

***Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants:
Guide to Policy Development and
Implementation***

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Structure and content of the Guide

Introduction

1. What is linguistic integration?
2. How to create appropriate language programmes
3. Assessing the linguistic competence of migrants

Recommendations

Introduction

- **Migration, language and integration**
 - Successful linguistic integration requires language programmes of high quality
 - From the perspective of migrants, linguistic integration is not necessarily a sign of full integration
 - Language tests are often seen by migrants as obstacles to be overcome, imposed on them by the receiving society, and less often as part of a system provided to welcome and support them
- **The perspective of the Council of Europe**
 - Programmes designed to support linguistic integration should implement the Council of Europe’s core values
 - Programmes should take account of the languages that migrants already know, respond to their language needs, and acknowledge the diversity of migrant populations

1. What is linguistic integration?

- Learning the language(s) of the receiving society (is not enough)
 - True integration involves putting in place the conditions for a successful reconfiguration of the linguistic repertoires of adult migrants
- Linguistic repertoires
 - We all possess a complex of linguistic knowledge and skills that we deploy in various ways in the different domains of life
 - For many of us, including adult migrants, this repertoire is made up of more than one language and therefore rests on “plurilingual competence”
- Forms of linguistic integration
 - Passive; functional; proactive; expands identity
- Migrants’ linguistic diversity
 - There can be no single, standard language programme for adult migrants

2. How to create appropriate language programmes

- The general process
- The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) and adult migrants’ linguistic integration
 - Multidimensional, complex and non-prescriptive, the CEFR should be used with care
- The CEFR and needs analysis for adult migrants
 - The CEFR can be used to analyse the objective needs of adult migrants: the tasks they will be required to perform in different domains of language use
- Subjective needs, autonomous learning and the European Language Portfolio (ELP)
 - Subjective needs: attitude and motivation, learning style, aptitude, learning skills
 - The ELP as a means of responding to learners’ subjective needs and fostering autonomous learning
- Teaching methodologies and adult migrants’ educational cultures
- The importance of transparency and quality

3. Assessing the linguistic competence of migrants

- Some guiding principles for testing
 - Tests are not necessarily the most appropriate form of assessment for migrants
- Pre-arrival tests
 - Concern has been expressed by the Commissioner for Human Rights
- Tests for permanent residence and citizenship
 - Successful integration depends on many other factors besides knowledge of language and society
- What are the consequences for integration of those who fail?
- Some concluding thoughts on language tests
 - If they are to support rather than obstruct integration, tests must embody realistic objectives
- Alternatives to testing
 - These need further exploration and development because they are more likely to promote integration

Recommendations (abbreviated)

- Careful consideration should be given to the levels of competence required before and after entry to ensure that they are appropriate, achievable and do not exclude migrants who would otherwise be eligible
- Language programmes should be of a sufficiently high quality to give strong support to migrants’ efforts to adapt to a new linguistic and cultural situation
- Language programmes should be designed not simply as a preparation for tests but as a wider educational tool
- Language programmes should take account of migrants’ rights and respect the values of the Council of Europe, which are the foundation of a tolerant and civilized society and indispensable for European stability, economic growth and social cohesion

Recommendations (abbreviated)

- Programmes designed to support linguistic integration should take into account the languages that adult migrants already know, which should be recognised and valued, and used to help them learn the language of the host society
- Member states should opt for courses, types of assessment and testing methods that are flexible and appropriate to the persons and groups concerned
- The Council of Europe developed the European Language Portfolio (ELP) in parallel with the CEFR partly in order to foster autonomous learning: use of the version of the ELP specially created for adult migrants is strongly encouraged
- If it is considered appropriate to introduce or continue to use integration tests, those responsible for developing them should ensure that they correspond to the needs and abilities of those being tested

Recommendations (abbreviated)

- Wherever possible, education should be offered to support people wishing to take tests, and there should be careful consideration of the form this should take
- Further consideration should be given to exemptions from testing and what these should be
- Consideration should be given to whether or not it is appropriate for there to be a fee for tests, and if so, what exemptions there should be from payment
- Further consideration should be given to researching and developing alternatives to tests that might be fairer and non-discriminatory
- In order to support the implementation of these recommendations, member states are invited to make use of available Council of Europe resources and expertise