

Knowledge of German before moving to Austria & Integration Agreement

Proof of knowledge of German before moving to Austria

When applying for the first time for a “Red-White-Red Card plus” (except for family members of researchers with a “Red-White-Red Card for particularly highly qualified persons” or a “Settlement Permit – Researcher”), a “Settlement Permit” or a “Settlement Permit – Special Cases of Gainful Employment” third-country nationals must prove having knowledge of the German language at level A1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) unless they do not intend to apply for a renewal of the residence title after a total period of stay of 24 months within 3 years or the fulfilment or exemption from the fulfilment obligation is assumed.

Relevant language diplomas of the following institutions are recognised as proof of adequate knowledge of German:

- Austrian Language Diploma German (*Österreichisches Sprachdiplom Deutsch*)
- Goethe-Institut e.V.
- Telc GmbH
- Austrian Integration Fund (Österreichischer Integrationsfonds)

The language diploma must not be older than one year at the time of submission.

If the prerequisites for fulfilling the Module 1 or 2 of the Integration Agreement (see immediately below) are met this is also regarded as proof.

Underage children (children under 14 years of age) do not have to provide proof of knowledge of the German language.

Integration Agreement

The Integration Agreement consists of two consecutive modules (1 and 2) and is intended to promote the rapid integration of persons who are lawfully resident in Austria by learning the German language and by learning fundamental values of the legal and social order in Austria.

Who has to fulfil the Module 1 of the Integration Agreement?

The granting of a “Settlement Permit – Special Cases of Gainful Employment”, a “Red-White-Red Card plus” or a “Settlement Permit” for the first time implies the obligation to fulfil the Module 1 of the Integration Agreement **within 2 years** unless the holder of the residence title does not intend to apply for a renewal of the residence title after a total period of residence of 24 months within 3 years or the fulfilment or exemption from the fulfilment obligation is assumed.

Taking into account personal circumstances, the period for the fulfilment may be extended by a further 12 months upon request.

You also have to fulfil the Module 1 of the Integration Agreement if, after holding a residence title for 2 years, you want to apply for a residence title for 3 years (e.g. a

“Settlement Permit – Special Cases of Gainful Employment” or a “Red-White-Red Card plus” for 3 years).

Which proofs for having fulfilled the Module 1 are accepted?

The Module 1 of the Integration Agreement is regarded as fulfilled if the [Austrian Integration Fund](#) provides proof that you have completed the integration examination (or a proof recognised as equivalent). The integration examination consists of proof of knowledge of German at **level A2** of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and of knowledge of the fundamental values of the legal and social order of the Republic of Austria.

The integration examination certificate must not be older than 2 years at the time of submission.

Furthermore, the Module 1 of the Integration Agreement is deemed to have been fulfilled if the researcher or his/her family members have a **school leaving certificate corresponding to the general university entrance qualification or to a vocational secondary school leaving certificate**.

If it is a non-Austrian certificate, it must first be legalised in the country where it was issued and subsequently declared equivalent by the National Information Centre for Academic Recognition [ENIC NARIC Austria](#). You may submit your application for a declaration of equivalence electronically and it is usually processed quickly and free of charge.

Who does not have to fulfil this requirement?

Persons who will be under 14 years old at the time when the Module 1 of the Integration Agreement has to be fulfilled (two years from the date of issue of the residence title) or who cannot reasonably be expected to fulfil it due to their mental or physical state of health are exempted from the obligation to fulfil the Module 1 of the Integration Agreement.

Moreover, you will be exempted from the obligation to fulfil the Module 1 of the Integration Agreement if you declare in writing that you will not stay in Austria for more than 24 months within 3 years. This declaration is irrevocable; when signing it you cannot apply for a renewal anymore.

Who has to fulfil the Module 2 of the Integration Agreement?

Researchers and their family members must be able to prove that they have fulfilled the Module 2 of the Integration Agreement **when applying for** the permanent residence title “Permanent Residence – EU” or for Austrian nationality.

There is no general obligation to fulfil the Module 2 of the Integration Agreement. If the requirements of the Module 2 are fulfilled, the Module 1 is also considered fulfilled.

Which proofs for having fulfilled the Module 2 are accepted?

The Module 2 of the Integration Agreement is regarded as fulfilled if the [Austrian Integration Fund](#) provides proof that you have completed the integration examination (or a proof recognised as equivalent). The integration examination consists of proof of knowledge of

German at level B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and of knowledge of the fundamental values of the legal and social order of the Republic of Austria.

Researchers can also fulfil the Module 2 of the Integration Agreement by proving that they have been enrolled in a post-secondary educational institution (e.g. a university) in a course of study with German as the language of instruction for two years and that they have achieved at least 32 ECTS credits (or 16 semester hours per week) or a corresponding degree.

Furthermore, the Module 2 can also be fulfilled, for example, by attending an Austrian school within the framework of general compulsory schooling.

Who does not have to fulfil this requirement?

Persons who are not yet of school age at the time of application or who cannot reasonably be expected to fulfil this requirement due to their mental or physical state of health do not have to fulfil the Module 2 of the Integration Agreement.