

Travelling to Belgium for work: family reunification (visa D)

WHAT IS FAMILY REUNIFICATION (VISA D) ?

Family reunification is a recognized **right** to which non-EU nationals with a valid residence and work permit in a EU country like Belgium are entitled. As a migrant worker in Belgium, you have the right to be reunited with your family. Furthermore, because of your status as economic migrant, you and your family enjoy **certain exemptions and more flexible provisions** by the Immigration Office of Belgium to facilitate the process of family reunification. All persons aged over 18 years old joining you also enjoy immediate **access to employment** in Belgium once they have obtained their residence permit upon arrival.

The visa for family reunification (or visa D) is a **sticker affixed to your passport** by the competent Belgian Embassy or Consulate. The visa D is a travel document, which allows you to enter Belgium and enables you to register with a Belgian town hall.



WHICH OF MY FAMILY MEMBERS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR FAMILY REUNIFICATION?



SPOUSE OR PARTNER



The marriage (or the partnership equivalent to marriage) must have been concluded before you obtain your single permit for Belgium, as this entitles you to immediate reunification. The minimum age for both spouses/partners is then 18. Otherwise, the standard rules and lead times apply. You must submit proof of marriage (or of partnership), and in case of multiple spouses, only one of them can join you.



LEGALLY REGISTERED & COHABITATING PARTNER



If you are not married, your partner can also join as long as your partnership is legally registered, meaning you have made an official declaration of legal cohabitation with the competent authority in the country in question. Moreover, you must provide proof that your relationship is “stable and lasting”.



MINOR CHILDREN (BELOW AGE 18)



Children born to you and your spouse/partner, as well as the children that you or your spouse/partner may have had separately, may join you in Belgium on certain conditions: they must be under 18, they must be unmarried, and you must have single custody over them (or shared custody but with consent of the other parent).



CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES



Children with a disability born to you and/or to your spouse/partner may join you in Belgium regardless of their age, provided you can submit proof of the child's state of health.



CHILDREN OVER 18



Your other children aged 18 or over cannot join you in Belgium via a family reunification procedure. In certain specific circumstances, they may be able to come to reside in Belgium and join you through a so-called humanitarian visa, based on humanitarian grounds. This falls outside the scope of the right to family reunification.



Other members of your family (children over 18, parents, grandparents, grandchildren, nephews, nieces, etc.) **cannot** join you in Belgium by means of family reunification. In certain circumstances, they can be issued a permit to reside in Belgium on humanitarian grounds (so-called humanitarian visa), for which specific conditions apply.

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HOW DO YOU APPLY?

To obtain your visa D as a migrant worker holding a single permit for Belgium, you will need to **first apply online** via the designated portal website and **then collect the visa at the Belgian diplomatic post in your country of residence**. If you plan to be joined in Belgium by your family, all members must submit their own online application for the visa D (family reunification) and collect the visas in person at the same Belgian diplomatic or consular post responsible for your place of residence.

THREE APPLICATION POSSIBILITIES

1

SIMULTANEOUS APPLICATION



approx. 2 weeks (fast-track procedure)

In this scenario, you and your family members apply for your visa D at the same time, at the same diplomatic post, once you have obtained your single permit for Belgium. Accordingly, your family does not have to wait for you to get your residence permit (A card) once in Belgium, before they can apply for family reunification, as it is normally the case.

The simultaneous application gives your family members access to a fast-track, simplified procedure – check out the box on the right!

2

APPLICATION WITHIN 6 MONTHS



approx. 2 weeks (fast-track procedure)

In this scenario, your family members who would like to join you, may apply for a visa D for family reunification **within six months** from the day you received your visa D (as the main applicant). Even if you did not receive your residence permit in Belgium yet (A card), your family can already apply for family reunification at the same diplomatic post where you applied.

Applying within 6 months gives your family members access to a fast-track, simplified procedure – check out the box on the right!

3

STANDARD PROCEDURE



up to 9-12 months

If your family members apply for a visa D for family reunification later than 6 months after you obtained your visa D as main applicant, the application will have to be filed at the Belgian consulate, which in turn will forward it to the Immigration Office in Belgium. Accordingly, the standard procedure will apply, which can take up to 9 months (extendable up to 12 months).

FAST-TRACK PROCEDURE for family of migrant workers

In these two procedures reserved to migrant workers, the diplomatic post can **exceptionally** issue the visa D to your family members applying for family reunification. Normally, visa applications for family reunification are transmitted to, and handled by the Belgian Immigration Office. This fast-track procedure entails **shorter lead times** and **more flexible conditions**, including on the necessary supporting documents, such as:



proof of sufficient housing



proof of stable, regular, and sufficient means of livelihood



N.B.: At this stage, declarations of support from your employer will suffice as proof. However, your prospective salary must be at least 2.008,32 euros (net pay) per month.



WHAT AFTER I AND MY FAMILY MEMBERS HAVE OBTAINED THE VISA D?

Once you and your family members have obtained your visa D, you will be able to travel to Belgium. Upon arrival, you will need to register at the town hall of your chosen place of residence and request a residence permit.

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WHICH TYPE OF DOCUMENTS DO I NEED FOR THE APPLICATION?

The documents required for **each** visa D application (for each family member) which you will need to bring to your appointment are the following:



Original **passport** containing at least two adjacent blank pages and valid for at least 15 months from the date of application.



Three **passport photos**, in colour.



Two **long-stay visa application forms**, duly completed, dated and signed.



Completed **language form**.



For the spouse or partner, official copy of the **marriage certificate** legalized/apostilled properly dated within the last six months from the date the visa application is filed.



For each child, original **birth certificate** mentioning the name of both parents, dated within the last six months from the date the visa application is filed.



Original **medical certificate** (one per family member) prepared and signed by a physician approved by the Belgian diplomatic post having jurisdiction over your place of residence.



Police clearance certificate for each family member above 18, issued by the competent authorities of your country of residence within the last six months from the application date.



Copy of **international health insurance (or declaration from employer)**, proving you and your family are covered for medical expenses in Belgium



Copy of your **rental agreement** in Belgium or **alternatively a letter from your company** confirming that they will support your housing search.



Copy of the **main applicant's Belgian contract**, and, for non-simultaneous applications, copy of their **pay slips for the past 6 months**.



Proof of payment of the applicable fees (visa D application fee for spouse/partner), and sufficient financial means to pay remaining fees (see below).



Make sure to bring two sets of photocopies of all required documents listed above!



All documents must be in **English, Dutch, French or German** or accompanied by a certified translation in one of those languages. Marriage certificate, police clearance and birth certificate also need to be **legalized**.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

€180

Visa D processing fee
for each family member

*to be paid at the
diplomatic post*

+

€198

Visa D application fee
only for spouse/partner

*to be paid in advance via
bank transfer to the Belgian
Immigration Office*

+

€20-30

**Municipality
registration fee**
for each family member

*to be paid in Belgium at the
municipality of residence*

