

Germany – ROUND-TABLE:

1. Does your country have specific language requirements for adult migrants from outside the EU, such as a minimum level(s) of competence for entry, residence, citizenship, etc?

The CEFR is a success story by providing a tool for identifying levels and standards. It helps policy makers to design fair, reliable and valid integration policies.

Germany is widely using the Common Framework of Reference for Languages for defining language levels in laws, as tool for defining teaching objectives and for developing curricula and tests.

The answer on question 1 is yes:

- **Pre-entry language requirements**

According to the German residence act spouses are required that for the purpose of family reunification they have to prove a German language knowledge level A 1 of the CEFR before entry. Language courses are provided in the countries of origin by the Goethe Institute.

- **Residence requirements**

Requirement for a permanent residence permit is level B 1 of the CEFR.

- **Citizenship**

Requirement for citizenship is level B 1 of the CEFR.

2. What did your country base these policy decisions on? What was the rationale?

There are three different reasons :

- Firstly, the policy decision was based on the fact that Germany faces the influx of non German speaking migrants : 70% of all newcomers who settle in Germany with the perspective of staying do not speak German. This is true as well for the past: There is still a high proportion of non German speaking persons among second and third generation of immigrants.
- Secondly, Germany has a 50 years old tradition of providing language courses to migrants. The responsibility for the different programmes were, however, split-up between different ministries with the effect that each programme was implemented in a different way. Today the language policy for adult migrants is in the hand of one ministry – Federal Ministry of the Interior.
- Thirdly, the language policy for the integration of adult migrants became part of migration policies and is the most important expression for the comprehensive relationship between migration and integration.

3. Are integration courses (for example on language, citizenship and history) provided for adult migrants? If so, are these voluntary or compulsory?

- Yes, the biggest single integration programme of the Federal Government is the integration course with a yearly budget of 155 million Euro. The regular integration course includes a programme of 600 hours language teaching and 45 hours civic orientation.
- Newly arriving migrants have a right of participation. However, when they do not have a German language knowledge of the level A 1 of the CERF the participation in the integration course is compulsory. The same is true for persons entering through the family reunification scheme when they do not have a German language level knowledge of the level B 1 of the CERF.
- For migrants who already entered Germany before the year 2005 participation is in principle voluntary. The participation can become compulsory when a person receives social assistance.
- Compulsory participation is defined as attending the integration course duly – there is no obligation of passing a B 1 test.

4. Are there tests? If so, what kinds of test, and for what purpose(s)?

- Yes, there are different tests in place for different purposes:

- The successful participation in an integration course is certified by a special certificate. This certificate is handed out, when a participant passes the B 1 language test and the civic orientation class tests. For both test we are currently developing new formats: The Goethe-Institute is developing a special A2-B1 test for the target group of migrants. A nation-wide multiple choice test will replace the current system of a course-based testing procedure in the civic orientation classes. Both tests will come into force at the beginning of next year.
- From September 2008 there will be a nation-wide multiple choice citizenship test.
- Most important those new tests provide more legal security: The practise of checking language knowledge was in many cases arbitrary before we decided to use the CEFR as reference for language levels

5. *How are the language courses accredited, and how are any language tests validated?*

- According to the federal act on integration courses each training institution has to apply for an accreditation by the Federal Office of Migration and Refugees. There are three main criteria for accreditation:
 - Reliability
 - Performance potential and
 - Quality assurance
- We use in the integration courses only tests developed by the Goethe- Institute. Also for the actual tests only institutions and examiners with a certificate are permitted.

6. *Does your country have any new policy initiatives planned?*

No, based on an evaluation both the federal residence law as well as federal act on integration courses were amended in the year 2007. The challenge remains of putting into practice a nation wide programme, guaranteeing all over Germany to migrants the access to integration courses while at the same time courses are supposed to match individual learning needs.