

Integration – a central task of society

Germany is an open-minded country. Approximately 15 million people from migrant families live here. This amounts to more than 18 percent of the population. That is why integration is a key task of our time. The Federal Government has made this subject a key issue of its work.

New paths – new opportunities

Successful integration means equal participation in social life and accepting responsibility. This requires efforts from government and society, as well as from the immigrants themselves. Good command of German, good education and acceptance in the labour market are paramount.

In July 2006, an integration summit took place for the first time, at the invitation of the Federal Chancellor. The objective was to prepare a joint strategy on integration policy by summer 2007. This summit initiated a new development in society.

The result has been presented by the Federal Chancellor at the second integration summit in July 2007: the National Integration Plan. It was developed with regard to two guidelines:

1. in dialogue with migrants – talking with them, not about them.
2. precisely: demanding commitment from each participant, because everyone can contribute to the success of integration.

» Through tolerance and open-mindedness, our society becomes richer and more humane. Integration concerns all of us – people from migrant families, as well as the citizens living here for a long time. Integration can only succeed in cooperation. «

Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel



National Integration Plan

The National Integration Plan strikes new paths and opens up new opportunities for integration of migrants. For the first time, all those dealing with integration in politics and in society work hand in hand: Federal Government, Länder (Federal States), local authorities, migrants, institutions and organizations from science, media, culture, sports, trade and industry, trade unions and religious groups.

The most important issues of the National Integration Plan are:

- improving integration courses
- promoting the German language from the very start
- ensuring good education and vocational training, improving labour market opportunities
- improving the life situation of women and girls; achieving gender equality
- supporting integration in the communities
- living cultural diversity
- integration through sports
- using the diversity of the media
- strengthening integration through civic commitment and equal participation
- science – open-minded!



Promoting and demanding

Integration is a task of national importance. Apart from our values and our cultural self-conception, it is based on the liberal democratic constitutional system, as it has developed from the German and the European history, and has found its constitutional characteristic in the Basic Law.

Integration cannot be decreed. It requires an effort from everyone, from government and society. Decisive is the migrants' willingness to get involved with life in our society, to unconditionally accept our Basic Law and our entire legal system and, in particular, to visibly demonstrate the belonging to Germany by learning the German language. On the side of the host society, acceptance, tolerance, civic commitment and willingness to honestly welcome people living lawfully among us, are essential: Integration – an opportunity for our country!

The diverse migrants' abilities have not been sufficiently acknowledged and promoted thus far. The Federal Government would like to change this in the future. All people living permanently in Germany shall be able to develop their talents and gain security through education and work.

Many take part

Federal Government, Länder (Federal States) and local authorities provide important conditions for the success of integration. Government alone, however, cannot master the entire society's task of integration – this can only be achieved with an active civic society. That is why many contribute to the National Integration Plan: State and civic groups, media, culture, science, trade and industry, as well as migrant organizations – they all have made commitments to implement concrete measures. Here are some examples:

The Federal Government will

- extend integration courses for learning the German language;
- increase the number of full-day schools and child care, in cooperation with Länder (Federal States) and local authorities;
- reduce the number of school drop-outs with the model programme “2nd Chance”;
- promote children and juveniles with the network “Bildungspaten” (godfathers/godmothers for education)
- increase the chances for a high-quality vocational training and successful studies through specific measures.





» Integration of people from migrant families is an enormous challenge. Let's turn it into a great opportunity for our country! For this decides the question on the sustainability of our society – on the national as well as European level. «

Maria Böhmer, Minister of State in the Federal Chancellery and Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration

Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel and Minister of State Maria Böhmer at the integration summit 2006

The Länder (Federal States) will

- increase the promotion of the German language starting from kindergarten to school up to vocational training;
- recruit more migrants as kindergarten teachers and school teachers;
- improve migrants' access to health services, care services and services for senior citizens.

The central associations of local authorities recommend

- to support migrants through "integration counselors";
- to strengthen the participation of migrants in decision and arrangement procedures in the communities;
- to promote cohabitation of the population groups in quarters with integration deficits, through quarter management and establishing networks.

The migrant organizations will

- carry out a campaign "Women have rights";
- improve the participation of young migrants in education, through specific parent work and education godparents.

Trade and Industry will

- create 10,000 additional vacancies for vocational training in companies run by migrants;
- improve vocational training and labour market integration with the "Charta of Diversity".



The German Olympic Sports Confederation and the German Football Association will

- communicate to the clubs the importance of integration as a key issue of sports; offer training courses for coaches and canvass members in migrant families.

The foundations will

- develop integration as a key goal of their civic commitment and their scholarships for the gifted.

The German and foreign media will

- have journalists and actors of foreign origin increasingly included in editorial departments and programmes;
- intensify media research and promote media skills.

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The National Integration Plan

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