



## Travel Visa - Deklaratorische Aufenthaltserlaubnis

You want to travel within the Schengen Area\* and you are a SOFA-Card holder?

In the past third-country national NATO-family members (states acc. to Annex I VISA-VO also listed in Section I A.5.e. under "Germany" in the Electronic Foreign Clearance Guide at <https://www.fcg.pentagon.mil/fcg.cfm>) often had problems travelling within the Schengen Area or returning back from their home country, because they only had the SOFA-Card and no visa to re-enter the Schengen-Area.

To avoid issues like this, these family members can apply for a so-called "Deklaratorische Aufenthaltserlaubnis/Travel Visa".

This is a special type of residence permit **only** for third-country national SOFA-card holders. With this residence card, you can travel in the Schengen Area for a maximum 90 days within a 180 days period (acc. to § Art. 21 SDÜ). It also avoids issues returning back to Germany or the Schengen Area from your home country.

The residence permit has the endorsement: **„Deklaratorisch erteilt, Inhaber unterliegt dem NATO-Truppenstatut. Erlischt bei Verlust des SOFA-Status“.**

Translation: **“Declaratory, holder is subject to NATO-Status of Forces Agreement. Permit expires with loss of SOFA-Status.”**

### **How to apply:**

- Fill out the application for a residence permit
- Go to the Foreigners Office and bring:
  - passport
  - passport photo (biometric)
  - application
  - SOFA-Card

The expiry date of the residence card corresponds with the expiry date of the SOFA-card, therefore the fee varies between 100,- € (up to 1 year) and 110,- € (more than a year).

### **Duration of process:**

From the moment you apply until the delivery of the residence card, it takes about 2-3 weeks!

### **IMPORTANT !**

**The purpose of this residence permit is only to simplify travelling!  
It does not establish further or future rights for a legal stay or other reasons!**

\* All EU states except UK and Ireland, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania, but including non-EU states Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland