



Embassy  
of the Federal Republic of Germany  
Kuwait

## Press Information

The German Embassy Kuwait welcomes all Kuwaiti and third country nationals who are choosing Germany as their summer destination 2020.

In 2019, over 43,000 Schengen visa applications have been processed by the German Embassy Kuwait.

The majority of applicants consisted of Kuwaiti citizens and their families for holiday, leisure and medical visits. Also the expatriates in Kuwait show growing interest in Germany for holiday, trade fair and business visits owed to the continuously expanding business relationships between Kuwaiti and German companies.

In order to make your preparations and travel experience for this summer as beneficial as possible, the German Embassy has prepared a few important facts & information about the visa application procedure for you:

### **German Visa Service Center operated by VFS Global Kuwait**

The German Visa application Center VFS is located on 25<sup>th</sup> Floor of Arraya Tower in Kuwait City. All applicants are required to book a prior appointment through their website [www.vfsglobal.com/germany/kuwait](http://www.vfsglobal.com/germany/kuwait) in order to allow for short waiting times and efficient customer service.

VFS Global Kuwait is the only officially Visa Service Center appointed by the German Embassy Kuwait. Unfortunately, some private businesses or agencies are claiming to render visa or messenger services to German Schengen customers without having any approval or cooperation with the German Embassy.

Please be aware of the prices and quality of service of such agencies since various complaints have been received about overpriced services and wrong visa information.

### **Waiting times – please apply early**

The German Embassy would like to call upon all travellers to start filing their Schengen visa applications for their annual vacation in Germany from now on and not just a few days before their actual trip in order to avoid any inconveniences.

At the moment, appointments at the application Centre VFS Global Kuwait can be obtained within 1-2 days – during the summer travel season **waiting times** for an appointment of **one week or more** can occur due to the high demand. Last summer, the Visa Section of the German Embassy has processed between 10,000 and 12,000 visas per month, but could not avoid the building up of waiting times due to the high number of last minute applicants.

Please bear in mind that your application has to be handed in at VFS Global **15 days before the travel date due to the new visa codex regulations.**

The visa clearance is a computerized process – the German Embassy has no influence on the processing time.

#### **Did you know ....**

- **... that applications can be handed in as early as six (!) months prior to the intended travel date?**

If you are a frequent traveller, then please attach copies of your previous Schengen visas to your application file in order to enable the Visa Team to check whether you might be eligible to a multiple entry visa with a longer validity period.

#### **... at which Embassy to apply for your Schengen visa?**

In accordance with the Schengen Code, a Schengen visa for a short stay up to 90 days has to be applied for through the Embassy of the country which is your **main destination**.

The main destination is understood to be the destination where the applicant intends to spend the longest time or where the main purpose of the intended journey is carried out.

However, for your entry and departure you may cross any Schengen border to reach your destination with a visa issued by any Schengen Member State.

At the **border of entry or during other controls** you may have to show the visa but also provide additional documentation, for example information on your travel destination or that you have sufficient means to cover the stay and the return trip. It is therefore recommended that you carry with you copies of the documents which you presented when applying for the visa (e.g. hotel booking or letters of invitation, flight confirmations, travel health insurance or other documents stating the purpose of your stay).

#### **... there are now online tools to assist you with calculating the 90 days period of stay?**

A Schengen visa entitles the holder to a stay not exceeding 90 days per six-month period, even if the Schengen visa has been issued with a validity of one year or more.

Customers sometimes find it difficult to calculate this period of stay. Therefore, you can find an electronic calculator on the homepage of the German Embassy under “FAQ Visa” ([www.kuwait.diplo.de/visa](http://www.kuwait.diplo.de/visa)) to assist you with your travel planning.

**... the official visa fees for a Schengen visa are only 28,- KWD, even if it is a multiple entry visa?**

Depending on the daily exchange rate, the processing fee for a Schengen visa is currently 28,- KWD for adults regardless of the visas validity period. VFS is adding a standard service charge of 6,- KWD on top of the Embassy's' processing fee and you can find all these amounts transparently documented on their homepage.

The validity of your Schengen Visa depends on the travel purpose, travel history and overall situation of each applicant. Every application will be considered individually based on the papers presented by the customer. Therefore, frequent travellers are welcome to add an explanatory letter to the application as well as proof of regular travel in the last years (e.g. copy of old visas and entry stamps or recommendations by business partners) and the Embassy's visa team will gladly take that information into consideration for the validity period of the visa.

**... you have to make a customs declaration if you enter Germany with a total amount of 10,000 € (ten thousand Euros) or more per person?**

Anybody entering Germany from a non-European Union country carrying cash in a total amount of 10,000 euros or more is obliged to declare this amount of money to the competent German customs office in writing without being explicitly requested to do so.

The purpose of the obligation to declare is to prevent the illegal movement of money across the external borders of the European Union in order to combat money laundering, the financing of terrorist organizations and criminal activities.

The obligation to submit a declaration and the customs inspections are not intended to restrict the free movement of capital in any way.

You will still be permitted to carry unlimited amounts of cash across borders in the future.

Travellers who intend to bring an amount of 10,000 € or more per person to Germany can download the necessary cash declaration form at <http://www.zoll.de> prior to their trip and present the completed declaration form upon arrival to the German customs officers to facilitate entry procedures.