

Naturalization

Are you a foreigner and have been living in Germany for some time? Then you can become a German citizen under certain conditions.

On 19 January 2024, the German Bundestag passed the Act on the Modernization of Citizenship Law. Among other things, the law provides for a reduction in the required period of residence in Germany from 8 to 5 years and the general acceptance of multiple citizenship. The law comes into force on 27.06.2024. Until it comes into force, naturalizations will be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the current Citizenship Act:

<https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/stag/StAG.pdf>

Please refrain from making inquiries about the new legislation at the moment.

Information on the reform of the Citizenship Act can be found under "Further information" - "Where can I find out more?" - "Questions and answers: Reform of the Citizenship Act".

Fortunately, more and more foreign citizens are deciding to apply for German citizenship. Unfortunately, the increasing number of applications also leads to longer processing times. Applications from the 2nd quarter of 2022 are currently being processed. As soon as your application is in the final processing stage, we will contact you.

Please note that, for reasons of equal treatment, naturalization applications are always processed according to the date of receipt.

Competent Department

- [Einbürgerung](#)

Basic information

With naturalization you receive German citizenship and become an equal citizen of the Federal Republic of Germany with all rights and obligations.

With German citizenship you can, among other things

- exercise your right to vote in the federal states and for the German Bundestag,
- enjoy freedom of movement within the European Union as a citizen of the Union,
- travel outside Europe to many countries without a visa.

If you meet the requirements, you can apply for German citizenship through naturalization.

Requirements

To obtain German citizenship, you must meet the following requirements:

- You reside in Bremen.
- You have 8 years of domestic residence.
- Your identity and citizenship have been clarified.
- You are committed to the Basic Law.
- You are in possession of a permanent residence permit.
- You do not receive unemployment benefit II or social welfare.
- You are willing to give up your citizenship.
- You have no criminal record.
- You have sufficient knowledge of the German language.
- You have basic knowledge of the legal and social system and living conditions in Germany.
- You fit into the German living conditions.

With the so-called "Quick Check" you have the opportunity to check without obligation whether you meet the requirements for naturalization. The "Quick-Check" is provided by the Bavarian State Ministry of the Interior, for Sports and Integration. You can find the "Quick-Check" under "Further Information".

Exceptions to the listed requirements are possible under certain circumstances. For further information, please refer to the FAQ section. You are also welcome to contact the naturalization authority for further clarification.

What documents do I need?

- The application form describes which documents are usually required in your life situation.

Naturalization requires the submission of a variety of documents.

Which documents must be submitted depends on your personal life situation.

Procedure

1. consultation

Before you apply for naturalization, a consultation with the naturalization authority is useful and recommended. For a consultation, please contact us by telephone (0421 - 361 - 88670). Telephone availability: Mondays to Thursdays from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm. During the consultation, the requirements for naturalization will be explained to you and you will receive your individual information on the procedure. After a telephone consultation, we will be happy to send you the application form. Alternatively, you can also send us an e-

mail (Einbuengerung@migrationsamt.bremen.de). Please ensure that you include your full name, date of birth and telephone number in your e-mail. You also have the option of informing us of your interest in naturalization by completing a "Contact form for initial consultation". We ask you to fill out the contact form as completely as possible.

If you are sure that naturalization is an option for you and you would like to forego a telephone or written consultation, you can also submit the naturalization application without prior consultation. Please use the form to apply for naturalization. This can be found under "Further information".

2. submission of application

Applications can currently only be submitted by post. Please ensure that you have completed and signed the application form in full. Please only send us copies of the required documents. The fees are only due when the naturalization authority asks you to pay the fee. Please refrain from making a bank transfer. Please send the completed application form and copies of all required documents to the following address:

Migrationsamt
Staatsangehörigkeitsbehörde
Postfach 10 78 49
28078 Bremen

(alternatively: drop it in the in-house letterbox/Stresemannstraße 48).

3. examination of your application for naturalization

Once your application has been received, your documents will be checked for completeness. If something is still missing, e.g. the naturalization test, you can also submit these documents later.

Fortunately, more and more foreign citizens are deciding to apply for German citizenship. Unfortunately, the increasing number of applications also leads to longer processing times.

We will contact you again once we have checked all the requirements. If the requirements are met, the naturalization certificate will be issued with your personal details. You will now receive an invitation to hand over your naturalization certificate in person.

Legal bases

- [§ 10 Staatsangehörigkeitsgesetz \(StAG\)](#)

How long does it take to process

The duration of the procedure can currently be delayed and last for several months due to a large number of naturalization applications.

What are the costs?

255,00 EUR per person

51,00 EUR for minor children who apply together with you

Frequently asked Questions

- **What will change with the new law?**

Information on the reform of the Citizenship Act can be found at the following link:

<https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/faqs/DE/themen/heimat/reform-staatsangehoerigkeitsrecht/reform-staatsangehoerigkeitsrecht-liste.html>

- **I am interested in naturalization and would like to get advice. How do I have to proceed?**

We are pleased that you are interested in naturalization. You can reach us by telephone on the following number 0421 - 361 - 88670. Telephone availability: Mondays to Thursdays from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm. Alternatively, you can also send us an e-mail (Einbuergerung@migrationsamt.bremen.de). Please ensure that you include your full name, date of birth and telephone number in your e-mail.

- **I would like to submit the naturalization application. What do I need to consider?**

Due to the current situation, it is not possible to come in person to submit your application.

Please send us the completed application with the requested documents by mail (alternatively: drop it in the house mailbox/Stresemannstraße 48). Please make sure that you only send us copies.

Please also check that you have signed the application.

Please bear in mind that each naturalization applicant who has reached the age of 16 must complete a separate application.

- **Are original documents required to submit the application?**

No, please send us only copies at first. Later in the naturalization process, we will ask you to submit some original documents.

- **I would like to submit documents relating to my naturalization application. How do I have to proceed?**

You are welcome to send us a copy of your documents by post. Please address your mail to the Naturalization Office. It would also be helpful if you could note your file number on the post.

Due to the high number of applications, it is unfortunately not possible to send confirmation of receipt for later submissions in the naturalization procedure.

- **What documents are required for a naturalization application?**

The exact documents required depend on the respective life situation of the applicant. You will receive further information during a telephone consultation or by contacting us by e-mail.

- **Will the submitted passport photo also appear on the travel document or identity card?**

No, because biometric photos are required for the application of the identity card or passport.

- **How long do I have to live in Germany to become a naturalized citizen?**

An uninterrupted legal residence of 8 years in Germany is required.

Please note that only periods in which you had a residence permit can be taken into account. Periods during which you were granted a so-called Duldung by the Aliens' Registration Office cannot be taken into account. In case of interruptions of the legal residence in Germany, the previous residence periods can be credited under certain conditions.

You can obtain further information on this during a telephone consultation or by contacting us by e-mail.

- **I do not yet have 8 years of legal residence. Can I still be naturalized already?**

Yes, the residence periods can be shortened in certain cases. A shortening to 7 years is possible with a successfully completed integration course. A shortening to 6 years is possible, if you can prove special integration achievements (especially language skills above B1 level).

If you are married to a German spouse or live in a registered partnership with a German citizen, you need a three-year legal habitual residence in Germany. The marriage or registered partnership must have existed for two years.

- **Do I need a settlement permit to become a naturalized citizen?**

No, naturalization is also possible with a temporary residence permit.

However, as a rule, naturalization is not possible if you have a residence permit pursuant to Sections 16a, 16b, 16d, 16e, 16f, 17, 18d, 18f, 19, 19b, 19e, 20, 22, 23 (1), Sections 23a, 24, 25 (3) to (5) and 104c of the Residence Act.

- **What language level is required for naturalization?**

Language skills at the B1 level are required. These are usually proven by a language certificate. Please note that the language certificate can only be recognized if the language course provider has a TELC license.

Alternatively, you can prove your language skills with a German school-leaving certificate, completed German vocational training or completed German-language studies.

- **Do I have to take a naturalization test?**

If you apply for German citizenship, you must prove knowledge of the legal and social order and living conditions in Germany by taking a naturalization test. Advice and registration for the naturalization test can be obtained from the Volkshochschulen (VHS).

If you have a German school leaving certificate, no naturalization test is required. In certain cases, a naturalization test is also not necessary if you have completed vocational training or a course of study.

- **I have already applied for naturalization. Now I have moved to Bremen or moved away from Bremen. What do I have to consider?**

If you have moved, the responsibility for processing your naturalization application changes. However, you do not have to submit a new naturalization application in your new place of residence. Please notify the previously responsible naturalization authority of your move. They will forward the entire naturalization process to the new naturalization authority responsible.

- **Can I keep my previous citizenship after naturalization?**

In Germany, the principle of avoiding multiple nationalities applies in principle to naturalization.

A special rule applies to citizens of European Union states and Switzerland: they do not have to renounce their previous nationality before naturalization. This is also possible in the case of additional nationalities. For more information, please contact the citizenship office.

However, according to the law of the other state, you may automatically lose your previous citizenship if you naturalize in Germany. If you have any doubts, you should contact the embassy or consulate of the country of your previous citizenship.

- **What should I do if there are problems with the release from my previous citizenship?**

If you encounter any difficulties in being released from your current citizenship, contact your naturalization authority.

It is recommended that, if possible, you obtain proof of all the steps you take to be discharged from your current citizenship, so that you can provide evidence of your efforts to your naturalization authority if needed.

- **I have received the discharge certificate from my home country. Do I need an appointment to hand in the documents?**

No, you do not need an appointment. Please send us a copy of the discharge certificate (with an appropriate translation, if necessary) by mail or e-mail. In addition, please provide us with your current contact details (e-mail address or telephone number) so that we can discuss the further procedure with you at short notice.

- **When I receive the naturalization certificate, do I also receive a German passport or a German identity card at the same time?**

No, you must apply for your passport or ID card separately at the BürgerServiceCenter.

You can obtain further information by calling the public authority number 115 or on the Internet at www.service.bremen.de.