please preferably contact them by [email](#). IOM is also reachable by phone: 0090 (212) 401 02 50

IOM has an office in Istanbul where you can be counselled in person in Arabic, among other languages. You can obtain the necessary address and opening hours via the contact information mentioned above.

In the visa procedure for family members of holders of subsidiary protection status in Germany IOM will conduct the necessary preliminary procedure and will subsequently inform the applicant about the visa application date scheduled by the visa section.

### **Beware of dubious visa agencies and non-authorized websites!**

The German visa sections in Turkey explicitly caution against using the services of visa agencies and non-official websites.

Please only use the official information on our website and the websites that we refer to there. Our only partners in the visa procedure are the iDATA company and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).