

Issuance of a Certificate of Citizenship to Persons Residing Abroad

Prior to issuing a certificate of citizenship, the Federal Office of Administration reviews

- whether and how you have *acquired* your German citizenship and
- whether and how you may have *lost* your German citizenship.

In doing so, the Federal Office of Administration primarily relies on the information and documents you provide. It is therefore important that you fill out the application form carefully and as completely as possible and support the information you provide with as many documents as possible.

Minor children 16 years or older must file their own applications and submit all necessary declarations themselves.

1. Complete Pages 2 and 3 of the Application Form

Apart from the information about yourself (column 1), information about the persons from whom you derive your citizenship, in ascending order of generation dating back to at least 1914, is generally also required. Columns II, III, and IV are available as needed for this purpose.

Please seek advice from the competent German mission abroad if anything is unclear when filling out the application form.

2. Documents

The following documents are indispensable or important to the process:

a. Documents concerning parentage and marital status:

Birth certificates or certificates of parentage, marriage certificates, and family registers are absolutely necessary for you and all persons from whom you derive German citizenship, tracing back to the ancestor who either

- has or had a certificate of citizenship;
- can be proven to have become a German, for example through naturalization;
- or was treated as a German since at least 1914.

b. Documents from which German citizenship can be concluded:

Please submit these documents if available! They include:

Documents attesting to acquisition of German citizenship:

Certificates of naturalization (“Einbürgerungsurkunde”), granting certificates (“Verleihungsurkunde”), instruments of admission (“Aufnahmeurkunde”), certificates/instruments attesting that German citizenship has been acquired by means of a declaration or selection, (“Urkunde über den Erwerb der deutschen Staatsangehörigkeit durch Erklärung oder Option”), appointment letters for civil servants (“Ernennungsurkunde” bei Beamten), notice of acquisition of citizenship through service in the former German *Wehrmacht* and other similar organizations (“Feststellungsbescheid”).

Documents attesting to membership in a group of persons to which collective naturalization was extended:

Expellee cards (“Vertriebenenausweis”), ethnic list IDs (“Volkslistenausweis”), certifications of ethnicity or other documents attesting to German ethnicity (“Volkstumsbescheinigung”), proof of (former) *lex patriae*, right of citizenship, or residence in the relevant territories, certifications on waiver of right to disclaim (“Bescheinigung über Verzicht auf das Ausschlagungsrecht”).

Documents attesting to German citizenship or to former legal status as a German or to treatment as a German:

Certificates of citizenship (“Staatsangehörigkeitsausweis” or “Heimatsschein”), certificates/IDs attesting to legal status as a German, passports, personal IDs and other identification papers (including old ones), excerpts from (past) family registers, citizen lists, citizen directories, documents attesting to completed military service or employment as a civil servant (“Beamter”), registration records (“Meldebestätigung”), documents confirming approval to retain German citizenship, expellee cards, (old) refugee identification papers, registration certificates.

The documents must be submitted as an original or as certified photocopies or photocopies authenticated by a notary. Photocopies must be complete, in other words, both the front and reverse sides of the document must be submitted. Unauthenticated copies are insufficient. Transcripts cannot be accepted.

Documents may be authenticated by

- government notaries or
- registrars of the agency where the entry was made in the vital records.

Authentications by other agencies cannot be accepted. When authenticating documents, please be sure that what is being authenticated is that the *entire content of the copy is in full conformity* with the original.

Authentications by German registration offices may also be accepted.

The attestation clause must appear on the original, in other words,

- with the original seal of the notary or registrar
- with the original signature of the notary or registrar.

Copies of attestation clauses or attestation clauses that merely authenticate the signature of the translator will not suffice for this procedure.

All foreign-language documents are to be accompanied by a translation prepared by a *sworn* translator and attached in such a manner that the translation can easily be attributed to the relevant original. Translations by unsworn persons cannot be accepted.

3. Further Information about the Process:

If the documents you provide do not suffice to prove German citizenship, we will do research at archives and information offices for you. This may significantly lengthen the process.

All correspondence with the German Federal Office of Administration is to be conducted in German.

On special request, original documents can be returned at the end of the entire process. We recommend that you send only authenticated copies. If, in an exceptional case, the original of a document is required, we will inform you accordingly.

The process is subject to fees; fees will be charged as follows:

Conclusion of the Process through:	Fee:
Certificate of Citizenship	25.00 euros
Denial of the Application	18.00 euros
Decision on an Appeal	25.00 euros

The Federal Office of Administration relies on your assistance during this process. If you do not respond to a request by the Federal Office of Administration, the process will be suspended until we hear from you again.