

# INTEGRATION OF NEWCOMER LEARNERS INTO MAINSTREAM EDUCATION: **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

I've just arrived in Belgium and my child doesn't speak any word in French.

[Are there any special classes where my child could learn French for free?](#)

[What do you mean by DASPA provision?](#)

[What is FLA support system?](#)

[What are the requirements to have access to DASPA provision?](#)

[What does DASPA include?](#)

[For how long my child could stay in DASPA?](#)

[What can I do if I am unable to make a request of diploma recognition?](#)

[How do I enrol my child for DASPA?](#)

[Where can I find a list of DASPA structures?](#)

[Is there anyone who could help me with the enrolment?](#)

## **Are there any special classes where my child could learn French for free?**

Yes. The French Community provides two types of provisions aimed at learners who do not speak any French or whose level of French is low:

**DASPA** meaning « Reception and Schooling of Newly Arrived Pupils » (Dispositif d'Accueil et de Scolarisation des élèves Primo-arrivants et Assimilés) provision provides the education and integration of newcomer learners into mainstream education. No diploma recognition is needed.

**Support system FLA** meaning « French Language Learning Support System » is compulsory for schools that receive newcomer learners of equivalent status but do not organise a DASPA. In order to continue their studies in secondary education, a foreign learner has to obtain a diploma recognition, which will determine their level. [All the information for submitting an equivalence request is available here.](#)

## What do you mean by DASPA provision?

DASPA is a provision which is not so different from an intensive course of French. It is a foundation year for those who are unable to follow the classes in French independently.

The main purposes of DASPA are:

- Intensive learning of French from A1 level to B1 level (sufficient level of French proficiency)
- Integration into Belgian school system
- Intention to prepare learners to join a mainstream education
- Intention to direct them to the education that suits them best

International students can apply for DASPA since they are considered as newcomer learners or assimilated to newcomer learners.

## What is FLA support system?

If your child already speaks French at the level B1, you can enrol them to a regular year of study and request support classes for them.

Before that, you will have to [apply for a diploma recognition](#).

## What are the requirements to have access to DASPA provision?

You will find all requirements below.

Please, read them thoroughly before you enrol.

All three requirements must be met to gain a newcomer learners status:

- 1) Age: be older than 2 years and 6 months and younger than 18 years old
- 2) Duration of residence: arrived in Belgium less than one year ago
- 3) Status/Nationality: having obtained a refugee status or asylum, accompanied by a refugee, a national of a country that receives development assistance from the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD and is on the list as of the 1st of January 2012.

All requirements must be met in order to gain the status of Assimilated to newcomer learners:

- 1) Age: be at least 5 years and under 18 years old
- 2) Nationality: foreign nationality, or having obtained Belgian nationality through adoption, or being of Belgian nationality and having lived for more than 12 months abroad in a non-French speaking region, or being stateless
- 3) Duration of education in French Community: attending a school organised or subsidised by the French Community for less than one year

- 4) Level of French: have obtained a C result (level A1-A2 of the Common European Framework of Reference) in the evaluation of the level of French

## **What does DASPA include?**

DASPA learners follow a curriculum adapted to skills they have to obtain before they leave the DASPA provision. This curriculum must include a minimum total number of minimum 16 weekly periods of French and literature classes, 8 weekly periods of science classes.

## **For how long my child could stay in DASPA?**

A newcomer learner can attend the DASPA provision for 12 months. It is possible to extend this period to 18 months or even to 24 for illiterate learners during which time they will benefit from a personalised support. Subsequently, they are directed to the education that suits them best.

Learners have to obtain either a diploma recognition (equivalence) or certificate of admissibility to join a regular year.

The year of their study would be determined by either a diploma recognition (equivalence) or certificate of admissibility.

## **What can I do if I am unable to make a request of diploma recognition?**

For learners who are enrolled in a DASPA, a certificate of admissibility is issued to newcomer pupils who do not have the school documents necessary to obtain the certification of equivalence and who have been enrolled in a DASPA for at least 6 months. With the 'certificate of admissibility' a learner may attend any year of secondary education, except for years 6 and 7, by way of exception from the provisions governing admission to a year of secondary education.

## **How do I enrol my child for DASPA?**

In Belgium there is free choice of school. Your child must meet the admission criteria, but apart from that you may choose the school where you enrol your child.

Parents/guardians can submit the request themselves or can contact a secondary school of their choice.

Course providers are obliged to accept your registration as long as they have available places. If the course provider no longer has places, they are required to give you a certificate of registration request, and you will then have to look for another school.

## Where can I find a list of DASPA structures?

To be enrolled in a DASPA provision, look for schools who organise it by clicking here.

## Is there anyone who could help me with the enrolment?

If you need help to find a school, contact our assistance:

- Phone: + 32 2 690 87 70
- E-Mail: [exclusion-inscription@cfwb.be](mailto:exclusion-inscription@cfwb.be)