



Bundesamt  
für Migration  
und Flüchtlinge

# Learn German

Integration course  
for immigrants

ENGLISCH



Integration

# Integration course for immigrants

## What is an integration course?

An integration course is an offer for all immigrants who live permanently in Germany and who speak little or no German. It is not intended for children and juveniles who are still at school.

The integration course consists of a language course with 600 lesson units and an orientation course with 100 lesson units. Apart from the general integration course, special integration courses are also offered for women, parents and young adults as well as immigrants who still cannot read and write enough German.

Special integration courses can last up to 1,000 lesson units. However, if you are a very quick learner, for example because you have already learnt another foreign language, you can attend intensive courses with 430 lesson units.

## What do you learn in a language course?

You will learn the vocabulary for all important areas of day-to-day life and the working world. This deals with topics such as shopping, public transport, contact with the authorities, looking for a place to live, leisure activities with friends and neighbours as well as everyday situations. You will be taught how to write letters and emails in German, fill out forms, make a phone call or apply for a job. You will practice using familiar and new words correctly and how to feel more confident with the German language.

## What do you learn in an orientation course?

You will get to know Germany and learn key facts about its laws and politics, its culture and the recent history of the federal republic. You will be given information about your rights and duties, through also about daily life, traditions, regulations and liberties. The values of the democratic system in Germany are another important topic in the course. These include, for example, religious freedom, tolerance and the equal rights of different social groups.

## Who can take part in an integration course?

### → Foreign nationals with a residence title after 2005

If you were granted your first residence title after 01.01.2005 and live permanently in Germany, you are legally entitled to attend an integration course. If you are unable to make yourself understood in German, or only very little, you are in fact obliged to attend such a course. Your local Foreigners' Authority (Ausländerbehörde) will issue you with confirmation of your eligibility.

### → Foreign nationals with a residence title before 2005 as well as citizens from the European Union

If you have been living in Germany legitimately for a longer period of time as a foreign national, or if you are a citizen from the European Union, you may also attend an integration course.

If this is the case, you must apply in writing to the regional office of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, which can be found in every federal state, for admission to an integration course. You can also contact a local course provider who will help you with your application.

Application forms are available from the Foreigners' Authority, course providers and on the website of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees: [www.bamf.de/integrationskurs](http://www.bamf.de/integrationskurs). This website also has a search engine that you can use to find your next regional office or a course provider near you. However, you can also contact a counselling centre of the Migration Counselling for Adult Immigrants (MBE) or a Youth Migration Service (JMD).

If the Federal Office decides that you are entitled to attend an integration course, you will be issued with an authorisation. However, you will lose your entitlement to attend the course if you do not start the integration course with the course provider within one year of registration at your own responsibility or if you interrupt your attendance at the course for longer than one year.

If you receive unemployment benefit II and are (also) unable to find employment on account of your poor language skills, you may be obliged to attend an integration course.



→ **Ethnic German resettlers**

You are usually entitled to attend an integration course for free. Spouses and offspring are also entitled to attend if they are listed in the notification of admissions. The Federal Office of Administration will issue you with confirmation of your eligibility.

→ **German nationals**

You can take part in an integration course if you do not have adequate German language skills and are in particular need of integration. To do so, you must make a written application for admission to the integration course with the relevant regional office of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees.

→ **Asylum applicants with good prospects of residence or asylum applicants close to the labour market who entered the country before 01.08.2019, tolerated persons with a temporary suspension of deportation according to § 60 a (2) para. 3 German Residence Act (AufenthG) as well as holders of a residence permit according to § 25 (5) AufenthG**

You can apply to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees for admission to an integration course.

Asylum applicants may also be obliged to attend an integration course by the Federal Office in addition to their authorisation. This is often the case if you have good prospects of residence<sup>1</sup> or are close to the labour market and entered the country before 01.08.2019, and receive benefits under the Asylum Applicants Benefits Act. The benefits office responsible for you may demand that you attend an integration course.

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1 To find out which asylum applicants have good prospects of residence, visit the BAMF website and check out the following: Infothek → Fragen und Antworten → Fragen zu den Integrationskursen für Asylbewerber und Geduldete → Was heißt gute Bleibeperspektive? (Infothek → Questions and answers → Questions on the integration courses for asylum seekers and tolerated persons → What does good prospects of residence?)



## What next?

As a general rule, you are free to choose between the integration course providers approved by the Federal Office and can register for an integration course with these using your eligibility certificate. So as to allow people who are obliged to attend an integration course to take part as soon as possible, the Federal Office may assign you to a certain provider with a suitable course. The Federal Office may refer people who are entitled to attend an integration course to a certain course provider with a suitable course so that they can take part as soon as possible. In both of these cases, the Federal Office bears in mind that the courses start in the near future and you can get to them easily.

The language course in the integration course consists of several parts, the modules. Each of these has 100 lesson units.

An assessment test determines which module matches your language skills. You will only ever attend the module that best matches your personal knowledge and skills as well as your individual learning speed.

During your integration course you can switch from one module to another, skip or repeat certain modules. If you attend lessons regularly, the course provider can issue you with a certificate of participation.



The necessary language course is completed after 600 lesson units (or 900 in special courses).

A practice test is held after 300 lesson units. Your German language skills will be extended in the subsequent modules and new topics discussed. To prepare you for the final language test “Deutsch-Test für Zuwanderer” (German Test for Immigrants) (DTZ), a practice test will be held towards the end of the language course. The result of this test will allow you to judge your language skills. The DTZ is held at the end of the language course. This is to check whether you have sufficient skills in oral and written German.

Following the language course you will attend an orientation course with 100 lesson units. If you already have sufficient German language skills, you can also attend the orientation course without a prior language course.

The “Leben in Deutschland” (Life in Germany) (LiD) test has to be taken at the end of the orientation course to check what you have learnt during the course.

You can take the DTZ and LiD without having to pay for them. If you pass both of these tests, you will be awarded the “Integration course certificate”.

You may be able to be naturalised earlier if you have an “Integration course certificate”. What’s more, the German

language skills you acquire in the integration courses will make your daily life in Germany easier and improve your chances of finding a job.

If you are unable to prove sufficient German language skills (level B1) in the DTZ test, you can repeat the follow-on language course (300 lesson units) once by applying to your responsible regional office of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. The final test is once again free.

## **What does it cost to attend the integration course?**

The Federal Republic of Germany bears most of the costs for the integration course. You personally have to pay part of the costs of each lesson unit (contribution to the costs). You will be told the exact amount when you register for the integration course.

You may be exempted from the contribution to the costs under certain circumstances, for example if you receive unemployment benefit II or subsistence allowance, or if you are otherwise in need of financial support. Please apply to a regional office of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees for this.

Ethnic German resettlers do not have to pay any contribution to costs.

Asylum applicants with good prospects of residence or asylum applicants close to the labour market who entered the country before 01.08.2019, tolerated persons with a temporary suspension of deportation according to § 60 a (2) para. 3 German Residence Act (AufenthG) as well as holders of a residence permit according to § 25 (5) AufenthG are exempted from the contribution to costs.

If you pass the final test no later than two years after the first confirmation of your eligibility is issued, in other words you have proven that you have adequate German language skills at level B1 and a basic knowledge of the German legal and social order, you can apply for reimbursement of half of your contribution to costs. Please send your application to the regional office of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees that is responsible for you.

You may also be eligible for a travelling expenses subsidy if you are exempted from payment of the contribution to costs. Please send your application for this to the regional office of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees that is responsible for you.

## Where can I find further information?

- **Foreign nationals** can ask at their local Foreigners' Authority, which can be found at the urban, municipal or district authorities, as well as the counselling centres of the Migration Counselling for Adult Immigrants or the Youth Migration Services.
- **Citizens from the European Union** can get further information from the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, the counselling centres of the Migration Counselling for Adult Immigrants or the Youth Migration Services.
- **Asylum applicants with good prospects of residence or asylum applicants close to the labour market who entered the country before 01.08.2019, tolerated persons with a temporary suspension of deportation according to § 60 a (2) para. 3 German Residence Act (AufenthG) as well as holders of a residence permit according to § 25 (5) AufenthG**  
You will be given a leaflet and an application form when you apply for asylum. Further information is available from the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, the local Foreigners' Authorities, the counselling centres of the Migration Counselling for Adult Immigrants or the Youth Migration Services.
- **Ethnic German resettlers** will find more information in the federal reception centre in Friedland, in the temporary hostels for resettlers or the responsible counselling centres of the Migration Counselling for Adult Immigrants or the Youth Migration Services.
- **Participants with children**  
If you have a child who is not required to go to school, the course provider may be able to help you find a childcare offer, for example a place in a child daycare centre. Some course providers also offer supervision for your children during lessons if you have no other childcare possibility.



You will be given a leaflet about your rights and obligations when attending the integration course together with your eligibility certificate, as well as a list of integration course carriers near your place of residence.

Information is also available over the Internet at [www.bamf.de/integrationskurs](http://www.bamf.de/integrationskurs) or from the “Service Center” on the phone number 0911 9430.

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