

## **Information on how to apply for visas to enable foreign nationals to be joined by their families<sup>\*</sup>**

### **How can my family join me in Germany?**

If you are a foreign citizen staying on federal territory with a residence permit, you may apply to have your foreign spouse and/or unmarried minors join you in Germany. Other family members, e.g. grandparents, grandchildren or siblings, may apply to join you only if necessary to prevent unusual hardship. If you are an asylum-seeker, you may not bring your dependents to Germany until you have been granted asylum. Requests for family reunification may be turned down in certain circumstances. Your foreign-resident spouse must apply for a visa for family reunification (subsequent immigration) at the relevant German mission abroad (embassy or consulate general) in his/her country of origin or permitted residency. These regulations also apply to the establishment and continuation of cohabitation partnerships on federal territory.

### **What should I bear in mind concerning my spouse's entry into Germany?**

Family reunification is subject to the following conditions:

- The spouse living on federal territory must have a valid residence permit.
- The spouse applying for subsequent immigration must possess a valid national passport.
- No grounds for extradition may exist for the spouse applying for subsequent immigration. If he/she has been deported or extradited in the past, an application must first be filed to set a time limit on the ban associated with the deportation/extradition.
- Sufficient housing space must be available. The demand for sufficient housing space can be satisfied by as little as the space required in a state-owned low-rent apartment to house a person hunting for an apartment.
- Living costs must be secured. A foreigner's living costs are deemed to be secured if these can be covered, including sufficient health insurance cover, without requiring state financial assistance. Proof of net income must be submitted so that this self-sufficiency can be assessed.

> Gainfully-employed people in employment can demonstrate this by submitting a copy of their current employment contract, confirmation from their employer that employment has not be terminated, and their last three pay slips (six pay slips must be provided if "unemployment pay II" – ALG II – was previously claimed as per Book II or XII of the German Social Security Code, SGB).

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<sup>\*</sup> This does not apply to citizens of European Union Member States, EEA countries or Switzerland

> Self-employed people can prove their net monthly income for the last three months (or six months, if the company was recently launched) with a letter of confirmation from their accountant.

- Proof must be submitted to the Foreigners' Authority or the German mission abroad that the marriage was concluded in a legally binding manner. This marriage must also be legally effective on federal territory. Marriages conducted according to tribal law and other marital ceremonies not recognized by the state cannot be recognized and thus prevent family reunification.

Upon receiving the visa application, the Foreigners' Authority writes to the spouse resident in Germany, inviting him/her to an interview on a particular date, and notifying him/her about the documents he/she will be required to bring. The submitted documents are then used as the basis for a statement to the relevant German mission abroad.

### **What should I bear in mind after entering the country?**

The following must be undertaken after entering the country with the required visa:

First:

- Register your place of residence with the [Bürgeramt](#) (citizens' registration office)

Then:

- Apply for a residence permit from the [Foreigners' Authority](#) before your visa expires (Please make an appointment!)

### **General information:**

This data sheet is based on "normal" cases. Please note that deviations are possible in individual cases. Visa applications are processed on a first come, first served basis.