



The
Federal Government



National Action Plan on Integration Abridged press version

Declaration of the Federal Government

Contribution of the German Länder

Contribution of the Federation of Local Government Associations



Declaration of the Federal Government on the National Action Plan on Integration

A. From the National Integration Plan to the National Action Plan on Integration

The integration of people with an immigrant background in Germany is a key task of the federal government. Chancellor Angela Merkel gave the topic of integration top priority in 2006 and extended invitations to attend the initial integration summit in the federal chancellery. It was decided during the summit to draw up a National Integration Plan. The National Integration Plan constituted the basis for integration policy in the following years.

The federal government has decided to develop the National Integration Plan and make it more tangible through the formulation of the National Action Plan on Integration in this legislative period. The objective of the Action Plan is to make integration more binding and create instruments in order to render the results of the integration policy measurable. The agreement on objectives that are as tangible as possible and verifiable, the designation of indicators for the verification of goal attainment and the determination of a time frame are to form the basis of a tangible, verifiable and binding integration policy.

In the crafting of the National Action Plan on Integration, the principle of dialogue that had been initiated with the Integration Plan was carried forward: state and civil society - and, in particular, numerous immigrant organisations - drafted the Action Plan together in eleven dialogue forums.

At this point, we want to highlight in particular that the federal government and Länder governments largely agree on the strategic goals. This shows: The federal government and the German Länder are acting in concert with respect to integration policy. Furthermore, municipalities, immigrant organisations, industry and labour unions, charity organisations, sports associations, the churches, foundations and other players in the realm of civil society have participated in the crafting of the Action Plan. So it becomes clear that integration is a matter that concerns society as a whole and that the topic of integration is to be seen as a shared task.

The further development of the National Integration Plan to the National Action Plan on Integration is characterised by three components: The dialogue principle ensures that the various players are networked in order to develop the foundations of integration policy on a shared basis. The joint objectives of integration policy are anchored in the agreement on tangible and verifiable requirements. The verification of the implementation of the measures agreed upon enables the stabilisation of integration policy in Germany.

B. Measures initiated by the federal government

The integration of immigrants is no temporary special task that is solvable with temporary projects. Quite the opposite, integration is an ongoing task that needs to be tackled on a long-term, structural basis. That is why the federal government is focusing in

particular on measures concerning structural changes in the current National Action Plan on Integration .

Thus the “Sports” and “Culture” forums for dialogue have agreed to modify the funding guidelines for the promotion of sports and culture to the effect that recipients of allowances will have to pay special heed to the integration of people who had not been accessed sufficiently up to now. The “Immigrants in Public Service” forum for dialogue is designed to raise the share of people with an immigrant background in public administration, thus advancing the intercultural opening of administrative bodies. The “Early Childhood Education” and “Education, Training, Advanced Training” dialogue forums have drafted operational objectives that include the systematic anchoring of professional qualification for the strengthening of the intercultural skills among educational professionals as well as raising the share of professionals with an immigrant background in the field of education. The “Labour Market and Professional Life” forum for dialogue has stipulated the establishment of structures that should accompany the Law on the Improvement of the Determination and Acceptance of Professional Qualifications Acquired Abroad (Acceptance Act).

All these measures have one aspect in common: Through structural changes, they create the foundations for lasting and sustainable integration in Germany.

One main focus of the Action Plan is the integration of women and girls. All forums for dialogue have introduced corresponding measures in order to enable women and girls from immigrant families to lead a life in Germany based on self-determination and equal rights. Thus, as a contribution to the National Pact for Women in the MINT (mathematics, information technology, natural sciences and technology) professions, the federal government will focus on raising the number of women and girls who are beginning a course of studies in the natural sciences and technology. Furthermore, the federal government will publish two subject-related guidelines for sports clubs about sports facilities with special offers for women and girls with an immigrant background; as well as for the reduction of participation barriers, with the goal of raising the share of women and girls from immigrant families in sports associations and clubs.

Below, a selection of exemplary contributions is presented that the federal government has made to the National Action Plan on Integration as part of its responsibilities.

Early childhood education

Day care centres and day nurseries are the first educational sites for children outside the family. The earlier children experience individual, comprehensive education, learning and care, the more naturally and successfully they master their further educational path and educational direction as a whole. This requires that institutions pay attention to the diversity of family situations and consider the different needs of children and parents when developing their range of services. Entailed therein is a changed perspective: diversity is no longer an exception, but the norm. It provides opportunities for learning and development to everybody.

While the focus of early childhood education was on language training from the start in the National Integration Plan, the Action Plan has created a broader basis for early childhood education. The crafting of the strategic objectives in the “Early Childhood Education” forum for dialogue covers the entire spectrum of early childhood education and child care. It should be pointed out, however, that the responsibilities in the realm of child care and early childhood education lie predominantly with the German Länder and

municipalities. Hence the scope for action on the part of the federal government is limited.

The participants in the “Early Childhood Education” forum for dialogue have jointly agreed upon the following strategic goals:

1. Equal opportunities for all children through services for early childhood education, learning and care.
2. Further development of the quality of early childhood education, learning and care in all types of day care for children.
3. Participation by parents as a quality feature of early childhood education.

Many children and teenagers with an immigrant background are well integrated and master their educational path successfully. Nonetheless, there are still too many who have problems achieving a qualified graduation or completing an apprenticeship. One crucial reason is an insufficient knowledge of German. Language competence constitutes the most essential foundation for academic achievement. Hence the forum for dialogue focuses on early access to learning, care and education in day care facilities or day nurseries for children; this refers in particular to a qualitatively good language training that is integrated with day-to-day life.

The expansion of the care facilities and the reduction of structural access barriers constitute prerequisites for facilitating access for a greater number of children with an immigrant background. The federal government supports the Länder and municipalities with a continuing, needs-based expansion of care facilities. It is imperative to increase the care rate for children under three, with a special focus on the approximation of the care rates of children with and without an immigrant background. For this purpose, all involved have to act in concert.

The expansion of care facilities is supported by the federal government with initiatives for the further development of the quality of early childhood education, learning and care, for instance with the initiative entitled “**Offensive for Early Opportunities: Programme of Core Day Care Centres for Language & Integration,**” which aims at the improvement of language training in day care centres. Approximately 4,000 day care facilities in disadvantaged social areas with a high proportion of children with the need for language training are to be expanded into core day care centres for language & integration.

Alongside the “**Advanced Training Initiative for Professionals in Early Childhood Education**” initiated by the federal government, which aims at the comprehensive strengthening of the skills of early education professionals through innovations in the training and advanced training system, the federal government also supports projects that provide in-depth knowledge of how to advance and help children with and without an immigrant background in the acquisition and application of language skills appropriate to their language and developmental level, as part of the promotion of empirical research on education within the scope of the “**Research Initiative: Language Diagnosis and Language Training.**” These projects are augmented by a **new research programme** by the federal government, which is to investigate the effectiveness of the determination of language levels and the language training based upon it, as well as offer approaches for the further development of tools in this respect.

Earlier access to educational services and educational success require the willingness of parents to make use of such services and the guarantee of their participation in them. In this respect, the forum for dialogue pays special heed to the topic and has arranged for numerous measures, to be borne by all players. The federal government will support

difficult-to-reach parents in the organisation of their children' educational paths with its model project, "Educational Bridges—the Qualification of Parents for Better Educational Opportunities in Immigrant Families," which is to achieve the transfer of knowledge into practice.

Education, training, advanced training

Education, training and advanced training constitute the vital prerequisites for professional success. Given the allocation of responsibilities in terms of education, the contribution of the German Länder is of special significance within this range of topics. The federal government expressly welcomes the fact that the German Länder are sharing the strategic goals agreed upon in the forum for dialogue and that the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs¹ of the German Länder has presented its own contribution.

The following strategic goals were agreed upon in the “Education, Training, Advanced Training” forum for dialogue:

1. To optimise the framework conditions for participation opportunities and access to education, training and general advanced training on an equal basis
2. To craft transitions within the system of education, training and advanced training; expand the permeability of educational systems
3. To strengthen individual support systems; recognise and support the potentials of children, teenagers and (young) adults with an immigrant background
4. To continue quality assurance and quality development as well as differentiate educational research; develop the reporting on education in Germany

Valid data constitute an indispensable basis for political decisions and targeted assistance measures especially in this topical field, which is pivotal in terms of integration policy. Although the migration background has not been integrated yet in the pertinent statistics, the databases were improved and continue to be improved. Thus the partners in the education and training pact promised to campaign for an integration of the socio-characteristic of “an immigrant background” in educational, training and labour market statistics.

The federal government supports municipalities and independent cities in the development of a model of comprehensive data-based municipal education management as part of the **“Local Learning” support programme**. The programme, in which 40 supported municipalities and more than 140 foundations participate as partners, provides targeted support for, among other things, the goal of integrating local educational initiatives, e.g. immigrant councils, in the education management of the municipalities.

Given the allocation of the tasks stipulated in the German Constitution, the measures of the federal government concentrate on the field of training and apprenticeship integration as well as the support of professional education.

The federal government also provides support for the improvement of the situation of teenagers in school and in training and apprenticeships with the initiative of **“Graduation and Connection—Educational Chains up to Training Qualification”**: Under the umbrella of the educational chains, this initiative integrates new support tools with federal and Länder support programmes already in place. The objective is to avoid leaving school early, prevent waiting loops, achieve efficient transitions to dual training, thus ultimately to tackle also the shortage of skilled labour that is looming, induced by demographic change. The initiative mainly starts at special-needs schools and elementary schools, where young people with an immigrant background are more frequently represented; thus they profit from the initiative on an above-average basis.

¹ Cf. Resolution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs, “Contribution of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs to the National Action Plan,” dated June 10, 2011.

These measures are augmented by the programmes of the JUGEND STÄRKEN (STRENGTHEN YOUTH) initiative, in which the federal government provides primarily the individual and tailor-made support to young people with an immigrant background on a national level at around 800 locations during the transition period from school into professional life; concurrently, it provides incentives to the municipalities for new support strategies.

The federal government pays particular attention to winning over companies owned by people of international origin for training by means of KAUSA, a component of the JOBSTARTER structural programme for training; as well as through the “Active for Training” initiative. The activities of KAUSA—the “Training of Self-employed People with an Immigrant Background” coordination office—have been expanded according to the agreements in the National Pact for Training and Young Skilled Workers; the initiative will address companies as well as young people with an immigrant background so as to win them over for professional training.

To combat the low training and apprenticeship participation of young people and/or entrepreneurs with an immigrant background, the federal government also supports the programme “**Tailor-made Placement of Apprentices in Companies Willing to Apprentice,**” in which placement officers of the Chambers and other industry organisations provide specific targeted support to both companies and young people, in particular those with an immigrant background, in their efforts to conclude a training and apprenticeship contract.

Labour market and professional life

The labour market has a decisive significance for integration. Gainful employment empowers immigrants to establish contact with colleagues, participate actively in the host society and, as the most important goal, to earn a living on their own. Labour market integration is hence a core element of social integration.

In the “Labour Market and Professional Life” forum for dialogue, the targets of the National Integration Plan were further developed. One essential change in comparison to the Integration Plan was that the forum for dialogue strongly emphasised the nexus between the improvement in the labour market integration of immigrants and the securing of a skilled labour basis in Germany.

The following strategic goals were agreed upon in the “Labour Market and Professional Life” forum for dialogue:

1. To increase employment and earning opportunities as well as qualification
2. To ensure intercultural and migration-specific qualification of the consulting staff
3. To improve company integration
4. To secure the skilled labour basis

Mastering the German language constitutes a crucial prerequisite for any labour market integration. That is why the federal government supports the acquisition of job-related language skills through its “**ESF-BAMF Programme for Job-related Language Training.**” The programme's objective is to ease the way into the regular labour market for people with an immigrant background by means of linguistic and professional qualification and avoid the threat of unemployment. The rate of attendees who will be placed in a job, training or general advanced training measure is to be raised to at least 20% by the end of 2013.

With the Acceptance Act, the federal government has made a material contribution to the improved labour market integration of people with qualifications acquired abroad and thus to the securing of a skilled labour basis. In order to facilitate access to the acceptance procedures, the offers for initial information (pilot function) as part of the **“Integration by Qualification—IQ” support programme** will be set up, expanded as well as improved for exactly this purpose. The support programme is to integrate existing consultancy services with regional networks and to network them with the measures of local players that are relevant for the labour market.

The Federal Employment Agency has at its disposal a conclusive concept for labour market integration with the **“4-phase Model of Integration Work.”** This means that people with an immigrant background are supported in their integration into the labour market through targeted individual supplementary measures. To this end, the 4-phase model makes available the “Acceptance of Foreign Educational Qualifications and Certificates” and “Acquiring or Improving German Language Skills” action-strategy published guidelines as well as local support options. Further fields of action are language training; adjustment qualifications and post-qualification; the official German language test; model application of skills diagnosis; the initiative for the support of structural change as well as the model project for the development and certification of partial qualifications.

Migrants in the public service

The topical field of "Migrants in Public Service" is dealt with for the first time in the National Action Plan on Integration. This emphasises that the federal government faces up to its responsibility for raising the share of employees with an immigrant background in the public service.

The share of employees with an immigrant background in the public service is still low when compared to their share of gainfully employed persons in Germany. Public administration bodies are confronted by the challenge of integrating all societal groups in the solution and using their knowledge and skills as far as possible. They should be capable of addressing the specific needs of all demographic groups to the requisite extent.

Employees with an immigrant background can be important bridge makers between citizens and the administration bodies. The public service will strengthen its intercultural skills through the employment of immigrants. Given the demographic change and the diminishing potential of employed persons and taking into account a predictable shortage of skilled labour and junior employees, the administration bodies also profit from an expansion of their circle of suitable applicants.

In the "Migrants in Public Service" forum for dialogue, the following strategic goal was agreed upon: Raising of the share of immigrants in the public service. The goal of employing more immigrants in the public service is to be accomplished by increasing the interest of immigrants in the public service; by reducing barriers to the selection and hiring of applicants with an immigrant background; and by raising awareness of employees in the public service for intercultural diversity.

In order to be able to register the share of employees with an immigrant background, a clarification will be made as to what options exist for the collection of data about the share of employees with an immigrant background in the public service. The study group established for this purpose will submit a report on the **possibilities of data collection.**

Measures taken by the federal government to raise the share of immigrants in the public service include, among others, a central Web site with all federal training offers and job offers; the improved coordination among the public-relations offices in all government departments in terms of recruiting; a **direct address** made to immigrants in job postings; the **training** of decision-makers in Human Resources, of members of selection committees and staff and works councils **in terms of non-discriminatory staff selection** and the design of working conditions; as well as **qualification** of young immigrants in preparation for an apprenticeship and training in the public services.

Health, nursing care

For the first time, a forum for dialogue on the subject of health and nursing care was established in the National Action Plan on Integration so as to account for the growing significance of the topic—particularly due to the fact that the population with an immigrant background is becoming older.

The main task within this topical field is the improvement of access to health care and nursing care facilities for immigrants. In many areas, immigrants participate on a below-average level in prevention programmes and care programmes as well as in the access to facilities and services; in addition, they are in some cases underrepresented as employees in the health care and nursing care industries. Moreover, it is imperative to improve the data records about the health care situation and nursing care situation of immigrants.

The following strategic goals were agreed upon in the “Health, Nursing Care” forum for dialogue:

1. To improve data records
2. To improve access to employment in the health care system and nursing care system
3. To improve access to prevention and health care promotion
4. To reduce health risks
5. To improve access to facilities and services of the health care system
6. To improve access to facilities and services of the nursing care system

In this topical field, the federal government focuses on measures in the areas of research and improvement of data records, raising of the share of employees with an immigrant background as well as on information and networking. Thus, through the Law on the Improvement of the Determination and Acceptance of Professional Qualifications Acquired Abroad (**Acceptance Act**), the federal government aims to **raise the share of employees with an immigrant background** in the medical professions.

In order to **improve the data**, the federal government is carrying out a programme of **health monitoring** comprising the three elements: Youth Health Survey (Jugendgesundheitssurvey, KiGGS), German Adults Health Survey (Deutscher Erwachsenengesundheitssurvey, DEGS) and Healthy in Germany, Up-to-date (Gesund in Deutschland aktuell, GEDA). The collection of data on persons with an immigrant background correlating to their share of the population facilitates for the first time the assessment of measures for the reduction of health risks in children and teenagers with an immigrant background.

In order to **improve the level of information** about services of the health care system—in particular in terms of preventative measures, screenings and vaccinations—the federal government publishes target group-specific **educational material in foreign languages**, e.g. to remind people of pending vaccinations.

In order to avoid communication problems in health care matters and any risk of false diagnoses and a false treatment entailed therein, the federal governmental departments are currently working on the establishment of a uniform job description for **“Language and Integration Mediators.”** This serves the purpose of ensuring needs-based medical care and nursing care.

Local integration

The integration of the immigrant population is decided in the cities and municipalities. That is why the topical field of “local integration” is a matter of special significance for integration policy. In discussions of the forum for dialogue, it became evident that, for one, numerous promising approaches and programmes are in place; on the other hand, many measures and programmes coexist without any connection to one another. Therefore the strategic integration of city-wide and district-based strategies and programmes is of decisive importance.

The strengthening of social cohesiveness in the cities and municipalities constitutes one of the vital tasks of urban development policy. Especially in light of demographic development, an intergenerational, family-friendly and age-appropriate infrastructure in the municipalities is needed.

The following strategic goals were agreed upon in the “Local Integration” forum for dialogue:

1. To improve the integration and participation opportunities of persons with an immigrant background on a local basis
2. To strengthen integration and social cohesiveness in the neighbourhood

The federal government is providing 40 million euros in federal funding for an advanced **“Social City—Investments in the Neighbourhood”** programme in 2012. The federal government will remain a reliable partner for cities and municipalities, especially for disadvantaged, structurally weak urban districts. What has priority in this context are urban-development investments in the residential environment, infrastructure and the quality of residential living. Since the frequently complex local problems cannot be solved with funding from urban development programmes alone, it is absolutely necessary to establish a coordinated, interdisciplinary approach. Hence the federal government has set a new course for its Social City programme by integrating the players from the economic and societal spheres more strongly and with greater binding force. Moreover, civic commitment and volunteer work in the neighbourhood are to be strengthened. With the “Social City—Investments in the Neighbourhood” programme, promotion of urban development starts to come into play, in particular in those neighbourhoods characterised by a high share of inhabitants with an immigrant background.

From 2011 to 2014, as part of “experimental housing construction and urban development,” the federal government will **provide support to municipal model projects**, which create **places of integration** through an expansion of the infrastructure and innovative provider structures.

In addition, the federal government is willing to support the strategic alignment of municipal integration policy in the context of the implementation of the National Action Plan. To this end, the federal government is examining the **support of selected model regions**. In so doing, the findings of the **survey on the status of municipal integration policy** in Germany will be drawn upon; the survey is to be repeated on a regular basis with the support of municipal umbrella organisations.

Language, integration courses

Language constitutes the key to integration. Integration can only succeed if the immigrants can act on a stand-alone basis and without help in all matters of day-to-day living. The federal government launched statutory integration courses in 2005. Since then, a total of over 700,000 immigrants have attended an integration course; more than half of them participated on a voluntary basis. This emphasises that the courses are well accepted. The integration courses constitute a key element for the support of integration by the federal government.

The following strategic goals were agreed upon in the “Language Integration Course” forum for dialogue:

1. Assurance and maintenance of a high-quality range of offers in terms of language education for immigrants in Germany.
2. Qualitative development of the integration courses for the continuing increase of the success of the courses and a stronger alignment to the needs of the target group

The goals and measures of the “Language Integration Course” forum for dialogue, for one, dealt with the exploration of options for the improvement of overall language training in Germany and, in particular, in the school and the professional environments. Essentially, however, the forum for dialogue dealt with the further development of the system of integration courses as it exists today. In this topical field, the federal government focuses on measures for the qualitative further advancement of integration courses by using digital media; the further development of the supplementary qualification of the teachers in terms of content and organisation; the retention of a nation-wide, needs-based range of integration courses, while concurrently improving the quality of the courses and the quality of access opportunities; measures for the raising of the quality of testing and examination procedures in the integration courses; as well as a means for establishing contact with special target groups.

The federal government has introduced a **points system for the accreditation of providers**, through which minimum requirements as well as supplementary quality criteria are determined. Thus the providers of courses have to give evidence, for example, that they use digital media in the integration courses and participate in the online procedure for data transmission in terms of course administration.

For the **improvement of the qualification of teachers** in integration courses, including **literacy courses**, the federal government has developed accreditation criteria for teachers in integration courses, including literacy courses, which take account of the increased requirements for teaching literacy courses.

Specifically, the federal government has launched a **separate procedure** for providers of integration courses for their **accreditation as testing agencies** of the German test for immigrants in order to increase the testing reliability of final tests.

In order to win over parents with an immigrant background for participating in the integration course, the federal government is committed to the “Learning German, Getting Familiar with the German language” motivational campaign.

The federal government is conducting an evaluation, including academic support, of the **“Making Integration More Binding—Testing Integration Agreements” model project**. Alongside increasing the binding character of individual consultancy processes,

the project's goal lies in the improvement of the networking and support of the already solid collaboration among different players of local integration work. Among other things, this is to improve **access to the integration courses**.

Sports

Sports—in particular organised sports—have a great integration potential. Sports in general bring together people of different origins, create understanding and reduce mutual prejudices within a shared athletic experience. It conveys behavioural and orientation patterns, thus contributing to integration with the society. Hence the federal government sees sports as comprising a crucial component of integration policy. Targeted support is needed in order for integration to work in the realm of sports and for athletic activities to become lived integration.

One focus of the measures initiated by the federal government in the topical field of sports is the intercultural opening of organised sports, e.g. by the change of funding guidelines, winning over and qualifying voluntary workers with an immigrant background as well as the further training in intercultural skills.

Moreover, the federal government pays special attention to the integration of women and girls from immigrant families, since women and girls make use of the offers of sport clubs to a substantially lower degree compared to men and boys as well as to women and girls without an immigrant background. At the same time, according to empirical findings, female immigrants are no less interested in playing sports than women and girls without an immigrant background.

The following strategic goals were agreed upon in the “Sports” forum for dialogue:

1. Improvement of integration in sports
2. Improvement of integration by sports

As a vital measure for long-term structural change, the federal government has committed itself to augmenting the federal **funding guideline for the support of elite-level sports** through socio-political topics such as **integration and intercultural skills**. With it, funding recipients will be obliged to pay special attention to the integration of immigrants in sports and through sports.

In order to increase the share of women and girls from immigrant families in sports clubs, the federal government is crafting two **published guidelines** 1) about the range of sports offers for **women and girls** with an immigrant background and 2) on the reduction of participation barriers for sports associations and sports clubs. In addition, the federal government pays special attention to winning over new target groups, especially women and girls from immigrant families, within the framework of the **“Integration through Sports” programme**, conducted by the German Olympic Sports Association (Deutscher Olympischer Sportbund [DOSB]) in cooperation with the German Länder sports associations. To this end, target agreements are concluded between the German Länder sports associations and the support clubs of the programme.

In order to increase the share of voluntary workers with an immigrant background in organised sports, the federal government has provided support to the **“Gaining, Qualifying and Placement of Voluntary Workers with an Immigrant Background”** project, run by the Federal Consortium of Immigrants Associations (Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Immigrantenverbände, BAGIV). In cooperation with the German Länder sports association of Hessen, immigrants are addressed via the member associations of BAGIV and other immigrant organisations; by means of events, publications as well as a Web

site, they are informed about the voluntary work of sports clubs in Germany; and they are qualified in seminars for taking on a voluntary function.

Civic commitment

Civic commitment makes an important contribution to the integration and participation of immigrants. Civic commitment stimulates intercultural learning and opens processes for immigrants and the host society alike, allowing for a respectful and tolerant social intercourse and the mastering of changes in an increasingly diverse society. This approach to one another hence supports integration. In addition, the taking on of civic responsibility results in a heightened identification with the host country. The civic commitment of immigrants is an engine as well as an indicator of integration.

That is why the federal government attaches great importance to the support of immigrants' civic commitment so as to improve the social participation of immigrants. For one, the federal government is focusing on measures for structural change through the intercultural opening of the structures, targeted offers for immigrants as well as the support of immigrant organisations. In addition, measures are to be taken for a better appreciation and recognition of the civic commitment of immigrants. For the first time, the civic commitment of and for refugees is to be included. Furthermore, research projects in the field of civic commitment of immigrants are to be strengthened.

In the “Civic Commitment” forum for dialogue, the following strategic goal was agreed upon:

- Heightening the cohesiveness of our society: commitment as the engine for integration

The federal government has committed itself to **raising the share of immigrants in voluntary services and in the newly established Federal Voluntary Service.**

Specifically, the federal government wants to provide support to non-governmental players in their efforts to increase the share of immigrants in voluntary services and in the newly established Federal Voluntary Service, namely through consulting with immigrant organisations and other organisations as providers of voluntary services through the “Service Office for Youth Voluntary Services,” located at the Federal Agency for Families; the increase of funding for especially disadvantaged teenagers in the context of the Voluntary Social Year and the Voluntary Ecological Year programmes; and by means of targeted support. The creation of further targeted offers for civic commitment for and by immigrants, as well as the support of immigrant organisations, is envisioned in this field.

Within the scope of projects for the social integration, the federal government supports **projects run by immigrant organisations (e.g. in the form of tandem projects or projects in cooperation with other providers),** which are geared to options for the civic involvement of immigrants.

In addition, the federal government supports, by means of exemplary models, the development of recommendations for the professionalising of immigrant organisations. This also applies to the development of structures for the civic commitment of immigrant organisations.

The federal government also strengthens and supports **research projects** in the field of civic commitment of immigrants, for example the support of the **“Ethnic Diversity, Social Trust and Civic Engagement” project,** conducted by the Social Science Research Center Berlin (Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung, WZB) so as

to increase our knowledge about the interconnectedness of ethnic diversity and civic commitment.

In order to **heighten the public appreciation and recognition** of the civic commitment of and for immigrants, the federal government awards the **Medal for Integration** of the Federal Government Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration every year. The medal shows how important civic commitment is for the success of integration. An exemplary, individual commitment is honoured and concurrently it provides encouragement to other citizens to become active themselves so as to strengthen the trust between people with an immigrant and non-immigrant background.

Media

The media play a crucial role in the integration process. Their reporting and range of entertainment offers inform the images of immigrant society and their various demographic groups in an essential way; they also constitute a platform for public communication and exchange. The media are independent in terms of their reporting and programming. Owing to the independence of the media, which is guaranteed in the German Constitution, special significance is attached to the dialogue principle and the contribution of non-governmental players in this topical field.

Contents of programmes and reporting that address subjects like the diversity and normality of the German immigration society have been on the rise in the last years. Intercultural topics are more widespread even in the range of entertainment offers, in feature films and television, and immigrants are appearing as protagonists more often. Nevertheless, a problem-oriented reporting on immigration topics and immigrants still predominates in all journalistic formats, especially in the public debates and discourses that are communicated by the media. Especially regarding Muslims living in Germany, negative images still exist in the presentation. In order to counteract such deficits in presentation, there exist, in the form of programme conferences and advanced training courses, basic approaches in some media networks for the raising of awareness and for the qualification of editors and programme managers.

Many media corporations have initiated an active corporate policy in the last years in order to win over junior employees with an immigrant background and institutionalise diversity approaches at the executive level in their corporation. In many media corporations, corresponding target projects and guiding principles are in place. Surveys on the share of immigrants among all employees are rarer; this is owing to reasons of data protection. In the area of journalistic training, however, a share of trainees with an immigrant background representative of their share of the population has been achieved in many corporations at this point, in some cases, even a share of the entire staff that mirrors the share within the population.

Existing gaps in research for media use by immigrants were able to be closed by studies examining the use of German media and media in the language of origin (print, radio, Internet) by immigrants; e.g. the studies on “Media and Immigrants,” conducted by ARD/ZDF in 2007 and 2011. The findings of these studies are representative first and foremost of the large ethnic or national immigrant groups in Germany; they provide evidence for the principal accessibility of these groups by the German media and the alignment of media behaviour in the future.

In the “Media and Integration” forum for dialogue, the following strategic goal was agreed upon:

- Improvement of “medial integration”

The objective of improving “medial integration” encompasses a differentiating presentation of immigrant groups as well as of the ethnic and cultural diversity as normality in the immigration society (media contents); an appropriate involvement of immigrants in the media professions (media production); and the shared use of—German-speaking—mainstream media by all demographic groups to a relevant extent (media use).

Alongside numerous measures by media corporations in this topical field, the federal government intends to conduct supplementary projects for the support of more diversity in the media and a differentiating presentation of ethnic and cultural diversity as normality in the immigration society.

This includes, among other things, **the establishment of a cross-media information service** for the support of the editorial work, which can provide media-appropriate and factual information about the conditions and developments in the German immigration society; **journalistic published guidelines and media manuals** about topics in terms of immigration and integration policy; as well as an **expert database** suitable for journalistic purposes that covers the need for qualified contact persons, studio guests and protagonists of different cultural origins.

Furthermore, a **mentor programme for young employees with an immigrant background** will be provided with support. In order to give practical stimuli for content and programming, the federal government is planning on holding more workshops on the topic of **intercultural cinematic and television entertainment formats in terms of fiction and non-fiction** in collaboration with the Grimme Academy for 2012.

Culture

Successful integration always entails cultural integration. In the “Culture” forum for dialogue, integration is seen from the perspective of cultural policy; the focus is on “integration with the social, economic, intellectual/cultural and judicial structures of the host country, without having to give up one’s own cultural identity.”

Within this topical field, the federal government prioritises the intercultural opening of cultural institutions and cultural projects; the networking of the players; the communication of research findings; qualification as well as the crafting of transparent quality standards of intercultural dialogue. The objective are sustainable structural changes in order to intensify cultural integration and ensure the right of immigrants to cultural participation. The intended modification of the federal cultural funding guideline is to be emphasised in this context.

In the “Culture” forum for dialogue, the following strategic goal was agreed upon:

- Living cultural plurality—strengthening intercultural skills

As part of its responsibilities for the arts and culture, the federal government will work toward intensifying its activities in the realm of cultural education, paying special heed to the intensification of **cultural integration of immigrants** in all institutionally supported establishments. Through the **inclusion of integration aspects in the funding notifications** for permanently supported recipients of funding, regular items on the agenda of board meetings and published guidelines for board members, a sustainable intercultural opening of cultural institutions and cultural projects is to be ensured.

In order to improve the collaboration between civil society multipliers and players on a federal level, the level of the German Länder and municipalities, the federal government will launch a **“network for cultural education and integration”** with the Genshagen Foundation. The objective is the transfer of know-how in order to improve reciprocal information concerning strategies, concepts and approaches to work at the respective institutions.

C. Outlook

The National Action Plan on Integration constitutes a paradigm shift in integration policy. The federal government is striving for sustainable structural changes so as to create an enduring foundation for successful integration.

The National Action Plan on Integration also represents a new quality of integration policy insofar as the achievement of goals in integration policy will be verifiable on the basis of indicators in the future. It is imperative to continue on this path on a systematic basis in the future. The integration monitoring established by the federal government plays a vital role in this context.

The Action Plan is designed as a process that transcends the legislative period. A verification of the achievement of objectives is to take place at regular intervals. The findings will be published in a progress report. It is imperative to accompany the implementation of the targets and the verification of the accomplishments in a follow-up process that includes all partners, e.g. as part of the forums for dialogue.

As long as the participation of people with an immigrant background on an equal basis in vital societal areas—education, professional training, labour market, health care—is not yet comprehensively ensured, the need for action concerns all players in integration policy. Decisive steps have been initiated. A great deal has been accomplished since the first integration summit in 2006. Early childhood education today begins at an early point. Learning German is given high priority. In the field of education, targeted measures are offered in order to improve success in school and during the transition from school into the labour market. Labour market integration is supported; opportunities of employment and gainful work are improved. The National Action Plan shows that Germany is making good progress in terms of integration.

One future task of integration policy is to realise the goal of participation on an equal basis. The federal government is making its contribution—in conjunction with the German Länder, municipalities, associations, federations and immigrant organisations. All those involved have shown that they are facing up to their responsibility for the accomplishment of this shared goal. The National Action Plan on Integration will strengthen social cohesiveness in Germany.



Report of the German Länder on the National Action Plan on Integration

Together for greater integration

Status: November 11, 2011

Report of the German Länder on the National Action Plan on Integration

Together for greater integration

We can look back on more than half a century of modern immigration to Germany. Merely a decade after Germany had taken in millions of refugees and displaced persons in the aftermath of World War II people arrived in Germany as “guest workers”, later as the family members of these guest workers, asylum seekers, refugees from civil wars, ethnic Germans from earlier and later stages of resettlement, and, finally, as citizens of the European Union. Refugees and contract labourers also arrived in the former German Democratic Republic, even if the political circumstances and underlying conditions were not comparable and more restrictive.

For a long time this process was not viewed as "immigration" by immigrants or the host country of Germany, whether East or West. American migration researcher Philip Martin calls Germany "a reluctant land of immigration."¹ In terms of figures, immigration to Germany was more extensive than in some classic countries of immigration and much more extensive than that in many other European nations; but only recently has this been perceived as an actual immigration process. Though they themselves have no decision-making authority concerning immigration to Germany, during this time the municipalities and German Länder undertook enormous efforts to deal constructively with the consequences of immigration in their jurisdictions. And - by international comparison - they did so with measurable success, as is documented in the 2010 Annual Report by the Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration.

Germany has changed. It has become more diverse and cosmopolitan. The National Football Team is but the most conspicuous example. If in 2010 for the FIFA World Cup 11 of 23 players on the German team were from an immigrant background and understood the world over as German players, one need only look back to the 1990 World Cup, when the picture was entirely different. Changes just as enormous but less regarded have taken place not only in the field of sports but in all spheres of life: today integration is being successfully lived in Germany on a daily basis. Unspectacular and without making any headlines, it is thriving in clubs, neighbourhoods, schools and in the workplace. Germany's global business has become more diverse both in company workforces and increasingly in executive positions.

Shaping integration together

For the coming years, the federal states are striving to establish a culture of appreciation for cultural and religious diversity, mutual recognition and respect and tolerance. The German Länder are aware that over the decades Germany has recruited and attracted many people from families lacking formal education. Thus it remains our ambition to improve access to education and gainful employment for all immigrants in order to increase their opportunities in our society and make use of their potentials.

Integration is an opportunity for society as a whole. If it succeeds, everybody benefits. Integration provides an opportunity for a good life in our society, in which people with and without an immigrant background can contribute their talents, commitment, skills and culture on an equal basis.² Each and every person benefits when people of the various origins

¹ PHILIP L. MARTIN: GERMANY: RELUCTANT LAND OF IMMIGRATION; American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, 1998

² The state of Bavaria wants to emphasise that the National Action Plan and the attachment in the following refer to immigrants who have long-term prospects for the right of residence. North Rhine-Westphalia emphasises that participation covers all persons with an immigrant background, independent of age, gender, possible disabilities, sexual identity as well as any and all circumstances and spheres of life.

contribute to the diversity of a democratic society and the performance of its economy, be it as neighbours, employees, consumers, non-profit and voluntary workers, or as founders of new businesses, self-employed persons and entrepreneurs.

Immigrants' new and different perspectives, their knowledge and skills and their contacts to other countries have steadily contributed to the renewal and development of business, trade, society and culture in Germany. Integration provides an opportunity for growing tolerance, cosmopolitanism and mutual understanding. Knowledge about other countries, cultures and religions is promoted; racism and xenophobia are reduced. This strengthens domestic and international peace and heightens society's capacity for solving conflicts on the basis of democracy and solidarity. Successful integration that contributes to the openness and tolerance of our society also offers the chance to counteract the outflow of highly qualified immigrants and non-immigrants. A welcoming culture and attractive living conditions are necessary for keeping well-educated employees in the country and for Germany to appeal to specialists from abroad.

The benefits that immigrants and frequently their children bring with them include knowledge of their mother tongue. The overwhelming share of immigrants is interested in education, achievement and professional advancement. Their skills include diverse ways of seeing problems and different strategies for solving them. That is why international and intercultural teams are usually more creative and find better solutions. The earlier and better we promote and take advantage of such skills, the more society as a whole will benefit. Learning the German language quickly is one of the most important requirements. This also applies to those who have been living here for a longer period of time and who would like to benefit from the integration courses that are offered in the interest of catching up on integration. The enormous interest in attending integration courses is proof of a willingness to integrate on the part of immigrants. The German Länder also expect the federal government to meet the rising demand in the future.

Migration-specific barriers in the educational system, during the transition from school to career training and into the labour market have to be reduced further in order to take advantage of immigrant potentials and meet our needs for specialists. The German Länder are determined to help eliminate barriers to access, discrimination and exclusion!

For immigrants, gainful employment subject to social insurance contributions or self-employment and thus the possibility for independent living is a vital element of integration in society. The concerns and objective of the labour market policy pursued by the German Länder aim at supporting immigrants' integration into the labour market.

7.5 million of the roughly 16 million³ people in Germany with an immigrant background are women and girls. It is vital for the success of integration that their role in the migration process be recognised and, when specifically implemented, that their special situations and concerns are included in all fields of activity.

The federal states value the commitment on the part of many immigrant women to integration in family, career, neighbourhood and society. Each process of immigration has its own history and context; in this respect it is advised to take individual situations into consideration. Generally, women and men experience the transition from their country of origin to the host country differently and have distinctive histories of immigration. This constitutes an integral part of integration policy in the federal states.

The federal states acknowledge the achievements that particularly immigrant girls and young women contribute in school, job training as well as in their professional careers. As a rule, they are more successful than young immigrant men. Nonetheless, it is more difficult for them

³ See Press Release no. 248, dated July 14, 2010 of the German Federal Statistical Office.

to find job training than it is for young men. In addition, their range of career choices is even narrower than that of young non-immigrant women. Thus the German Länder regard it as their responsibility to safeguard and strengthen the rights and opportunities of girls and women, guided by the principles of freedom of choice and equal opportunity. This is all the more valid, as the educational potential of women and girls can make a tangible contribution to counteracting the demographically-induced shortage of skilled labour.

The German Länder support the right of self-determination for girls and women. The Länder encourage them to exploit their individual potential. If girls and women are prevented from exercising their rights, particularly the free choice of career and partner, the German Länder assume responsibility for enacting suitable measures of prevention, intervention and support. Likewise, the German Länder recognise it as their responsibility to advocate equality between the sexes and to actively combat conflicting tendencies.

The German Länder emphasise the significance of active immigrant participation. Their participation and civic involvement are essential elements of integration and an enrichment for our society. The German Länder underscore the central importance of such involvement for the success of integration. Immigrant organisations are playing a steadily greater role in this process. In view of the demographic change, the German Länder particularly want to improve the framework conditions for the civic involvement of older people with an immigrant background. The German Länder agree that our democratic body polity requires political and social participation. For immigrants without German citizenship, this participation is not possible to its full extent. It is in the interest of the German Länder to naturalise the immigrants who fulfil the requirements for naturalisation. Nevertheless, the German Länder point out that social participation is also possible without having German citizenship.

Integration takes place on a local basis. The German Länder recognise the indispensable work being performed by the municipalities. For the German Länder it is self-evident for integration policy to be shaped together with immigrants. The Länder involve them in the planning and implementation of their state-specific integration concepts in the form of state-level advisory bodies or in other ways. Municipal (advisory) councils for foreigners and, increasingly, for integration enable immigrants to get involved in politics and provide the municipalities an opportunity to benefit from their know-how and commitment to local integration.

In conjunction with the European Union, the federal government, the municipalities and civil society, the German Länder will coordinate their integration policy and, where necessary, expand it. At the federal and state level, as well as in many municipalities, integration has become a management issue. Structural and long-term improvements are still needed, however. The results of individual and model projects have to be examined for their contribution to improving standard structures and the range of services. The German Länder are willing to accommodate this in their sphere of responsibility; for them the intercultural opening of their regular services is a fundamental principle in every area of policy.

Regarding integration policy, the German Länder face a variety of challenges which differ from state to state: East versus West, large urban agglomerations versus rural regions, economic centres versus structurally weak regions as well as diverse immigrants groups of vastly different sizes require specific solutions. The German Länder have responded to this situation with a wide range of measures and a pronounced commitment to the integration of government and civic players, whose joint action promotes integration. This is summarised by the integration concepts and action plans of the federal states; the state governments answer to their parliaments and the public concerning the implementation of those plans. In several state parliaments there are committees for integration, and commissions of inquiry examine the topics of integration and immigration in greater depth;

their recommendations are integrated in the further development of the integration policy of the respective German Länder.⁴

As a supplement to their state-specific integration concepts, the German Länder consider the National Integration Plan a vital tool for integration policy to be further along with the National Action Plan on Integration. The first Progress Report on the National Integration Plan was very helpful in terms of evaluation and reporting.

Like the federal government, the German Länder recognise the necessity to verify the progress of integration as well as any problem areas on the basis of reliable data and facts. This is the prerequisite for a differentiated and objective discussion that takes concerns and fears seriously while also pointing to opportunities. Joint integration monitoring by the German Länder fulfils the task of observing and indicating the progress of integration in education and career training, the labour market and in the social sphere; there will be a report on integration monitoring published every two years.

The report of the German Länder provides continuity to the National Integration Plan and associated progress report. In the following reports on the fields of activity of the National Action Plan, the German Länder outline their positions, aims and measures, broken down according to the structure stipulated by the federal government for the dialogue forums and the strategic goals developed there. The basis of this are the reports of a series of conferences of ministers⁵ as well as the German Länder. Due to lack of space, the strategies and measures of individual German Länder can only be mentioned by way of example in this German Länder report. The reports by the conferences of ministers and individual German Länder are documented in the Appendix.

The work of the German Länder depends to a great extent on decisions made by federal policy-makers. Federal law determines who may enter Germany and who may obtain a permanent residence permit—and who may not. It is imperative that the federal government and states pursue joint policy objectives in this regard. With their integration measures, the German Länder can only respond best within the scope of this federal legal framework. The chances that these measures will succeed quickly and on a broad basis are linked directly to that. With joint federal and state programmes, for example, the German Länder are also directly impacted by the budgetary decisions of the federal government. However, the German Länder are only able to take more comprehensive structural measures in their own jurisdictions to the extent that their share in the distribution of taxes provides leeway for them to do so. This is why the federal state targets and measures mentioned in the report can only be attained within the scope of available budgetary funds. If, for instance, additional integration measures are to be taken in order to minimise the often internationally criticised dependency on family background for the attainment of educational success, and if the German Länder are to offer kindergarten facilities to parents free of charge or introduce all-day schools state-wide, a higher share in the tax revenue should be made available to them for this purpose.

⁴ See the report “Integration and Migration in Rhineland-Palatinate,” December 21, 2011, state parliament bulletin 15/5280 and “Migration and Integration in Hessen” by the Commission of Inquiry, whose work is still ongoing.

⁵ The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK), the Conference of Ministers of Gender Equality and Women’s Affairs (GFMK), the Conference of Building Ministers (BMK), the Conference of Ministers of Youth and Family Affairs (JFMK); the Conference of Health Ministers (GMK) and the Conference of Sports Ministers (SMK).

Federation of Local Government Associations on the National Action Plan on Integration



Report of the Federation of Local Government Associations on the National Action Plan on Integration

The Federation of Local Government Associations welcomes the dialogue initiated with the National Integration Plan and continued in the National Action Plan concerning the conditions for the successful integration of people with an immigrant background. The National Integration Plan and National Action Plan on Integration lend the topic of integration at the federal level a priority that it always had in the cities, districts and municipalities directly concerned. For even though essential framework conditions are set by the federal government and German Länder, integration takes place essentially at a local level.

The municipalities recognise their great responsibility to integration. As a large number of favourable examples highlight, for years they have made important contributions to the integration and peaceful social coexistence of different groups of people in the scope of municipal self-government. Successful integration, however, is not a one-sided process. It not only requires a host society willing to accept immigrants, but also a willingness to integrate on the part of those with an immigrant background.

In the National Integration Plan, the local government associations have pledged to further support and strengthen the integration process at the municipal level

- **by providing members with ideas and information, e.g. through the exchange of experiences and best practices, thus**
- **supporting their integration efforts,**
- **supporting members with recommendations and,**
- **as a vocal advocate, putting forward municipal needs for change to the federal government and German Länder**

in order to make a shared contribution to the sustainability of integration efforts. The municipal umbrella organisations are expressly committed to these voluntary obligations. On the basis of these, we will also support the municipalities in their integration efforts in the future. By way of example, we want to point to the series of events dedicated to topics of integration initiated by the German Association of Cities and Towns, which opened with an inaugural conference in Munich in November

2011 on the subject of “Discrimination as a Challenge” and the research/practice project titled “Integration Potentials in Small Towns and Districts,” carried out by the Schader Foundation and supported by the German County Association and German Association of Towns and Municipalities.¹

A current study commissioned by the Federal Government Commissioner for Migration, Refugees and Integration and the Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development, substantiates that the majority of municipalities have already carried out integration measures as recommended by the local government associations. The now well-documented fact that, at the level of local policy, most municipalities attach considerable or very considerable importance to the integration of people with an immigrant background highlights the commitment of the municipalities to integration. In so doing, municipal integration policy is increasingly geared toward the potentials that immigrants have to offer. Immigrants not only invigorate local cultural activities; not least in view of the demographic change, they contribute greatly to the economic prosperity and to securing the future viability of the cities, districts and municipalities.

The discussions and findings of the National Action Plan's dialogue forums mirror the level of integration in Germany that has been achieved thus far. In many cases, the dialogue forums in which the municipal umbrella organisations have participated concern spheres of integration policy-related activity for which we have provided recommendations in the National Integration Plan. The recommendations have been tried and tested and retain their validity. There is no reason to call them into question. However, the recommendations can be further developed and concretised.

1. Local integration

The Federation of Local Government Associations recommends its members/member associations:

- attach considerable importance to the topic of integration at the level of local policy;
- anchor integration as an interdepartmental responsibility in the municipal administration and establish it in accordance with its significance. The setup of staff and coordination offices for integration, establishment of steering committees involving the top administrative officials and founding of advisory councils for integration issues are examples to be considered;
- develop and update comprehensive municipal strategies adapted to respective needs. Such comprehensive strategies can be formulated in municipal integration concepts and/or guidelines and stipulate clear-cut targets and priorities for action;
- continue to support the linking of all social, political and economic players - including immigrant organisations - while acting within the scope of their capacities as the main player for the coordination and alignment of various integration efforts. In this context, special attention should be given to linking municipal youth work with the youth councils as well as to measures in the field of education and integration in labour market;
- involve immigrants to a greater extent in the decision- and policy-making processes in a broad range of areas of social and political life. Immigrants and immigrant organisations should be involved particularly in the development and implementation of municipal integration concepts, e.g. through involvement in steering committees or local participatory measures. To the extent it is legally permissible, the creation and active support of municipal advisory

¹ *Institut für Demokratische Entwicklung und Soziale Integration*, Survey on the status of municipal integration policy in Germany, 2011.

bodies—especially in the form of advisory councils—as well as involvement in municipal decision-making processes strengthen municipal integration policy. Immigrants possess a wide variety of skills, e.g. as multipliers and conflict mediators;

- promote social interaction between the population groups in communities with integration deficits through neighbourhood management and networking. To achieve targeted involvement of immigrant and non-immigrant citizens in the development of neighbourhoods, low-threshold participatory programmes and relevant social and cultural services constitute feasible options;
- make greater use of funding instruments for the strengthening of disadvantaged neighbourhoods, e.g. “Social City,” a programme run by the federal government and the European Social Fund (ESF);
- suitably inform the population about the range of local integration services available as well as document, evaluate and, if required, optimise integration efforts in the interest of the increased effectiveness of local integration policy and effective resource management. The development and launch of a needs-based and meaningful system of monitoring integration might be capable of meeting those requirements.

The Federation of Local Government Associations will reinforce these recommendations—as well as the recommendations for the topics below—by providing tools, organising events to exchange experiences and by supporting municipalities in the establishment, stabilisation and strengthening of municipal integration processes. Furthermore, the Association of German Cities and Towns and the German Association of Towns and Municipalities will broach the issue of integration in urban neighbourhoods as part of the Initiative for National Urban Development Policy founded jointly by the federal government and German Länder; moreover, they will advocate the continued advancement of the “Social City” programme at a high financial level.

2. People with an immigrant background in public service

The Federation of Local Government Associations recommends its members/member associations:

- increase the share of people with an immigrant background in administration, e.g. through training initiatives or by actively recruiting appropriately qualified immigrants with municipal job advertisements, cooperating with schools, or organising internships. The establishment of municipal targets should be considered in order to render measurable the successes in this area. This way, the municipalities contribute directly to professional integration in their role as employers;
- open municipal social services in terms of conception and personnel in order to meet the needs of people with an immigrant background;
- train employees in ways that accommodate even more effectively the goal of customer service and need for intercultural competence in administration and municipal institutions.

The Federation of Local Government Associations will concretise this recommendation by providing a published guideline on the intercultural opening of administration.

3. Labour market, working life

The Federation of Local Government Associations recommends its members/member associations:

- support the professional integration of people with an immigrant background with supplementary measures in their role as service providers pursuant to the Social Security Code II;
- support regional, labour market-relevant networks of players that provide or publicise advisory services concerning labour market and career issues, particularly low-threshold services in the immediate social environment;
- contribute to professional integration in their role as employer;
- make the greatest effort to support self-employed immigrants in starting and consolidating businesses, for instance through helpful referrals to a range of consulting, support and information services (e.g. the internet portal www.existenzgruender.de);
- take account of the growing significance of the ethnic economy within the framework of municipal concepts for the promotion of business;
- raise popular and administrative awareness of the potential of the ethnic economy and the municipality as a business location.

4. Civic involvement

The Federation of Local Government Associations recommends its members/member associations:

- support and promote civic involvement of, for and with immigrants and enhance the incorporation of the skills of immigrants as multipliers and conflict mediators;
- address immigrant organisations specifically and support them in order to strengthen civic involvement in these groups as well as intercultural cooperation in civic involvement. Organisations of young immigrants deserve special attention in this regard. Multi-generational houses also offer points of contact for the civic involvement for people with an immigrant background;
- take specific advantage of the opportunities of the Voluntary Social Year, the Voluntary Ecological Year and the Federal Voluntary Service.

5. Language and integration courses

The Federation of Local Government Associations recommends its members/member associations:

- attach great importance to language training and education, in particular for children and teenagers with an immigrant background, as it constitutes the “key to integration”;
- advocate near-term implementation for the nationwide provision of the integration courses announced by the federal government;

- strive, particularly in the rural regions, for the integration courses to begin without long waiting periods for the immigrants concerned by coordinating potential course participants and the respective course providers.

6. Early childhood education

The Federation of Local Government Associations recommends its members/member associations:

- pay special attention to the language training and education of all children who are already in daycare facilities;
- achieve heightened awareness of daycare professionals for issues specific to migration.

7. Education, training, advanced training

The Federation of Local Government Associations recommends its members/member associations:

- help immigrants learn about and introduce them to the range of educational services offered by the federal government and German Länder (e.g. by informing them about the respective range of services);
- supplement the range of educational services through close cooperation between schools, daycare centres, institutions of youth social work and third-party educational providers and to link these services with those of the federal government and German Länder;
- make greater use of all-day schools for a range of integration services;
- intensify the involvement of parents in the educational process;
- provide needs-based, migration-specific services in municipal educational facilities.

8. Healthcare and long-term care

The Federation of Local Government Associations recommends its members/member associations:

- organise information and public relations work, particularly that of the public health authorities, so that it is more specific to migration concerning healthcare and long-term care.

9. Sports

The Federation of Local Government Associations recommends its members/member associations:

- establish cooperations between schools and clubs aimed at introducing children with an immigrant background to sports activities;
- conduct tandem projects and strengthen the civic involvement regarding the improvement of integration through sports;
- make use of the options provided by open youth employment for sports;

- make use of existing links to immigrant organisations;
- provide intercultural training and further education of the employees in charge in administration as well as to establish sports-specific networks.

10. Culture

The Federation of Local Government Associations recommends its members/member associations:

- open existing cultural institutions and cultural projects interculturally;
- support closer links between the players involved within the scope of their capacities.

In view of the wide variety of local circumstances in the approximately 12,000 German municipalities, the recommendations of the Federation of Local Government Associations can only form the framework which is to be adapted to the specific local situation, taking the budgetary situation of each municipality into particular account.