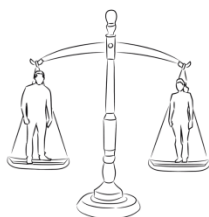




Marriage, Family and Parenting

Contracting marriage

In Germany, only the Civil Registry Office (*Standesamt*) is authorised to contract marriage. Wedding ceremonies conducted by a priest or imam are not valid. Proxy weddings and forced weddings are forbidden.

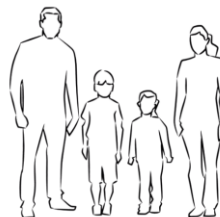


Equal rights of husband and wife

According to German law, both partners of a marriage have the same rights. They decide together who works and who cares for the children and the household. Spouses do not have the right to make decisions for the other partner. Also in terms of raising children both partners make the decisions.

Parental care for children

Children have the right to be raised without violence and the right to a healthy life and school and vocational education. If those rights are violated by one or both parents, the Youth Welfare Authority (*Jugendamt*) will intervene. If parents have conflicting opinions about a matter, the Family Court (*Familiengericht*) may transfer parental custody to one parent or a third person who then makes the decisions for the children.



Divorce and consequential decisions

According to German law, both partners have the right to demand divorce when the marriage failed after husband and wife have been living separate for at least one year. It does not matter who caused the break of the marriage. If the partners cannot agree on them, the Family Court also rules alimony rights, the right to determine residency of the children and who shall live in the marital home after the divorce.

Protection from violence

Neither husband nor wife shall suffer violence or any other inhumane treatment through beating, abuse or severe insults by their partner. The Police is obligated to help a victim of violence even when the offender is part of the family. The Family Court may impose a temporary no-contact provision and banish a partner from the marital home.



< links to the film "Living in Germany means: men and women are equals." on our website www.justiz.bayern.de. In the film, it is explained in an understandable way in three minutes which rights a woman in Germany has, professionally as well as privately. The issues "Equal rights for men and women", "Protection against violence in a partnership or marriage" and "A woman's rights in marriage and the bringing up of children" are taken up in particular.