

“Integration Courses”

This document is part of a larger collection of examples of current policies for young people in Europe. The collection is an outcome of a European research project called “UP2YOUTH – Youth: actor of social change?”

The basic idea of the “current practice” collection is to see how current practices and policies relate to young people as active agents in shaping their lives. Therefore, our intention is not a collection of “good” or “best” practices. Rather, it includes also practices, which are interesting because of their relation to young people’s agency but which involve problematic aspects, such as restricted financial resources, a very thin spread, or no clear evaluation criteria. We have applied a searching pattern which asked for “strengths” and “weaknesses”. This explicitly opens space for your own evaluation, because also policies are included, which definitely do have weaknesses, but are highly interesting for specific reasons. Therefore we have to stress that the researchers did not evaluate these practices themselves.

The whole collection can be found at

<http://www.up2youth.org/content/view/192/60/>

Section	Indications of contents
Title of programme/ practice	Integration Courses
Location	Germany
Main theme	Transition of young people with an ethnic minority or immigrant background
Practice/Programme-related keywords	Integration of foreigners; Jewish immigrants; Ethnic German repatriates; Language courses; Language testing; Orientation courses
Summary of programme/ practice	Language is a key to successful integration. In Germany, immigrants receive language instruction as part of their integration course. The objective is for migrants to make them understood in everyday situations and to become more familiar with German society. The second part of the integration course is known as the orientation course. This puts an emphasis on German culture, the legal system and ethical values.
Target	The government’s integration course consists of a language course and an orientation course. A test takes place on completion of 630 lessons. The objective is for all candidates to achieve language level B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF) and to give an insight into the legal system, the culture and history of Germany. Until the new, graded language test "Deutsch-Test für Zuwanderer" is used which, from 2009, will allow course attendees to prove their language skills at levels A2 and B1, two alternative language tests will be used as the final test during 2008.

Objectives of programme/ practice	The project's main components are: The literacy course (achieving integration by acquiring functional literacy, to improve participants' social integration skills by using self-supporting and sustainable-focused teaching methods and to acquire German language skills to the level of elementary language use, usually a maximum of A2 on the literacy course.) The women and parents integration course (Integration courses for parents are intended to give immigrant mothers and fathers the opportunity to become acquainted with their children's educational institutions and to take part in deciding about their education); Integration course for young people (To support attendees in their particular situation in life, in addition to German, additional content is taught on the integration course for young people including technical, job-focused and general knowledge subjects. Possible subjects are: the education system, the job market, career profiles, expectations of gender, healthcare provision, recreational activities, prevention of drugs and violence. All subject areas are practice-based and are also taught outside the context of the classroom.) Intensive course (The intensive course is a special integration course designed for people who learn particularly quickly. It takes 430 hours to complete. Participants on the intensive course should attain the B1 language level of the Common European Framework of Reference within 400 lessons of the language course and not within 600 as in the general integration course. The orientation course is also shorter. It takes 30 hours to complete.) Support course (the support course is aimed at immigrants who have been living in Germany for a while, and who because of their rudimentary knowledge of German need special support, and who are not expected to achieve the course objective - language level B1 - within the 600 hours of tuition.)
Content of programme/ practice	The project, which depends solely on Government funding, meets the needs of all kinds of immigrants by offering a reflective, language centred service. The project has been successful in offering an effective service to a wide spectrum of immigrants including.
Time scale	2005 to ongoing
Programme/practice design	Key features are one to one educational support focusing on literacy competences/skills, cultural and institutional knowledge, and technical and job-focused information. The majority of work is undertaken with children, youngsters, parents and adults in general. Some partners/mothers also participate on an ad hoc basis in counselling and one-to-one support visits. Where possible, fathers attend social activities with their children and partners.
Resources involved	2007 spending in general 126,7 Mio http://www.prointegration.org/pdf/integrationsbilanz-2007.pdf

Evaluation	Evaluation process: In order to guarantee the quality of integration courses, teaching plans and the final test will be constantly evaluated and developed. This will also apply to teaching and learning aids. The Evaluation Commission is responsible for these tasks in accordance with § 21 of the Ordinance on Integration Courses. It is also responsible for developing the quality control process and improving the nationwide integration course program. In addition, the Evaluation Commission is responsible for the special programs for integration courses for women, parents and young people and the integration course including literacy skills. Results / impact of programme: By implementing [these courses], we have been successful in removing deficiencies and gaps in language support previously offered to immigrants. Achievements have also been made by joining up the various different tools which have existed to date and combining these in one approach. As a result, responsibilities have been combined and a well-structured support programme has been set up. [...] The new system for integration courses has been established and proved itself and now, for the first time, it offers the option of systematic and high-quality support for integrating all immigrants. With this approach, the Government is on the right path." http://www.integration-in-deutschland.de/cln_101/nn_284510/Sub-Sites/Integration/EN/03__Akteure/Integrationskurse/Evaluation2006/evaluation2006-node.html?__nnn=true The final report also makes it clear, however, that introducing the new system at short notice and agreeing on the complexity of the tasks led to processes not being optimally designed. It also points out which components have stood the test of time in the system and the areas where there is potential for improvement. Assessment of programme/ action/ practice in terms of sustainability: The program will continue
Lessons to be drawn from programme or practice implemented	The most important amendments include: - abolishing particular information obligations imposed on course providers - reducing the maximum number of attendees per course group to 20 (previously 25) - increasing the number of lessons in special integration courses to 900 on the language course (previously 600) - introducing a new special type of course: support course (for attendees with a high level of language support needs) - introducing intensive courses with a total of 430 lessons - reimbursing travel costs for attendees who are required to attend an integration course by providers of basic security funds and for attendees who are exempt from costs - paying a travel allowance to attendees who are required to attend a course by their local foreign affairs office - the option to repeat the follow-on language course - reimbursing 50% of the cost contribution if the final test is passed within two years
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Other doc related to the programme/ practice	The topic in focus: "Mehrsprachigkeit: Motor oder Hindernis für die Integration?" http://www.integration-in-deutschland.de/cln_101/nn_1428634/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Integration/Publikationen/Blickpunkt/2008/2008-03,templateId=raw,property=publicationFile.pdf/2008-03.pdf The topic in focus: "Gleichberechtigte Teilhabe fördern - Integration von Frauen mit Migrationshintergrund" http://www.integration-in-deutschland.de/cln_101/nn_1428634/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Integration/Publikationen/Blickpunkt/2008/2008-02,templateId=raw,property=publicationFile.pdf/2008-02.pdf The topic in focus: "Nationaler Integrationsplan: Bundesamt setzt Selbstverpflichtungen um" http://www.integration-in-deutschland.de/cln_101/nn_1428634/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Integration/Publikationen/Blickpunkt/2008/2008-01,templateId=raw,property=publicationFile.pdf/2008-01.pdf