

Integration

Improve your German skills. Take advantage of courses offered by voluntary helpers. Mastering the local language and being able to engage in discussions with other people are essential for participating in the community and in daily life in Germany.

Make things as easy as possible for your children. Let your children learn German and play with children from other countries and cultures; let your children choose the partners and careers that appeal most to them.

Don't treat your sons differently to your daughters.



Advice and Help

Contact the on-site social workers and assistants first. They will help you quickly and without complications.

Help Hotline for Abused Women

toll-free number 08000 116 016 • www.hilfetelefon.de

On this number help is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year; interpreters for 15 languages (including English, French, Spanish, Turkish, Russian, Arabic and Persian) are ready to assist if needed.

Further Information for Refugees

<http://www.refugeeguide.de>

This website provides tips and information on living in Germany. The content is also available for download in multiple languages.

Important!

Please keep in mind: If you are the victim of a sexual crime or a violent act, you can report the crime to the police. This will in no way negatively affect the treatment of your asylum application!



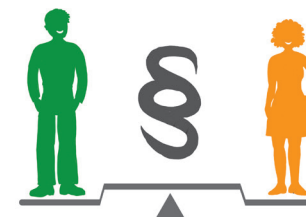
Welcome to the Federal Republic of Germany!

Since you arrived you have been under the special protection of this country's laws.

Here you enjoy the right to freedom of thought, opinion, press and creed;
also the freedom of art and science.



All people are treated equally before the law, regardless of their origin, language, gender, sexual orientation, worldview, or the colour of their skin.



Men and women are equal in all legal matters; they also share the same rights and responsibilities. Anyone who is politically persecuted has the right to asylum.

In particular, this means:

Constitutional Law

The German Constitution guarantees that none of the basic rights listed above can be violated in their essence. Religious notions, customs or traditions do not override the constitutional law.

Family Life

Children have the right to an upbringing free of violence. Physical punishments, emotional injuries, and other degrading measures are illegal.

The law promotes the physical and emotional development of all children equally, whether illegitimate or legitimate. Every mother is entitled to the protection and care of the community.

Domestic violence between adults, particularly between spouses or civil partners, is a criminal offense.

Even as a spouse, sexual intercourse is not an obligation.

Boys and girls aged 6 or older are required to attend school for at least 9 years (with some variation among the federal states).



Sexuality

Homosexuality is allowed.

Sexual activities between adults of age 18 and over and children under 14 years old are strictly illegal. Sexual activities between adults and minors aged 14 to 18 years are illegal insofar as they are forced, based on a dependency relationship, take advantage of the moral immaturity of the teenager, or are performed for money. Any attempt is also a criminal offense.

Apart from these exceptions, men and women alike have the right to sexual self-determination, which applies to both the selection of one's partner and the engagement in sexual practices.

Outside of permanent relationships, you should always use condoms to protect yourself from sexually transmitted diseases.

Worldviews

The European Convention on Human Rights guarantees the right of each individual to choose and/or change their religion.

No one is obliged to adhere to a particular religion. Every resident has the right to renounce any and all religious belief and to adopt an unprejudiced worldview based on scientific understanding and humanistic principles. Everyone has the right to be an atheist and to profess it openly.



Developing Your Own Personality



You decide about all matters affecting your own body.

You can wear revealing clothes.

You can kiss and engage in sexual activities with the people you feel drawn to, so long as this is done by mutual consent.

As a woman, you can decide for yourself whether to use contraceptives or whether you want children and how many.

As a woman or a man, you can marry whom you choose and are not required to ask your parents for permission.

You can refuse a marriage proposal without consulting your parents.

You can associate with whomever you want.

You can leave your partner if he or she hits you.

After the waiting period, you can decide for yourself whether you want to work and where you want to work. Your wages are yours alone.

You can spend your money on yourself and your own entertainment.

You are allowed and encouraged to share your opinions about politics, religion and society, so long as the personal rights of others are not violated.

