

Visa for self-employment

Do you want to start a business or work as a freelancer in Germany? If so, you are able to apply for a visa for self-employment. Depending on whether you are planning on starting a business or working as a freelancer, different conditions apply.

To find out whether you require a visa to enter Germany, see **Who needs a visa?**.

Starting a business

If you are looking to start a business, you can obtain a residence permit for self-employment in accordance with Section 21 (1) AufenthG (German Residence Act) if you fulfil the following requirements:

- There needs to be an economic interest in, or a regional demand for your product or service.
- It is foreseeable that your company will have a positive effect on the economy.
- You are able to finance the implementation of your business concept with your own capital or through a loan commitment.
- If you are older than 45 years of age, this visa can only be issued if you can provide proof of adequate old age pension provisions.

Freelancers

If you would like to work as a freelancer in one of the liberal professions, you are able to obtain a residence permit for self-employment in accordance with Section 21 (5) AufenthG (German Residence Act). You must fulfil the following requirements:

- You can provide proof of sufficient funds to finance your endeavours.
- You have obtained any licenses required perform the job in question.
- If you are older than 45 years of age, you must provide proof of adequate old age pension provisions.

What opportunities does the visa for self-employment offer?

A visa or residence permit for self-employment is initially issued for up to three years. If your business idea is successful and you are able to cover the costs of living for both yourself and your family, the residence permit can be extended.

Info box:

If you are starting your own company, it is possible to apply for a settlement permit after three years.

To learn about how to realise your business idea in Germany, see **Setting up a business.**

At a glance: Visa for self-employment (PDF)

Information on the internet**Federal Foreign Office (FFO)**

You can find out which visa you need in order to come to Germany with the Visa-Navigator. (German, English)

Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)

Centre of Excellence for Asylum, Migration and Integration in Germany (German, English)

<https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/visa/kinds-of-visa/self-employment/>

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