



Integration Course Guidance

for new immigrants who are entitled and obliged to attend, as well as foreigners who have been living in Germany for a longer period of time and who are obliged to attend.

Dear Fellow Citizen,

Under the Residence Act, you are entitled to attend an integration course once or you have been obliged to do so.

Children, adolescents and young adults who are still attending school cannot attend the integration course.

What is an integration course?

The general integration course consists of two parts: the language course and the orientation course.

In the language course you will learn the vocabulary you will need for speaking and writing in everyday life. This includes contact with the authorities, conversations with neighbours and at work, writing letters and filling in forms.

The orientation course provides you with information about life in Germany. Here you will learn about the legal system, German culture and the country's recent history.

The general integration course consists of a language course with 600 teaching units (one teaching unit is 45 minutes) and an orientation course with 100 teaching units. The language course consists of six course units with 100 teaching units each. The first 300 teaching units are called basic course; the following 300 teaching units are the advanced language course.

There are also special integration courses for women, parents, youths and for individuals who are unable to properly read or write. These courses have a duration of 1,000 teaching units.

If you are a particularly fast learner, you can attend an intensive course

The institution performing the integration courses, the so-called 'Kursträger' (course provider), will make you sit a placement test before starting the course. This test is used to assess which course and course unit you best begin with. The placement test is free of charge.

Attending the Final Test

The final test consists of a language test and a test at the end of the orientation course called 'Leben in Deutschland' (Life in Germany). You will have successfully completed the integration

course once you can prove sufficient knowledge of the German language in the language test (language level B1) and you have passed the 'Leben in Deutschland' test. You will then be awarded the 'Zertifikat Integrationskurs' (integration course certificate).

Should you fail one or both tests, you will be issued a certificate with your result.

Attendance of the final test is free of charge.

Advantages of Attending the Integration Course

Foreigners who come from a non-EU country must satisfy several requirements if they wish to obtain a permanent right of residence in Germany. Among other things, you must have sufficient knowledge of the German language as well as basic knowledge of the legal and social order and living conditions in Germany. These requirements are met upon successful completion of the integration course. Moreover, you can then be naturalised earlier where applicable. In addition, the German language skills acquired in the integration courses make everyday life in Germany easier and increase your prospects on the labour market.

Registration With a Course Provider

If you are entitled or obliged to attend an integration course, you will receive written confirmation of this (qualification certificate) from the foreigners authority or the office responsible for unemployment benefits. You can find course providers and course locations in your area as well as the regional office of the Federal Office responsible for you online at:

<https://bamf-navi.bamf.de/en/>

Please register for an integration course at the agency named to you and present the qualification certificate there. If no agency has been specified, please register as soon as possible with a course provider of your choice. If your qualification certificate states a date under 'Die Teilnahmeberechtigung bzw. die Teilnahmeverpflichtung ist gültig bis...' (The entitlement or obligation to attend is valid until...), then you can or must register with a course provider or the agency named to you by this date at the latest.

The Federal Office has the right to send you to a specific course provider to ensure timely course attendance.

The course provider must tell you the prospective starting date of a course. The course should start within six weeks following your registration. The course provider must notify you if no course comes about within this time frame.

Please note that your qualification certificate expires if for reasons within your responsibility you do not start the integration course the latest one year after registration or if you interrupt course

attendance course for longer than one year.

Proper Course Attendance

You need to attend the integration course as required to achieve the course objective. This means that you regularly attend lessons until completion of the course and sit the final test. Your course provider will provide you with written confirmation of proper course attendance upon request.

Childcare

Please contact the course provider if you require childcare in order to attend an integration course. The course provider will tell you about the available childcare options.

Change of Course Provider

As a rule, changing the course provider is only possible after completion of a course unit. Such a change is only possible in the presence of special circumstances, in particular, in the event of moving house, changing between part-time and full-time courses, for enabling childcare or for starting vocational training or employment, and only after completion of a course unit.

You will lose the missed teaching units of the course unit in the event of a change for other reasons.

The course provider will have to give the qualification certificate back to you in the event of a permissible change.

Costs of the integration course

You must pay a contribution to costs of €2.29 per lesson to the course provider. This contribution to costs must be paid before the start of each course section of 100 teaching units and before the orientation course. The contribution to costs for teaching units you missed cannot be refunded. If you have no income of your own, the person who is obliged to provide for your maintenance must pay the contribution to costs.

You can be exempted from the contribution to costs if you receive Bürgergeld (citizen's income) or Hilfe zum Lebensunterhalt (assistance for subsistence, Sozialhilfe: social benefits) or if you are financially needy for other reasons. Furthermore, you can be exempted from the contribution to costs if you are employed and your gross monthly pay does not exceed a certain amount, which increases if you have children. For more information and the exact amounts, which change annually, please see the current application form and on <https://www.bamf.de/ik-kostenbefreiung>. You must apply for exemption from the contribution to costs in writing to the regional office of the Federal Office that is responsible for you.

Please enclose proof of your financial need (copy of the relevant certificate, e.g. unemployment

benefit or citizen's income, social benefits, current payslip/valid employment contract showing a gross monthly income as well as proof of any child allowances, most recent income tax certificate or self-disclosure on ELStAM, housing benefit, BAFöG, child supplement, income under the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act, exemption from day-care fees, exemption from broadcasting fees, local social ticket, etc.).

Where possible, please submit your application before the start of the course. If you apply during the course, the exemption from costs cannot be backdated to the beginning of the course.

Travel Expenses

If you are receiving a citizen's income and have been obliged to attend an integration course by the relevant authority or have been exempted from paying the contribution to costs by the Federal Office, you can receive an allowance towards your travel expenses to the integration course. The travel allowance will be paid in the form of a fixed rate. However, this is always on condition that the course location is at least 3 km from your place of residence (shortest route on foot). You must apply for the travel allowance at the responsible regional office of the Federal Office. To find the responsible regional office, go to <https://bamf-navi.bamf.de/en/>

Repeating a Maximum of 300 Teaching Units of the Language Course

Subject to certain conditions, you can repeat once-only up to 300 teaching units of the language course. To do so, you will have to have fully attended the language course, have subsequently sat the language test and have in doing so failed to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of German (language level B1).

Attendance of repeat teaching units is subject to an application. Please submit this application to the Federal Office's regional office responsible for your place of residence.

No previous participation in the language test is required to qualify for repeating the 300 teaching units of the advanced language course if you are attending a literacy course (Alphabetisierungskurs).

Reimbursement of the Contribution to Costs

If your qualification certificate was issued by 31 Jan. 2023, the following applies:

The Federal Office can reimburse you 50% of the contribution to costs paid if you successfully took the final test after 8 Dec. 2007 and no more than two years have passed between the first issuing of your qualification certificate and the final test. You must apply for reimbursement at the responsible regional office of the Federal Office.

For qualification certificates issued after 1 Feb. 2023, the deadline is two years if you have taken

part in a general integration course.

The deadline is three years if you have taken part in a special integration course (e.g. literacy course, second writing system learner courses, parents' or women's integration course, youth integration course).

Guidance in the Event of an Obligation to Attend

If you have been obliged to attend an integration course by the foreigners authority or by the office responsible for the citizen's income, you must register for the integration course with a course provider as soon as possible and attend the course as required.

If you do not do so, this may have the following consequences for you, among others:

- It may affect the decision on the extension of your residence permit.
- If you receive social benefits, the benefits may be reduced.
- You may be ordered by the foreigners authority to pay the contribution to costs of €2.29 per teaching unit for the entire integration course in advance in one sum.
- A fine may be imposed.

Your course provider must inform the foreigners authority or the office responsible for the citizens' income if you do not attend the integration course as required.

Additional Information

All application forms mentioned in this guidance are also available from your course provider, your foreigners office or the Federal Office's regional office responsible for your place of residence. You can also find the forms on the website at: <https://www.bamf.de/formulare>.

You also have the option of submitting your applications to the Federal Office online via the Federal Portal.

The following applications are available in digital form:

- Application for Permission to Attend the Integration Course
- Application for Permission to Repeat a Maximum of 300 Teaching Units of the Language Course
- Application for Exemption from Contribution to the Costs of the Integration Course

- Application for Travel Allowance Including the Granting of a Higher Daily Allowance
- Application for Reimbursement of the Contribution to Costs (50%)

This internet address will take you to the online applications on the Federal Portal:

[Internet Address for Online Applications](#)

You can find all further information on how to apply online at:

[Internet Address for Information on How to Apply Online](#)

Please also take note of the services provided by the immigration advice centres and young immigrant counselling services. They will help you with submitting applications, will answer your questions, help you with your problems and can search for a suitable integration course for you. Information about immigration advice centres and young migrant counselling services in your area is available from your foreigners authority, the Federal Office's regional offices and online at <https://bamf-navi.bamf.de/en/>.

This guidance summarises the most important information you need for attending the integration course. Your course provider will be able to answer any additional questions.

You are not covered by statutory accident insurance while attending an integration course.

We wish you every success in attending the integration course!