



## Visa to perform voluntary service (Federal Voluntary Service (BFD), Voluntary Social Year (FSJ), Voluntary Ecological Year (FÖJ), European Voluntary Service (EVS))

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Doing good, acquiring new skills and getting to know the country: there are a number of volunteering opportunities in Germany (Federal Voluntary Service (BFD), Voluntary Social Year (FSJ), Voluntary Ecological Year (FÖJ), European Voluntary Service (EVS)). Even unpaid volunteering is considered employment and you will need a visa or residence permit authorising volunteer work. The duration of voluntary service can be between six and 24 months, as a rule, however, it lasts a full year.

Applications can be submitted in person, with prior [appointment](#) and the following application documents:

- Personally signed **passport** (original with one copy of the passport data page), with at least two completely empty pages and sufficient validity
- Valid **Swiss residence** permit with one copy
- **Application form** fully completed and signed including declaration to section 54 residence Act: [application form](#) with one copy
- One passport sized [photo](#) – no older than three months, according to biometric standards
- **Contract/arrangement** on your voluntary service in Germany:
  - > **Federal Voluntary Service (BFD)**: Your contract must be signed by you and the Federal Office of Family Affairs and Civil Society Functions (BAFzA), as well as the placement department, headquarters and, where applicable, by the institution implementing the voluntary service.
  - > **Voluntary Social Year (FSJ)/Voluntary Ecological Year (FOJ)**: Your contract must be signed by you and the respective institution, as well as, where applicable, the placement department.
  - > **European Voluntary Service (EVS)**: Your contract must be signed by the National Agency for Erasmus+ Youth in Action and the coordinating organisation. The coordinating organisation and the volunteer must sign the Volunteer Arrangement in which the tasks and planned participant achievements are described.
- Proof of **financial means**  
(As a rule, the sponsoring organisation covers accommodation and food costs. If the contract or other confirmation provided by the respective department does not provide information on your accommodation and meals, please provide additional proof that you can support yourself.)
- Detailed **curriculum vitae** and **motivation letter** in German or English language with one copy
- Postage expenses of 7 Swiss Francs
- Visa fee of 75 Euro payable by cash in Swiss Francs, by Visa or MasterCard (information [here](#))



Botschaft  
der Bundesrepublik Deutschland  
Bern

Please prepare the originals with **one set** of copies of all the indicated documents. Original documents will be return to you while a copy per set will be required. Missing documentation delays the procedure and can result in your application being rejected.

The German Embassy Bern reserve the right to ask for additional documents at any time during the processing of your application.

In this visa category, most applications are typically processed within 2 weeks. Please do not contact the mission abroad to check the status of your application during the normal processing period. Such inquiries are extremely time-consuming for the visa department and cannot be answered. We will contact you by email as soon as the decision has been made.

The visa will be valid for 12 month and allows you to do the voluntary service only. You can travel in the entire Schengen area for 90 days per half year.

**Please note:** Although the information in this information sheet has been prepared with utmost care, we cannot accept any responsibility for inaccuracies contained herein.