

Legislation provides for exemptions to the need to furnish proof of basic knowledge of German:

(a) Exemptions based on the applicant:

- when knowledge of German is obvious (= clearly identifiable knowledge of German when submitting application in person)
- in the case of university graduates with good employment and integration prospects
- when the planned stay in Germany is only temporary
- when re-entering Germany, i.e. if the applicant has previously lived in Germany with a permanent residence permit pursuant to the Residence Act
- if in the long term it is impossible for the applicant to learn a foreign language due to physical, intellectual or mental disability or illness

(b) Exemptions based on the reference person of the principal person entitled:

- if the spouse living in Germany is a national of one of the states listed in section 41 of the Ordinance Governing Residence, or enjoys freedom of movement in Germany, that is, nationals of a member state of the EU (other than Germany) or the EEA states Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein or Switzerland
- in the case of subsequent immigration to join experts, researchers and self-employed persons, if the spouse is in possession of an EU Blue Card, an ICT card, a mobile ICT card or a residence permit for certain researchers (section 18b (2) Residence Act (EU Blue Card), section 19 Residence Act (ICT card), section 19b Residence Act (mobile ICT card), section 18d Residence Act (research), section 18f Residence Act (mobile researchers))
- in the case of subsequent immigration to join highly skilled persons (section 18c (3) Residence Act) or self-employed persons (section 21 Residence Act) provided that the marriage predates the principal person entitled moving their main place of residence to the federal territory
- if immediately prior to being granted a permanent settlement permit or an EU long-term residence permit the principal person entitled had a residence permit pursuant to section 18d Residence Act (research)
- in the case of subsequent immigration to join beneficiaries of protection, provided that the marriage predates the beneficiary moving their main place of residence to Germany

An additional exemption applies if, due to special circumstances, it is not possible or it is deemed unreasonable to expect the spouse to endeavour to acquire basic knowledge of the German language prior to entering the country.

This applies in particular if language courses are permanently not available in the relevant country or if attending such classes entails a major security risk and if other promising alternatives (for example, using books or online courses) to learn the language and proof thereof are not available.

If you believe that you satisfy the requirements for such an exemption, you must provide relevant proof of the existence of the reason for the exemption when submitting your application.

If you are not sure whether or not one of the exemptions applies to you or what proof is required, you can inquire by describing your situation in an email (<https://helsinki.diplo.de/fi-fi/botschaft/kontakt-formular>).