



European Migration Network Ad-Hoc Query on

LANGUAGE AND ORIENTATION COURSES FOR IMMIGRANTS

Requested by EMN NCP Slovenia on 13th November 2008

(Responses from AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, EE, ES, GR, HU, LT, LV, MT, NL, PT, SE, SI, SK, UK)

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1. Background Information

Republic of Slovenia set up the system of integration of third-country nationals. Following the guidelines of the Handbook on Integration, the integration process consists, among other things, of the language and civic courses.


In this regard we would appreciate a brief explanation to the following questions.

- 1. Do you provide language and civic courses to all immigrants or just to the third-country nationals?**
- 2. Do the immigrants have to fulfill any conditions to attend the courses?**
- 3. In what scope – how many hours? Does the scope (duration) of the courses differ, depending on what status the immigrant has (temporary residence, permanent residence)?**
- 4. Are the courses covered entirely by the state/municipality budget or do the immigrants have to co-finance them?**



Please note that we are looking for information relating to immigrants, residing on the basis of the permanent or temporary residence permit, excluding refugees, asylum seekers, victims of trafficking etc.

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2. Responses

		Wider dissemination?	
	Belgium	Yes	<p>BE is a federal country. The competences of integration and education (incl adult education) are assigned to the language based Communities (Flemish/French/German) and territory based regions (Flanders/Walloon/Brussels). So there is no single policy on this in BE.</p> <p>1. <i>Do you provide language and civic courses to all immigrants or just to the third country nationals?</i></p> <p><u>Flemish Community (incl in Brussels):</u> Language courses and civic courses can be provided to all immigrants. For most of the newcomers in possession a residence permit valid for more than three months this “civic integration programme” is compulsory. It is optional for EU-citizens, TCN who live in Brussels, people older than 65 years, highly skilled migrants..., and some other smaller exceptions (disabled etc.) More information can be found on : http://binnenland.vlaanderen.be/inburgering/integrationprograme.htm</p> <p><u>French Community (incl in Brussels):</u> The Walloon Region and the French Community Commission in Brussels, which are competent for integration of foreigners, do not operate a compulsory civic integration programme nor do they operate compulsory French language courses . However, they do fund private or public organisations to provide literacy classes and French classes (the so-called FLE classes) to all categories of foreigners (EU or TCN) and people of foreign origin and to undertake various citizenship education, cultural and social participation projects where foreigners are (one of) the main target group(s). In Brussels (French speaking) and Wallonia, the French Community, which is competent in matters of education, also funds private and public organisations, including educational institutions (universities, higher education institutions, adult education courses, etc.), to provide French language courses and literacy programmes (e.g. the non-profit organisation Lire et Ecrire) to all immigrants and Belgians.</p> <p><u>German Community:</u> The German Community does not operate compulsory integration programme. Assistance to foreigners and language lessons are available through adult education and social care schemes; they are optional and accessible to all.</p> <p>2. <i>Do the immigrants have to fulfil any conditions to attend these courses?</i></p> <p><u>Flemish Community:</u> Anyone who has an obligation to integrate must meet the following conditions : to present oneself on time at the Inburgering welcome office to regularly attend the lessons within the primary integration program. This means that he or she must attend at least 80% of each course. when people who have an obligation to integrate do not comply with this integration obligation, they may be fined. They can also be fined if they do not participate in setting up the integration programme or refuse to sign the integration contract.</p>


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			<p><u>French Community:</u> No conditions are imposed. Certain non-profit organisations accept undocumented migrants in their courses or in their social and cultural participation projects. Low attendance rates and high drop-out rates are an issue for certain organisations and institutions.</p> <p>3. <i>In what scope- how many hours? Does the scope (duration) of the courses differ, depending on the status the immigrant has (temporary residence, permanent residence)?</i></p> <p><u>Flemish Community:</u> The primary integration programme is coordinated by the Inburgering welcome office and is composed of a training programme supported by the individual coach of the person integrating. The training programme consists of lessons Dutch, social orientation and career orientation. Number of hours of the language course “Dutch as a second language” depends on the level of knowledge of the applicant. It can vary from 80, 120, 180, 240, up till 600 hours. The course of social integration consists of 60 hours. The status of the immigrant has no effect on the duration of the courses.</p> <p><u>French Community:</u> For literacy classes and French language courses, difficulty levels and number of hours vary a lot in function of operators. No standard number of hours or scope is applied unilaterally to all existing training initiatives. The residence status of the immigrant has no effect on the duration of the courses.</p> <p>4. <i>Are courses covered entirely by the state/municipality budget or do the immigrants have to co-finance them?</i></p> <p><u>Flemish Community:</u> The courses that are mentioned in the personal civic integration contract of the immigrant are covered entirely by the state.</p> <p><u>French Community:</u> Since the initiatives mentioned above are subsidised, it means that they are either accessible at a very affordable price (for people with income) or (nearly) free of charge (a symbolic participation to the costs can be asked; also, fees are sensibly reduced if participants are unemployed or have claimed welfare benefits).</p>
	Bulgaria	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The State Agency for Refugees organises; organise Bulgarian language courses and vocational training courses for foreigners who have applied for status determination or who have been granted protection and provides them with assistance to adapt to the Bulgarian conditions 2. Foreigners who have applied for status determination or who have been granted protection do not have to fulfill any conditions to attend the courses. 3. A National programme for the integration of refugees ensures conditions for integration of newly recognized refugees for a one-year period after they have been granted refugee status. Any individual who has been granted refugee or humanitarian status in Bulgaria, within one year after receiving the status, is provided with shelter, social assistance, health insurance, Bulgarian language training, social and cultural counseling. 4. For the foreigners who have applied for status determination or who have been granted protection the courses are covered by the state budget.
	Czech Republic	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Language and civic courses are systematically provided just in the frame of the State Integration Programme for

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			<p>Recognized Refugees. Some projects that contain language or civic courses for third country nationals are organized by NGOs. These projects are mainly subsidized from the State Budget and European Funds.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Subsidized projects are mainly targeted at third country nationals with legal status who live in the territory of the Czech Republic at least one year or longer. The scope of the courses for third country nationals depends on each project, its funds and individual situation of third country nationals. Courses for recognized refugees run ca 1 year and comprise 600 (group courses) and 400 hours (exceptional individual courses) respectively. Courses for recognized refugees are free of charge and financed entirely from the State Budget and European Refugee Fund. <p>Some NGOs organize basic language or civic courses as a part of projects for third country nationals. These projects are usually entirely financed from the State Budget and European Funds. Nevertheless third country nationals' co-financing has been tested quite successfully in several projects.</p> <p>The Government has introduced knowledge of the Czech language as a condition for granting of a permanent residence status (with several defined exceptions) since January 1, 2009. The required level of language skills is A1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The Ministry of the Interior covers entirely the first attempt to pass language exam as the condition for granting of the permanent residence status.</p>
	Denmark		
	Germany	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> All migrants in Germany who have a permanent residence title have the chance to attend an integration course consisting of a language course and an orientation course. The Residence Act (<i>Aufenthaltsgesetz</i>) distinguishes here between new immigrants (who received their residence title after 1 January 2005), earlier immigrants (who received their residence title prior to 1 January 2005), EU citizens, ethnic German resettlers, Germans, those whose deportation has been suspended for many years and third-state nationals with a long-term right of residence. A general precondition is that the migrant has a permanent residence title. New immigrants and third-state nationals with a long-term right of residence (who have been resident in an EU State for more than five years) and ethnic German resettlers have a right to attend an integration course. EU citizens, those whose deportation has been suspended for many years (contingent on a residence title in accordance with section 104 a subs. 1 or section 23 subs. 1 of the Residence Act), existing immigrants, as well as German nationals (whose language proficiency is inadequate and who are in particular need of integration) are not entitled to participate but may be placed by the Federal Office should course places be available. The duration of an integration course does not depend on residence status. Anyone who has an entitlement to attend a course or has been placed by the Federal Office may attend an integration course lasting 645 hours (600 hours of language study and 45 hours of orientation). Under certain conditions integration may also last for 945 hours (applicable to young people aged up to 27, parents and women, participants in need of literacy training and immigrants who have been living in Germany for a longer period and who have learnt "incorrect" German over time). There are also 430-hour intensive courses for quick learners. The integration course is largely subsidised by the Federal Republic of Germany; participants are charged one Euro per hour of tuition. However, the Federal Office also exempts those on a low income and Unemployment Benefit II

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			beneficiaries from making such a contribution to the costs.
	Estonia	Yes	<p>Estonia doesn't offer centralized language and civic courses to immigrants. We have some project-based language and civic courses, what are organized by different NGOs. These projects are financed partly by the government, European structural funds, and other sources. Estonian Migration Foundation has organized (in collaboration with Estonian Labour Market Board and NGO Civil Training Centre) since 02.04.2007 a project called "New Home", that offers languages courses (6x 8 h) and adaption coursed (6 x8 h) for returnees and new immigrants. This course is free of charge to the participants (there is a registration fee 250 kroons/per person or 500 kroons/per family for these participants who started they courses on 27.09.2008). For more information visit www.migfond.ee</p> <p>Integration Foundation is an NGO, who has based its activities on the Estonian national integration programmes, which are worked out by the Office of the Minister for Population and Ethnic Affairs. Integration Foundation is organizing different language and civic courses for new immigrants and also for these people who have lived in Estonia for a long time. More information about these projects you can find on www.meis.ee</p> <p>Aliens who wish to apply for long-term residents residence permit must pass the elementary language exam (required as a condition of integration from 1 June 2007). Freed from the requirement of passing the language exam are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - individuals below the age of 15 and over the age of 65; - individuals who obtained their basic, secondary or higher education in Estonian; - adults with limited legal competence; - individuals incapable of passing the exam due to their health (although if an individual is capable of passing a certain part of the exam, requirements in this case shall be decided upon by an expert committee as per the procedure for passing the citizenship exam); <p>The exact procedure and conditions for sitting the language exam shall be implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research. Money spent on studying Estonian will be refunded if the following conditions are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the applicant is not an Estonian citizen; - the applicant has passed both the Estonian language exam and the knowledge of the law exam; - the educational and training institution that conducted the Estonian language instruction has been issued an education license by the Ministry of Education and Research. <p>In order to get back the money spent on Estonian language studies, the person who has passed the exams must submit the corresponding application to the National Examination and Qualification Centre within 3 months of passing the last exam. The application form is available on the National Examination and Qualification Centre website (www.ekk.edu.ee)and the offices and contact points of the Centre.</p> <p>Up to 6,000 EEK of the money spent on language training is refundable. The income tax is deducted from this amount.</p>








EMN Ad-Hoc Query: Change of identity/travel documents

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			The state compensation can be applied for only once. Compensation is paid only for Estonian language studies.
	Ireland		
	Greece	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Greece provides language and civic courses to all immigrants, both third-country nationals (T.C.Ns) and EU citizens, through the Ministry of National Education & Religious Affairs structures. Furthermore, in the framework of the European Integration Fund, under Annual Programmes 2007, 2008 & 2009, Greek language, history and culture as well as civic orientation courses are going to be implemented both in the Hellenic territory and abroad (pre-departure measures in Moldova and Georgia). These courses address only T.C.Ns. 2. In order to attend the courses, the immigrants have to prove their legal residency in the country (any document proving temporary or permanent residence). 3. The duration of the courses is the same no matter what the status of the immigrants (temporary or permanent residence). Immigrants attend 150 - hour language courses and 25 - hour Greek history and culture courses, under the Educational Programme entitled "Certification of adequate knowledge of the Greek language and elements of Greek history and culture of T.C.Ns" (Ministry of National Education & Religious Affairs). Furthermore, immigrants attend 100 to 150 - hour language courses, depending on their language attainment, under the Educational Programme entitled "Teaching of the Greek language as a foreign language to immigrant workers" (Ministry of National Education & Religious Affairs). 4. The immigrants don't have to co-finance the above mentioned courses. Most of them are co-financed by the EU and the state/municipality budget.
	Spain	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Courses are offered to all immigrants, not just third country nationals. 2. In general, there are no pre-conditions to be accepted in courses, which are delivered on a first-come basis. 3. The number of hours does not vary depending on the administrative status. It does vary depending on the organizers of the courses: ngos, migrant associations, municipalities 4. There is no co-financing foreseen. In some cases, immigrants have to finance teaching materials. <p>Note: Spain does not have a centralized system for these courses. National and regional governments fund the offer of this kind of courses on a project basis, in order to provide a sufficient offer of course opportunities, which are delivered through ngos, migrant associations, municipalities. So the Spanish system can to be characterized as open, voluntary and decentralized.</p>
	France		
	Italy		
	Cyprus		
	Latvia	Yes	Latvia does not provide language courses or civic courses for immigrants with residence permits.
	Lithuania	Yes	Lithuania provides language courses only for refugees.

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	Luxembourg		
	Hungary	Yes	For the time being Hungary does not provide any language training courses and civic integration programmes for legally resident third-country nationals.
	Malta	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Language classes are available to asylum seekers at closed reception Centres in Malta. 2. Attendance is on voluntary basis. While they are in the Centre Immigrants may attend language classes. Immigrants who have spent the longest period of time in detention, are given priority. 3. Training include: English language, Cultural Orientation, Job skills and recreation. All courses consist of an average of twenty training hours and the duration of the courses does not depend on variable factors. 4. The classes are provided through a state agency. The immigrant is not asked to pay any fees for classes at the closed reception centres.
	Netherlands	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the Netherlands language and civic courses are provided for all immigrants. The course prepares to successfully pass the Dutch Civic Integration Examination passing of which is obligatory for third country nationals. In the framework of integration all immigrants, including 2nd and 3rd generation immigrants, can attend the course on a voluntary base. 2. Immigrants do not have to attend the courses when they are younger than 18 or older than 65; when they have lived in the Netherlands for a period of over eight years before they reached the age of 16 or when they have successfully passed the 'Short Dispensation Examination'. 3. Maximum duration to attend courses and get tuition financed is three years. The course prepares for the examination Have immigrants by then still not passed the Civic Integration Examination, they lose their right to have the course's costs covered by public money. Status of the immigrant makes no difference for the scope (duration) of the course 4. The possibility exists to have the course covered by a public budget or by the municipality the reside in. Immigrants can apply to get a maximum of € 4480 from which the tuition expenses will be paid for them, provided they enrol in a course organized by an officially recognized school or institution.
	Austria	No	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Austria provides alphabetization and language courses for third country nationals only. EU/EEA nationals are exempted from this obligation. 2. The fulfilment of the courses is an <u>obligation</u>. According to the Integration Agreement (Integrationsvereinbarung) a third country national who plans to stay in Austria for a period of more than 12 months within two years and needs a residence title, has to learn German at a level, which enables him/her to participate in the social and cultural life. 3. Generally, two modules have to be fulfilled: Module 1 is an alphabetization course (75h), whereas Module 2 is a German language training (300h). The courses take place at acknowledged institutes and have to be passed with a positive examination. 4. As a general rule, third country nationals have to finance the courses themselves. The State only refunds the costs (100%) for module 1 if it is fulfilled within one year and it refunds 50% for module 2 for persons of subsequent family reunifications if it is fulfilled within two years.
	Poland		
	Portugal	Yes	In the Portuguese public sector these courses fall within the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training's (IEFP) portfolio. Other institutions may have other requirements, but no full survey of the private (profit and non-profit) training

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			<p>offer in these subjects is known to the PT NCP.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes, language and civic courses are available to – but not required of - all willing immigrants. 2. The sole requirement for the courses ministered by the IEFPP is to be a legal immigrant. 3. The language courses provided by the IEFPP are 150 hours long. The IEFPP civic courses are 50 hours long. Duration does not vary according to the immigrant's status. Still, an immigrant already near proficient in Portuguese language may skip a few modules. 4. IEFPP courses operate on the basis of the Portuguese state budget only. Not only are the courses free of charge to the immigrant, but trainees may even be eligible for subsidized travel and meals.
	Romania		
	Slovenia	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Slovenia provides language and civic courses to third-country nationals only. 2. The third-country national, residing in Slovenia on the basis of temporary residence permit, is eligible for the courses after 2 years of residence and has to have a residence permit issued for another year. His/Her immediate family members, who reside in Slovenia on the basis of a permit, issued with the purpose of family reunification, are eligible to attend the courses when he/she is. All third-country nationals have to have the knowledge of the slovene language in order to attend civic course. 3. Third-country nationals, residing on the basis of permanent residence permits and their immediate family members are entitled to up to the 180-hour-languages course (depending on their prior knowlegde), while third-country nationals residing on the basis of temporary residence permits and their immediate family members are entitled to the 60-hour-language course. Regardless, all third-country nationals are entitled to the 30-hour-civic course. 4. For third-country nationals, the courses are covered by the state budget.
	Slovak Republic	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Slovak Republic does not provide language and civic courses to third-country nationals on temporary or permanent residence permits. Slovak lanugage courses are only provided to asylum seekers and refugees. 2. All asylum seekers and refugees are entitled to attend the courses of Slovak. The attendance of the courses is voluntary in case of asylum seekers. According to the Act on Asylum No. 480/2002 the attendance of the language course is compulsory for foreigners who were granted asylum and are staying in the integration centre (the stay in the integration centre is not compulsory), the extent of the course is not stipulated in the act. 3. The extent of the course for both asylum seekers and refugees is not stipulated by the law. 4. The courses for asylum seekers and refugees are financed by the Migration Office of the Minsitry of Interior or through projects. Any courses for other groups of foreigners are currently financed exclusively through projects of NGOs or IOs. <p>Slovak Government (Ministry of Labour, Foreign Affairs and Family) is currently working on a National Strategy for the Integration of Foreign Nationals that should more closely define the integration services and requirements. It is anticipated that the strategy will be adopted in the course of 2009.</p>
	Finland		

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	Sweden	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Migration Board offers language courses to asylum seekers only. The municipalities offers courses to all persons who receive a residence with the duration of 1 year or longer. 2. N/A when it comes to the Migration Board. No when it comes to the municipalities. 3. Since the courses are offered by the local governments the scope and duration can differ between different municipalities. 4. N/A when it comes to the Migration Board. The courses that the municipalities offers are free of charge.
	United Kingdom	Yes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yes, we provide language and civic courses to all immigrants, not just 3rd Country nationals. The course is ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Language) with citizenship materials (see www.esolcitizenship.org.uk for the standard teaching materials). 2. The course is entirely voluntary, but taking this course or passing a Life in the UK test is a requirement for permanent residency. 3. This is a mainstream course and the length of time it takes to complete varies, depending on factors including how good the individual's English is at the commencement of study, how hard they work etc. Thus there are no set time limits, but an individual does need to make sufficient progress (passing from one level to the next) in order to reach the level required for citizenship. 4. The state pays at least 2/3 of the cost. Those immigrants who can afford to pay a contribution do so (up to 35%) but certain needy groups (e.g. refugees, people on earnings related benefits) are exempt from paying.
