

Rwanda

Information for applicants

Republic of Rwanda

Rwanda is a densely populated landlocked country in eastern Africa. It borders Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda and Tanzania. With its hilly landscape, Rwanda is also known as the 'land of a thousand hills'. Rwanda was a German colony from 1884 to 1916, after which it became a Belgian UN mandate territory. It gained independence in 1962. Due to structural problems, a high population density and conflicts between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups – which culminated in the 1994 Tutsi genocide – the country was among the poorest in Africa.

Rwanda has made significant economic progress in recent years. The governing party, the Rwandan Patriotic Front, controls major segments of the economy. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, Rwanda was in the middle of an economic boom. Growth exceeded 10% in 2019, driven mostly by public investments for implementation of the National Strategy of Transformation. Rwanda's strong economic growth was accompanied by substantial improvements in living standards, with a two-thirds drop in child mortality and near-universal primary school enrolment. A strong focus on homegrown policies and initiatives has contributed to significant improvement in access to services and human development indicators. However, the Covid-19 crisis is dramatically increasing poverty and threatening human capital.

Medical care

There is a network of government-run hospitals in major cities. The University Hospital in Kigali is clean and decent in parts, but, like many government-run hospitals, it suffers from a lack of materials. While the University Hospital in Butare is certainly suitable for primary care and stabilising of patients with serious illnesses/injuries, you should seek to be transferred to Kigali as soon as possible, and subsequently evacuated from there. Kigali also has private medical services that cover the main health conditions. The King Faisal Hospital is the best choice available if you need to stay in hospital. However, as a whole, patients should return to Germany to have serious health problems treated, especially cardiovascular conditions. The King Faisal is a good base from which to organise an evacuation if necessary. The Bio Medical Center is a good provider of laboratory tests, and the King Faisal Hospital is the best choice for other technical examination methods like X-ray, ultrasound etc.

Quality of living, finding accommodation

There is a sufficient supply of suitable accommodation in Kigali. The local GIZ office will help you find accommodation, enlisting the help of real estate brokers if necessary.

Shops and services

Prices for imported goods are often high. The currency is the RWF (Rwandan franc). USD and euros can be exchanged easily at banks, larger hotels and exchange offices.

Climate

Despite of the country's proximity to the equator, the climate is quite temperate and damp due to the elevation. There are no significant temperature fluctuations during the year, but temperatures vary with elevation. There are two rainy seasons from February to May and September to December. Rural areas in particular are affected by floods and landslides due to heavy rains. The seismically highly active area in the north and west of Rwanda around Lake Kivu is part of the East Africa Rift Valley system. Earthquakes can occur there.

Accompanying partners

Married couples receive a permanent visa after presenting their marriage certificates. Unmarried accompanying partners are not entitled to a permanent visa. Arrangements must be made with the Rwandan authorities on a case-by-case basis. In order to work, a permit change is necessary. Same sex relationships are not officially prohibited. However, LGBTIQ are not socially accepted.

Schools

Kigali has several international schools, offering classes in English or in French.

Childcare

Childcare services for kindergarten children are available.

Find out more

<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/332.html>

<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/laenderinformationen/ruanda-node>

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