

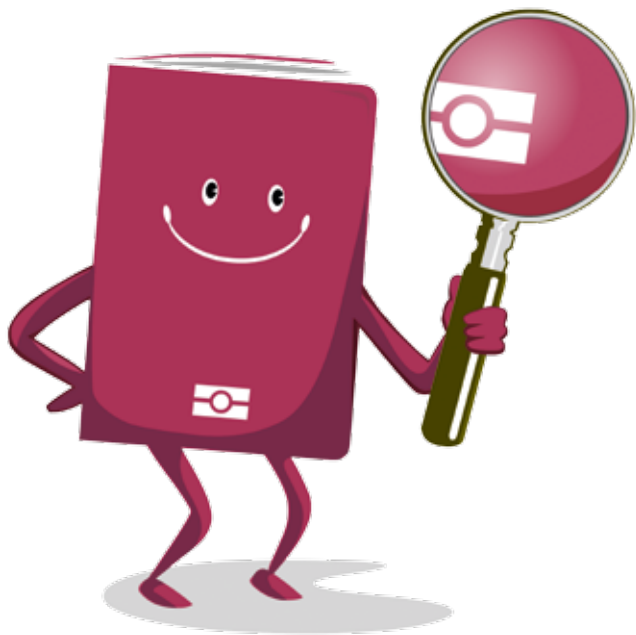


Federal Ministry
of the Interior

Discover Germany's Electronic Passport



www.ePass.de



Introducing Germany's e-passport

If you want to know

- why there are electronic passports and how to recognize them;
- whether old passports remain valid;
- how to get your passport photograph just right;
- how fingerprint scanning works;
- how data on the e-passport chip are protected;
- how passports will be checked in the future;
- which travel documents will be issued in Germany as of 1 November 2007; and
- where to find further information ...

read this brochure!



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(valid as of 1 November 2007)

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The e-passport

Basics

What is an e-passport?

E-passport stands for electronic passport, i.e. a passport with a computer chip.

In Germany, the e-passport was introduced in November 2005. The e-passport chip stores data on:

- the passport holder: first name, last name, date of birth, sex, and nationality
- the document: serial number, issuing country, document type and date of expiry

In addition, the e-passport includes biometric data:

- The first generation e-passport (applications until 31 October 2007) includes a digital photograph.
- The second generation e-passport (applications from 1 November 2007 onwards) includes a digital photograph and two fingerprints.

How can I recognize an e-passport?

A symbol on the front cover indicates that the passport is electronic.

The e-passport chip is embedded in the passport cover and is not visible.





Why are electronic passports being introduced?

Because they will significantly improve the verification of a traveller's identity! The new passports will help prevent terrorists and criminals from entering the country using counterfeit travel documents or the genuine documents of a person whom they resemble. The chip on the e-passport is a further obstacle for counterfeiters. The biometric information on the chip is machine-readable, which makes it possible to verify precisely whether the passport belongs to the person presenting it.

Numerous countries around the world are already using biometric procedures for security purposes. After the attacks of 11 September 2001, the Member States of the European Union agreed on introducing biometrics in passports, visas and residence titles. The EC Regulation on the introduction of electronic passports was adopted in 2004. This was followed by the necessary amendments to the German Passport Act and Passport regulations.

Why were facial image and fingerprints chosen as biometric identifiers for the e-passport?

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) sets the standards for international travel documents. Since the passport photograph has been a common feature for a long time, ICAO recommended using the photograph to be stored on the chip of electronic passports.

EU Member States decided to use fingerprints as the second biometric identifier because fingerprint capture and reading systems have proved convenient in practice. Moreover, two different biometric features increase the flexibility of controls. Depending on the situation, inspectors will be able to choose whether to check only the photo or also the fingerprints during biometric controls.

How much does the e-passport cost?

Due to the additional technical efforts required to enhance security and privacy, the passport fee was raised in November 2005. Costs for the e-passport comprise

- the passport booklet,
- the chip,
- the capture of biometric data, and
- their integration into the passport.

The passport fee will not increase when fingerprints are added to the e-passport (applications from 1 November 2007): An e-passport valid for ten years will still cost 59 euros. An e-passport valid for six years, which is issued to persons under 24, costs 37.50 euros. In international comparison, the price of a German e-passport ranks in the bottom third.



Will old passports remain valid?

Yes. All passports already issued will be valid until they expire. Holders of old but valid passports will face no disadvantages when travelling. It is therefore not necessary to exchange travel documents before they expire.

From November 2007 three different types of passports will be in circulation:

- passports without a chip;
- first-generation electronic passports which include only a digital photograph;
- second-generation electronic passports which include a digital photograph and fingerprints.

In addition to regular passports, temporary and child passports without a chip will still be issued.

The photograph

How should an e-passport photograph look?

Since the introduction of the electronic passport on 1 November 2005, new standards for passport photographs apply to facilitate biometric controls. They are based on specifications of the International Standards Organization (ISO) and ICAO, which is responsible for standardizing travel documents.

The new type of photographs will no longer show a half-profile but a front-view image. Further requirements are illustrated by the sample photograph gallery including examples of suitable and unsuitable digital photographs. In addition, passport authorities provide a photograph template and verification software.

The photograph samples and templates can be downloaded at www.ePass.de.



Not suitable for passports: photograph in half-profile



Since 2005 for all passports: Frontal view instead of half-profile

For greater convenience, the new specifications for the e-passport photograph can be applied to other documents as well (e.g. ID cards and driving licences).

The responsible passport authority decides whether a photograph can be used for an e-passport. Exceptions (e.g. for medical reasons) are also taken into account. Passport authorities are obliged to refuse photographs which do not meet the specifications. For biometric purposes, the most important requirements for a digital photograph include:

1. The face must be taken from a full frontal position.
2. The height of the face must meet the specifications of the sample photograph gallery and template.
3. The eyes must be open, level and clearly visible within the indicated area.
4. The face should be centred within the frame.

Hair need not be completely visible. Black and white photos are permitted.

The rules for children under ten are less strict. Some leeway is allowed in regard to the height of the face and the position of the eyes, and with babies and infants also in the position of the face, the facial expression, the eyes and the line of sight. However, a frontal photograph is also required for children.



The fingerprints

How are fingerprints taken for the e-passport?

Two fingerprints are needed for the e-passport. They are taken using a scanner at the passport authority when the passport application is submitted.

When the finger is pressed against the scanner's glass plate, the fingerprint is captured electronically within seconds – without stamping ink or other means.

As a rule, both index fingers are scanned three times in a row. The software instantly and automatically chooses the best sample. If necessary, other fingers can be used as well. However, the little fingers are never used. The passport application process will take only slightly longer than before fingerprint scanning was introduced.

Will children's fingerprints also be taken?

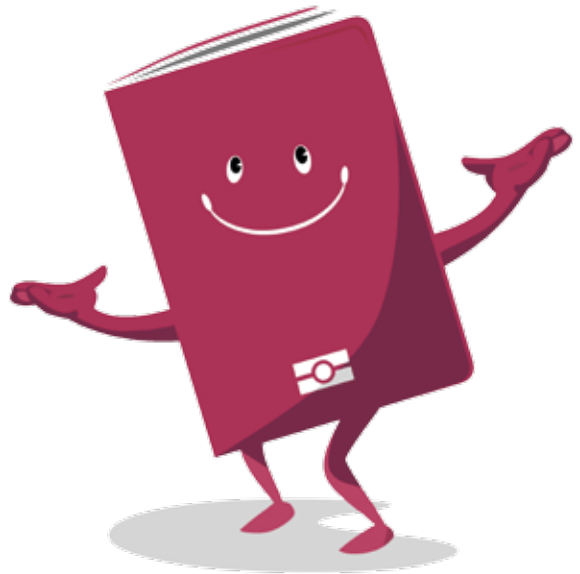
No. The rule from 1 November 2007 is: e-passports including fingerprints are issued to youths aged 12 and over. Only at the parents' express request will an e-passport be issued to children. But even in this case, no fingerprints are taken from children under six.



How do the fingerprint scanners look?

From 1 November 2007 on there will be two different types of fingerprint scanners in use.

The picture below shows both types of scanners as well as utensils for regular cleaning.



What if fingers or hands are injured?

In this case the recovery time is important. If the medical condition is temporary (e.g. hand or arm in plaster) and will pass within three months, the e-passport application must be submitted at a later date. If a travel document is needed on short notice, a temporary passport may be issued.



What happens in case of long-term medical conditions, disabilities or amputation?

In case of permanent medical conditions which last longer than three months, a regular e-passport will be issued.

Depending on the individual situation, no or only one fingerprint will be stored on the chip.

Is it possible to apply for an e-passport which does not include fingerprints?

As of 1 November 2007 the law requires that fingerprints of passport applicants be taken.

If applicants are not willing to have their fingerprints taken, a passport cannot be issued to them.

Data protection and data security

Will existing passports be “upgraded” with fingerprints?

No. Data stored on the chip are electronically signed, and the chip is then sealed against deletion and alteration of data. Therefore passports will not be “upgraded”.

Will biometric data of the e-passport be stored in a central database?

No. The fingerprints provided for the e-passport will be stored only on the holder’s e-passport chip. As in the past, passport authorities will archive photographs but not the fingerprints in their local registers.

Are data on the e-passport chip protected against unauthorized access?

Yes. The first generation e-passport already has an effective mechanism to protect passports against skimming and eavesdropping.

A further anti-skimming feature has been added to the second-generation e-passport: Only those countries which Germany has granted special access rights will be able to read the fingerprints on the chip.



How can citizens check the data stored on their e-passport?

Passport agencies are equipped with readers which e-passport holders may use to view their personal data stored on the chip.



  	Name MUSTERMANN
	Vornamen ERIKA
	Geburtsdag 12.08.64
	Geschlecht F
	Staatsangehörigkeit D
	Seriennummer C84M58WT6
	Ausstellender Staat D
	Typ P
	Gültig bis 21.11.17
	Weitere Daten (in Deutschland nicht vorhanden)

To access the data on the chip, the passport must be inserted into the reader (see picture at left), and the machine-readable zones must be scanned to generate the key. For second generation e-passports the reader will display the above information (sample).

Who is authorized to read fingerprints?

Under the German Passport Act, data stored on the chip may be read and used only to verify the authenticity of the document or the identity of the passport holder. For these purposes, fingerprints may be read only by the following public bodies:

- a) law enforcement agencies
- b) customs administration
- c) passport and identity card agencies
- d) registration agencies

According to the Passport Act, other individuals are not allowed to read the chip. This is also ensured by technical security mechanisms.

How do the biometric checks work?

According to the German Passport Act, the authorized bodies may

1. read biometric and other data stored on the chip,
2. additionally take a photograph and/or fingerprints directly at the checkpoint,
3. compare the photos and fingerprints on the chip with the photos and fingerprints taken at the checkpoint to verify that the person presenting the passport is the same person to whom the passport was originally issued.



Border controls with the e-passport

Will inspectors be dispensable in the future?

No. Biometric verification methods will not replace but complement traditional border controls.



How will border controls change?

Since older passports will remain valid until they expire, only a small number of citizens will present an e-passport at the border.

The Federal Police will therefore introduce biometric border controls gradually:

In a first step, personal and biometric data on the chip will be read and verified electronically. Because the digital photo stored on the chip is of better quality, it is also used for the visual checks by the federal police. In another step, the photo and fingerprints taken at the checkpoint will be compared with the data on the e-passport chip.

No data will be stored during the verification process.

Which countries may access the data on the chip?

If you present your e-passport during a border control in a foreign country, officers can access text data (name, etc.) and the photo on the chip if they have the necessary readers. Data on the chip can be accessed only if you hand over your e-passport.

To read the fingerprints, foreign countries need an express authorization. Germany will decide for each individual country which ones should be authorized to read fingerprints from German passports.

Will e-passport holders with “weak” or no fingerprints face difficulties when travelling?

The e-passport is a valid travel document even if some biometric identifiers are missing.

“Weak” fingerprints are quite common and will be noticed already when they are collected at the passport agency. In addition to the fingerprint images their quality will be indicated so that inspectors will be able to recognize permanent medical conditions, for example.

Whether and what kind of special checks persons concerned might have to undergo depends on the entry rules of the country of destination. As an alternative to fingerprint checks the chip includes a photograph.

What if the e-passport chip is defective?

To ensure full functionality, each e-passport produced is checked by the manufacturer before being delivered to the responsible passport agency.

The passport holder may view the data stored on the chip using the readers at passport agencies and thus check whether the passport works.

The document will remain valid even if the chip is defective. In this case it depends on the entry rules of the country of destination whether and what kind of special checks persons concerned will have to undergo.



Document features

Features of the e-passport



Who can obtain the passport?

As of 1 November 2005 the e-passport including a chip is the new regular passport. From 1 November 2007 the e-passport will be issued to persons aged 12 and over.

At the parents' express request, an e-passport may also be issued to children under 12. However, no fingerprints are taken for children under six.

Which documents must be presented with the application?

Old passport, child passport, child travel document (if available) or identity card (if it is a first-time application) or birth certificate.

Photograph requirements

Full frontal view in line with international standards (see sample photograph gallery).

Length of validity

Passports issued to persons aged 24 and over remain valid for ten years. Passports of persons under 24 are valid for six years.

Fees

Passports issued to persons aged 24 and over cost 59 euros. Passports for persons under 24 cost 37.50 euros.

Features of the temporary passport



Who can obtain the passport?

A temporary passport is issued only in exceptional cases, for example if the applicant needs a passport immediately and a regular passport cannot be issued before it is needed for the first time.

Which documents must be presented with the application?

Old passport, child passport, child travel document (if available) or identity card (if it is a first-time application) or birth certificate. Passport agencies may require documents such as airline tickets for an imminent journey to prove the immediate need.

Photograph requirements

Full frontal view in line with international standards (see sample photograph gallery).

Length of validity

The passport may be valid up to one year.

Fees

26 euros.

Features of the child passport



Who can obtain the passport?

Children up to their 12th birthday.

Which documents must be presented with the application?

Old child passport, child travel document or birth certificate and (declaration of) consent of the legal guardian; if there is only one legal guardian, that person has to present proof of the right of custody.

Photograph requirements

Full frontal view in line with international standards (see sample photograph gallery).

Length of validity

Six years. The passport may be renewed once before the child's 12th birthday.

Fees

13 euros, and six euros for renewal.

Note: As of 1 January 2006 the former child passport is no longer issued or renewed. As of 1 November 2007 children can no longer be endorsed on their parents' passport. As of that date it will however be possible to apply for a child identity card (e.g. for travelling within the EU).

Features of the identity card



Who can obtain the identity card?

As a rule, all persons aged 16 and over.

Note: From 1 November 2007 identity cards are available for all children irrespective of their age, e.g. for travelling within the European Union.

Which documents must be presented with the application?

Old child travel document, child passport or birth certificate and (declaration of) consent of the legal guardian; if there is only one legal guardian that person has to present proof of the right of custody.

Photograph requirements

Half-profile or full frontal view in line with international standards (see sample photograph gallery).

Length of validity

Identity cards issued to persons aged 24 and over remain valid for ten years. Identity cards of persons under 24 are valid for six years.

Fees

8 euros.

Public information service

Information about the e-passport and other passport and identity documents is available on the websites of the Federal Ministry of the Interior:

www.ePass.de

www.bmi.bund.de

In Germany, applications for passports and identity cards can be filed with the responsible local passport and identity card agencies (usually a Bürgeramt). They can also provide detailed information on the application procedure.



Good journey!



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