



Information sheet on the integration course

for new immigrants entitled and obligated to participate as well as foreign nationals living in Germany long-term obligated to participate

Dear fellow resident,

In accordance with the German Residence Act, you are entitled or have been obligated to participate in an integration course on a one-off basis.

Children, young people and young adults who are still attending school cannot participate in 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 get to know the vocabulary you need to speak and write German in everyday life. This includes contacting authorities, discussions with neighbours and at the workplace, writing letters and filling in forms.

The orientation course will inform you about life in Germany. Here you will learn about the legal system, the culture and the recent history of the country.

The general integration course consists of a language course comprising 600 teaching units (one teaching unit equals 45 minutes) and an orientation course comprising 100 teaching units. The language course comprises six course modules of 100 teaching units each. The first 300 teaching units make up the basic course and the next 300 teaching units the intermediate language course.

Special integration courses, such as for women, parents, young people and persons who are unable to read and write properly, are also available. These courses comprise 1,000 teaching units.

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

The institution that conducts the integration courses, the course provider, will do an assessment test with you before the start of the course. This test will determine which course and course module will be most suitable for you to start with. The assessment test is free of charge.

Participation in the final examination

The final examination consists of a language test and a test at the end of the orientation course called “Leben in Deutschland” (Life in Germany). If you demonstrate an adequate knowledge of German (B1 level) in the language test and pass the “Leben in Deutschland” test, you have successfully completed the integration course. You will receive the Integration Course Certificate.

If you are not successful in one or both tests, you will receive a certificate stating your result.

Participation in the final examination is free of charge.

Benefits of participating in the integration course

Foreign nationals who come from a country that is not in the European Union must meet several requirements if they want to receive permanent residence in Germany. These include an adequate knowledge of the German language as well as basic knowledge of the legal and social system and living conditions in Germany. These requirements are met on successful completion of the integration course. It may also allow earlier naturalisation. In addition, the German language skills acquired in the integration course make everyday life in Germany easier and improve the chances on the job market.

Registration with the course provider

If you are entitled or obligated to participate in an integration course, you will receive written confirmation (Eligibility Certificate) from the immigration office or the office competent for unemployment benefits. Course providers and course locations near you as well as the regional Federal Office branch competent for you can be found online at:

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

Please register with the named course provider for an integration course and present your Eligibility Certificate there. If no particular course provider is named, please register with a course provider of your choice as soon as possible. If there is a date under “The eligibility/obligation to participate is valid until...” in the Eligibility Certificate, then you can/must register with a course provider or the named course provider no later than by this date.

To ensure prompt participation in a course, the Federal Office can send you to a particular course provider.

The course provider must notify you of the expected start date of a course. The course should start within six weeks after your registration. If no course takes place during this time, the course provider must notify you.

Please note that your eligibility to participate expires if you do not start your integration course the latest within one year of registration or if you discontinue participation in the course for more than one year for reasons you are responsible for.

Due participation in the course

You should participate in the course in due form in order to achieve the goal of the integration course. This means that you attend lessons regularly until the end of the course and take part in the final examination. Due participation in the course is also important for you if you wish to repeat teaching units of the language course at a later date. Your course provider will confirm your due participation in written form at your request.

Childcare

If you require childcare while participating in an integration course, please contact your course provider. They will inform you of the childcare options.

Changing course providers

In general, it is only possible to change course provider after completing a course module. A change is only possible for special circumstances, in particular in the event of a relocation, change from part-time to full-time courses, to allow for childcare or to join a training programme or start employment, after the completion of a course module.

If you change for any other reason, the teaching units of a course module that you no longer attend will be lost.

In the event of a permitted change, the course provider must return your Eligibility Certificate to you.

Costs of the integration course

You must pay the course provider a cost contribution of 2.20 euros per teaching unit. This cost contribution must be paid before the start of every course module of 100 teaching units and before the orientation course. If you do not attend a lesson, the cost contribution you have paid for the lessons missed cannot be reimbursed. If you do not have your own income, the person who is obligated to pay for your maintenance must pay the cost contribution.

You can be exempted from the cost contribution if you are receiving unemployment benefit II or assistance for your livelihood (social assistance) or if you require financial support for other reasons. You must apply for exemption from the cost contribution in writing from the regional branch of the Federal Office competent for you.

Please submit proof of requiring financial support (copy of the relevant confirmation, e.g. notification of unemployment benefit I or II, social assistance, housing allowance, student loan [BAFöG], child allowance, benefits under the German Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act, exemption from day care fees, exemption from radio and television license fees, local welfare ticket, etc). Please apply for this before the start of your participation in the course. If you apply during the course, the cost exemption cannot be granted retroactively from the start of the course.

If you are receiving unemployment benefit II and are obligated by the competent office to participate in an integration course, you are automatically exempt from the cost contribution. In this case, you do not need to apply for a cost exemption at the regional branch of the Federal Office.

Travel expenses

If you are receiving unemployment benefit II and are obligated by the competent office to participate in an integration course or were exempted by the Federal Office from paying the cost contribution, you can receive an allowance for your travel expenses to the integration course. The allowance is paid in the form of a lump sum. However, the requirement is always that the location of the course must be least 3 km from your place of residence. You must apply for the travel expense allowance at the competent regional branch of the Federal Office. You can find this on the Internet at <https://bamf-navi.bamf.de/en/>.

Repetition of a maximum of 300 teaching units per language course

Under certain conditions, you can repeat up to 300 teaching units of the language course on a one-off basis. To be eligible, you must have participated fully and in the proper manner in the language course, taken a language test afterwards and have proven inadequate German language skills (B1 level).

You must apply for participating in the repeat lessons. Please apply at the regional branch of the Federal Office competent for your place of residence.

If you are attending a literacy course, no prior participation in the language test is required for repeating the intermediate course in order to be able to repeat the 300 teaching units.

Reimbursement of the contribution to the costs

The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees can reimburse you for 50% of the contribution of the costs which you have already paid if you have successfully taken the final examination after 8 December 2007. However, this only applies if no more than two years have passed between the first issuance of confirmation of eligibility to attend the course and the completion of the final examination. You will have to file an application to the competent regional office of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees in order to receive reimbursement.

Information in the event of an obligation to participate

If you are obligated by the immigration office or the office competent for unemployment benefit II to participate in an integration course, you must register with an integration course provider and duly participate in the course as soon as possible.

If you fail to do so, the consequences for you include the following:

- It may affect the decision on extending your residence permit.
- If you receive social benefits, these could be reduced.
- If applicable, the immigration office can request you to pay the cost contribution of 2.20 euros per teaching unit for the entire integration course in advance in one amount.

- A fine may be imposed.

Your course provider must inform the immigration office or the office competent for unemployment benefit II if you do not duly participate in the integration course.

Other things you need to know

All of the application forms mentioned in this information sheet are also available from the course provider, your local immigration office or the regional branch of the Federal Office competent for your place of residence. You can also find the forms on the Internet at: www.bamf.de/formulare.

You also have the option of sending your applications to the Federal Office digitally via the Federal Office portal.

The following applications can be made digitally:

- Application for admission to the integration course
- Application for admission to repeat a maximum of 300 teaching units of the language course
- Application for exemption from the contribution to the costs for the integration course
- Application for the granting of a travel expense allowance incl. the granting of a higher daily lump sum
- Application for reimbursement of the contribution to the costs (50%)

The online applications on the Federal Office portal can be found at this Internet address:

<https://www.bamf.de/EN/Themen/Integration/ZugewanderteTeilnehmende/Integrationskurse/integrationskurse-node.html>

All further information for applying online can be found at:

<https://www.bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Integration/Integrationskurse/faq-ozg-ik.html;jsessionid=611F0734B4887DB3B25C2094CA56DCAE.internet532>

Please also note the offers of the immigration consultation offices and the youth immigration services. These offices will assist you with applications, answer questions you may have and address your problems, and can find a suitable integration course for you. You can find out where immigration consultation offices and youth immigration services in your vicinity are from your local immigration office, the competent regional office of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees or on the internet at <https://bamf-navi.bamf.de/en/>.

This information sheet contains the most important information for your participation in the integration course. Your course provider will also be pleased to answer any further questions.

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

We wish you every success with your integration course!