



Tackling today's challenges together: Linguistic integration of adult migrants

” FACTS AND FIGURES

Over one million refugees and asylum seekers* entered Europe in 2015.

Migrants must pass a language test to obtain a residence permit in 23 Council of Europe member states. For citizenship, they must reach a set level of language proficiency in 26 member states. **

LINGUISTIC INTEGRATION OF ADULT MIGRANTS

■ If refugees and migrants are not well integrated, European societies cannot be peaceful democracies, in which everyone's human rights and dignity are respected.

■ Migrants need to be able to communicate within their host country and to participate in society and daily life.

■ Refugees and asylum seekers urgently need basic communication skills in the language of their transit and destination countries.

■ Many European countries require adult migrants to pass language and knowledge-of-society tests for entry, residence or citizenship. There is also a tendency to increase the language levels expected.

■ Unrealistic language requirements can hamper migrants' integration and one-size-fits-all courses are unlikely to meet migrants' diverse needs.

■ Success in a test does not guarantee integration.

■ Inappropriate use of Council of Europe language-proficiency scales (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, CEFR) may contravene international standards.

WHAT CAN WE DO ?

■ Integration is a two-way process; policy makers and citizens, as well as migrants, must play an active role.

■ Council of Europe tools, standards, guidelines and programmes, based on the Organisation's core values – human rights, democracy and the rule of law – assist host countries in integrating migrants.

■ These include resources to ensure that:

- ▶ language tests do not exclude those who would otherwise be eligible for entry, residence, work or citizenship;
- ▶ adult language courses are of good quality and tailored to migrants' needs;
- ▶ migrants' existing language skills are valued as a basis for learning the new language; and,
- ▶ levels of language proficiency are realistically and flexibly defined.

■ A Council of Europe toolkit is in preparation to provide guidance and easy-to-use teaching materials for volunteers working with refugees.



Sources:

*UN Agency for Refugees: <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php>

**Council of Europe survey on national language requirements for migrants, 2014: www.coe.int/lang-migrants.

▶▶▶ <http://www.coe.int/education>

COUNCIL OF EUROPE POLICY GUIDELINES

- *The linguistic integration of adult migrants: from one country to another, from one language to another* (2014)
- *Linguistic integration of adult migrants – Guide to policy development and implementation* (2014)
- *Adult migrant integration policies: principles and implementation* (2010)
- *The linguistic integration of adult migrants: evaluating policy and practice* (2010)
- *The role of languages in policies for the integration of adult migrants* (2008)
- *Language tests for social cohesion and citizenship: an outline for policy makers* (2008)

COUNCIL OF EUROPE MATERIALS

For learners, teachers, course and test designers

- *The linguistic integration of adult migrants and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (2012)
- *European Language Portfolio – learning the language of the host country – adult migrants* (2012)
- *Tailoring language provision and requirements to the needs and capacities of adult migrants* (2008)
- *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)* (2001) – to be adapted to use with migrants

Self-evaluation for course providers

- *Providers of Courses for Adult migrants: Self-assessment Handbook* (2014)
- *Quality assurance in the provision of language education and training for adult migrants* (2008)

Language in the workplace

- *Learning the language of the host country for professional purposes – Outline of issues and educational approaches* (2012)



COUNCIL OF EUROPE STANDARDS

Conventions

- The European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers (1977, ETS No. 93): signatory states agree to “facilitate the teaching of its language or, if there are several, one of its languages to migrant workers and members of their families”.
- The European Social Charter (revised) (1996 – ETS No. 163): parties undertake to facilitate family reunion and the teaching of the national language.

Committee of Ministers recommendations

- CM/Rec(2011)2 on validating migrants’ skills
- CM/Rec(2008)10 on improving access of migrants and persons of immigrant background to employment
- CM/Rec(2008)7 on the use of the Council of Europe’s Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the promotion of plurilingualism

Parliamentary Assembly recommendations

- Rec2034(2014) on integration tests: helping or hindering integration?
- Rec1625(2003) on policies for the integration of immigrants in Council of Europe member states
- Rec786(1976) on the education and cultural development of migrants

USEFUL COUNCIL OF EUROPE WEBSITES:

- Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants: www.coe.int/lang-migrants
- Language Policy: www.coe.int/lang
- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR): www.coe.int/lang-CEFR