

Integration Principles

ברוכים
הואים

தொடர்பு வரவேற்று

Intercultural Integration Concept

On 20 February 2008 the Munich City Council unanimously approved the **Principles and Structure of the Munich City Integration Policy (Intercultural Integration Concept)**.

Why do we need an Integration Concept?

In Munich approximately 36 percent of the population has a migrant background on the strength of they themselves or one of their parents having moved to Munich from abroad after 1955. Some of them have been living in Munich for decades while others have just recently settled here. The municipal authorities in Munich see themselves as a service provider for anyone living here, so if services are to be equally accessible for everyone regardless of language spoken or religious denomination, age or gender, it is the responsibility of the Munich authorities to ensure that these services are readily available, and it is the Integration Concept that serves as a vital framework for this target.

What does that mean?

The city of Munich has committed itself to principles and guidelines that ensure that intercultural aspects are taken into consideration in all municipal decisions, projects, plans and services, that more opportunities for active participation are given in areas where this had been neglected in the past, and that city council policies and plans are oriented towards these principles and guidelines.

සැලසුම්
විඳිනු ලැබේ.

欢迎
أهلاً وسهلاً

Who designed this concept?

The Office for Intercultural Affairs, which is responsible throughout Munich for the cross-sectional task of integration, lead managed the concept and, together with all other departments, designed the present form of the Integration Concept. The draft was discussed in depth during more than 50 meetings with a wide range of diverse groups, such as charity organisations, the Foreigners' Advisory Council, immigrant organisations and trade unions.

What changes can we see?

For over 30 years now a feature of the Munich city management has been its proactive intercultural policies – in many municipal departments workers and managers have demonstrated their commitment to an intercultural policy by actively supporting intercultural mainstreaming (please refer to the list of 11 principles below). The Integration Concept pools all these activities – something that had previously not been achieved – and initiates mandatory intercultural mainstreaming of all departments.

What are the essential principles?

The basis of the Integration Concept is the following for the entire city community.

The sense of solidarity within the city of Munich is the responsibility of every individual. Understanding between the diverse social groups is the basis of integration. Municipal policies and services promote the existing competencies of all individuals living in Munich, regardless of age, gender, skin colour, religion, cultural and social background, disabilities, illnesses, philosophy of life or sexual orientation. Special emphasis must be given to the position of children and adolescents. We must ensure that each person has equal opportunities to participate in life in the community and in local policy decisions and has access to resources.

This vision outlines one of the central terms in the Integration Concept, namely

“integration”:

For us, integration means the long-term process that immigrants go through of becoming involved in core areas of society and of bonding with others in the community to achieve equal opportunities. Both the newcomer and the long-standing member of a community are equally responsible for success or failure of this process. Our vision of integration respects and values cultural diversity and promotes potential that such diversity offers.

So integration is a process that needs time and cannot be achieved from one day to the next. Our vision of integration illustrates that both the newcomer as well as the existing community must work together and jointly create a society offering equality to all. We consider “core areas of society” to be, for example, education, vocational training, the job market, housing, political participation, healthcare.

An important aspect of life in a community is the exchange of viewpoints and the discussion of issues at all levels – a common basis and framework for debate and the introduction of changes facilitates this process – and this is what the integration concept provides by drawing up 11 basic principles.

11 basic principles:

Vision

1 Integration depends on the recognition of common, free and democratic standards.

The basis of all discussion is the German Basic Law. This law provides the foundation, for example, for the right to Islam religious instruction or the building of mosques. Human dignity, freedom of action or physical integrity are, on the other hand, rights that are anchored in the law and are not to be challenged. Consequently, female circumcision and forced marriage, for example, cannot possibly be allowed.

2 Integration concerns everybody and is a process of mutual understanding and negotiation in the case of conflicting interests. Integration strengthens the sense of solidarity in a community.

This makes it clear that integration is not expected from just one section of a community (the immigrants) but from everyone living in the community. Not one group alone can determine and define standards but it is up to everyone to endeavour to find a common path.

3 Integration in a European city must be based on the promotion of non-isolation and socio-geographical mix in all sections of the community.

Conflicts are not caused by a predominance in one area of people from a specific country of origin (ghettos) but by a predominance of people in difficult circumstances (unemployment, poverty).

4 Integration key resources are language skills in both German and a person's native language.

A command of the German language is essential in order to become actively involved in life in Germany and to feel integrated here. This is undisputed. It is also undisputed that recognition and promotion of language skills in a child's native tongue are just as important for its development. It is important that multilingualism is recognised, as well as its significance in education and vocational training, if it is to be seen as an asset for society and for young people with an immigrant background that they have mastered two languages.

5 Integration means recognising and developing diversity, as well as enabling political participation and equal opportunity for involvement in urban society.

In addition to calling for voting rights in local elections for all adults living in Munich – regardless of their nationality – the Munich authorities support the involvement of all individuals, initiatives and associations in life in our community.

6 Integration can only be achieved if institutions adopt a policy of intercultural orientation and intercultural mainstreaming.

Intercultural orientation means that institutions recognise that people of different origins with different interests and needs live in the city, and it must be possible for these diverse groups to voice and stand up for their interests on a basis of equality. **Intercultural mainstreaming** is the realisation of all this in everyday practice; this means that all facilities and services provided by the city authorities must be equally available to anyone living here.

7 Integration means decisive action to combat discrimination and racism.

Taking an active stand against reservations or opposition towards minority groups and investigation of offences committed against such sections of the

population are an essential element in the promotion of integration and are vital for the city's reputation. Every citizen of the city is called upon to show a sense of moral courage in the fight against discrimination and racism. The Munich authorities support this.

8 Integration recognizes the existing potential of the people of Munich.

It is no longer the alleged deficits of immigrants – “Can't speak German”, “Haven't got any job training”, etc. – that dominate any discussion, but the potential assets that people bring with them – “Can speak four languages”, “Had professional experience in his home country”. In the future it will become even more important to find ways to utilise this potential.

9 Intercultural integration stands for equal access for all to information, education, culture and the arts, sports, job opportunities, housing, social services and healthcare regardless of age, gender, skin colour, religion, social and cultural origins, disabilities, lifestyle philosophy or sexual identity.

Integration does not mean levelling down but equal opportunities for everyone.

10 All integration measures and the entire municipal policy regarding people of immigrant background are checked as regards their impact on women and men, as well as on girls and boys. The impact of all measures on the acceptance of lesbians, gays and transgender also has to be examined.

This describes the link-up of the cross-sectional tasks intercultural mainstreaming, gender mainstreaming and non-discrimination policies for lesbians, gays and transgender.

11 Integration must have something specific to offer to each target group.

Equality throughout the population of Munich does not mean that everyone will use the same facilities or services. Equality means that everyone will have access to the facilities and services they personally need, or facilities and services will be created taking the needs of diverse groups into consideration.

Добро пожаловать

Integration Principles