



## FAQ – Processing of visa applications in times of COVID-19 (Visa Section Dekwaneh)

### 1. When will the visa section finally open again?

**It is! - But with limited capacities.**

Our „Visa section for Lebanon“ has temporarily moved from Dekwaneh to Rabieh after the blast in Beirut harbour. We are currently improvising in many areas in order to handle your cases as efficiently as possible. Also our staff capacities are still limited by measures taken in order to prevent the spread of the new Corona virus.

We are processing old applications and also accepting new ones now.

If you need an appointment to apply for a national visa, please register on one of our appointment waiting lists after reading through all relevant information regarding your visa type on our website.

If you would like to know if and how you can apply for a Schengen visa at this moment, please check our information sheet regarding this topic.

**Please refrain from regular inquiries about the status of your case or your appointment booking. This kind of requests is draining our resources. We would much prefer to use all of those for actually processing visa files instead of answering e-mails.**

### 2. I have handed in my application already, can you please process it while we are all waiting for better times?

**Yes, we can and we do!**

Everybody in Lebanon can feel the negative effects of COVID-19 and the explosion in Beirut harbor in the beginning of August. The German Embassy is not an exception to this.

At the moment we do not have the usual number of employees present to work on all applications that were already handed in, but **we do our best despite all those difficulties. Please give us the time to do this and refrain from regular inquiries about your application or your appointment.**

**If we need anything from you, we will contact you directly.** There is no need for you to ask us whether we need something more from you if we do not contact you to ask for something. **The less e-mail requests and telephone calls we get, the faster we can process all applications.**

### 3. Can I apply for a Schengen visa so that I can tend to important business or just get some rest in Germany?

**In exceptional cases: Yes.**

If you have already obtained or are interested in a visa to travel to Germany for a **short period** of time only (**“Schengen visa”**, i.e. family visit, tourism, business trip), **you can generally still not enter Germany coming from Lebanon** at this moment.

**There are only a few exceptions from this rule.** You can find more information on this on the website of the German Federal Police (our border police) <http://www.bundespolizei.de>, who makes the final decisions about whether someone can legally enter Germany or not. The information there is currently only available in German. You can check our Ministry of the Interior’s webpage <http://www.bmi.bund.de/EN> for slightly more general information in English.

Please also consult our website <http://www.beirut.diplo.de> regarding this topic (click on “Informationen für Visaantragsteller” (highlighted on the main page)).

#### 4. What are the requirements for an “immigration visa” to Germany?

**Immigration to Germany is possible if you have a reason to travel that is foreseen in our immigration legislation.** Immigration without any specific cause is not possible.

You can register for a visa appointment on our website <http://www.beirut.diplo.de>. Appointments are assigned by us as soon as possible, however this might take a few weeks as we are currently working with limited capacities. Please read through all the relevant information regarding your visa type on our website (especially the information sheets), before you register for an appointment. Visa information is available in German and Arabic.

**If you are looking for initial information on work related visas, we recommend you take a look at <http://www.make-it-in-germany.de>.**

For persons who have their lawful and actual place of residence in Lebanon, there are appointment waiting lists in three categories of national (long-term) visas:

**WORK** (common list für Lebanon and Syria) – for all work related visas (including: qualification, research, job seekers, internship, vocational training, etc.)

**FAMILY REUNION** – for all visas aiming at joining your family members who already live in Germany, this category includes you, if you are planning to move to Germany together WITH your German spouse/(minor)child. (exception: If you want to apply for a family reunion with a person who lives in Germany with a refugee/subsidiary protection status, please register on the respective appointment list for applicants from Syria – also if your family member is not a Syrian refugee)

**STUDYING** – for all study related visas (auch: language courses, school, etc.)

#### 5. I have already received my visa but could not use it due to the pandemic – can the Embassy prolong it?

**In most cases yes. Please contact us.**

**If your visa was left unused solely because of the pandemic, we can re-issue it in most cases.** If this is the case for you, please send us an e-mail to [visalbn@beir.diplo.de](mailto:visalbn@beir.diplo.de). We will then get in touch with you and inform you on whether and how the visa can be re-issued. **The deadline regarding the prolongation of unused visas is 31 December 2020.** If you miss that deadline or if the purpose of your intended stay in Germany has significantly changed, **you can of course also apply for a new visa!** Please check our website for further information regarding visa types and appointment booking.

#### 6. As the Goethe Institute in Beirut has been closed due to the explosion in Beirut harbour, will you waive any kind of German language requirements for national visas?

**No.**

The closure of the Goethe Institute in Beirut is only temporary. The building of the Institute was severely damaged by the explosion, but the Institute is currently exploring ways to re-open for language exams and language courses as soon as possible. For further information regarding this, please contact them directly. If German language skills are required by law for the type of visa you applied for, there is a reason behind this which did not become invalid because the Goethe Institute has not been offering language exams for a few weeks.

**However: You can hand in your application without the language certificate, if you don't have it yet.** It is no problem if you hand it in at a later point of time. Depending on your visa type we might be able to start processing your file without the language certificate and add it to the file later on. In some cases we will have to wait for the certificate to start processing though.

**You will have to prove your language proficiency before a visa can be issued though.**

If your level of German is in fact much higher than the level required for your visa type (e.g. much higher than the A1 level required for a family reunion with your spouse), but you don't have a language certificate to prove this, please let us know when you hand in your documents. There might be options to waive the requirement to hand in a language certificate in your specific case.

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This list of frequently asked questions will be frequently updated. Please check in again in a few days if your question has not been answered yet. All answers are given to the best of your knowledge at the time of publishing them. Please note that they are not legally binding.