

**From the 01.01.2026 on, Russian citizens will on principle require a biometric Russian external passport to enter Germany. Non-biometric external passport cannot be used anymore unless they contain a German visa which remains valid.**

#### **What changes exactly?**

Do you have a valid Russian biometric external passport, which you want to use to travel to Germany? Then nothing changes for you in regards to the travel document required. You can still use your passport as usual to apply for a visa or to travel to Germany with an existing valid visa.

If you only have a non-biometric Russian external passport, the following applies. **Non-biometric Russian passports can no longer be used to enter Germany from 01.01.2026 onward.** AS a Russian citizen please use a biometric Russian passport for trips to Germany instead. You can find the relevant legal regulations [here](#).

#### **Are there exceptions for continuing to use a non-biometric Russian external passport to travel to Germany?**

German missions abroad will continue to issue visas in non-biometric Russian passports until the 31.12.2025. These visas issued before the 01.01.2026 can still be used for entering and staying in Germany. The same is true if you were issued a German residence permit with your non-biometric Russian passport before the 01.01.2026. In these cases, it is not necessary to carry a biometric passport.

However, if you want to apply for a new visa or want to extend your residence permit in Germany, this will not be possible with a non-biometric Russian external passport anymore after the 01.01.2026. In these cases, you will have to apply for a new biometric passport at the Russian authorities. For information on the application process for a biometric Russian external passport and the processing time, please refer to the relevant Russian authorities.

#### **Does this effect my visa application?**

If you plan to apply for a visa (for short- or long-term stays) at a German mission abroad, we recommend to apply for a biometric Russian external passport early on. Applying with a non-biometric Russian external passport will not be possible anymore. The same is true if you are applying for a visa from a different Schengen member state and want to use this visa to travel to Germany as well.

If you have already applied for a visa and have not received a decision until the 31.12.2025, you will have to submit a biometric Russian passport to receive the visa. Should this apply to you, you will receive a notification about it on 01.01.2026. From the 01.01.2026 German visas cannot be issued in a non-biometric Russian external passport anymore.

Please be informed that this only changes the conditions, with which type of passport Russian citizens can apply for a visa and enter Germany. The conditions in terms of content of the application

will not change. The German Embassy in Moscow continues to take visa applications (through the VisaMetric application centers) and continues to process these on the grounds of the current legal regulations, including among other things the EU-guidelines of 2022.

**I have already received a valid visa for Germany in my non-biometric Russian external passport. Can I not travel with it anymore now?**

If your visa for Germany or the Schengen area, which was issued before the 01.01.2026 and is still valid, you can still use your non-biometric passport to enter and stay in Germany until the end of your visa's validity. The date of issue can be found on your visa.

**How do I know if my Russian external passport is biometric or non-biometric?**

A Russian non-biometric external passport only has a validity of five years instead of ten. Additionally, the ICAO symbol for electronic travel documents is visible on the front of a biometric Russian passport.