

# Integration guidelines

## A social innovation from Bern (CH)



## Development

In the second half of the 1990's, due to the growing heterogenisation and fragmentation of the population of Bern, the need was felt to clarify the urban integration policy.

In 1999, after years of discussion, Bern was one of the first Swiss cities to establish guidelines for the integration of migrants. It resulted in a document that was heavily publicised. It is not a law, but recommendations were addressed to everyone, particularly to institutional stakeholders. It is mandatory for public servants – as a work instruction – but has the status of a recommendation regarding private stakeholders.

The document is also meant to inform the population about the position and aims of the city council regarding integration. The project is coordinated by a competence centre for integration.

In 2010, a revised version of the guidelines was prepared with a large participation of specialists, representatives of the city government and political parties.

## Basic principles

“The city of Bern :

- recognises diversity and differences as a strength of our society
- supports the potential of the migrants
- commits itself in the fight against discrimination
- promotes the equality of opportunity and the participation of the migrants”



## An innovative policy

It aims at collectively discussing and defining the concept of integration

It emphasises the variety of fields of action and underlines the responsibility of everyone (migrants and non-migrants, civil and private stakeholders)

It supports participation, acceptance and coordination through consultation and involvement of stakeholders

It gives the state the role of encouraging and enabling stakeholders



## Catalogue of measures

The legislative council of the city voted in 2010 a two year catalogue of measures in order to insure the implementation of the guidelines. Based on a study from the Swiss forum for migration and population studies (University of Neuchatel) and on several workshops gathering diverse stakeholders, the Competence center for integration prepared a new catalogue for the years 2014-2017.

The five departments of Bern municipal administration are responsible for the implementation. Most of the measures are financed by the city, even if some have external financing.

*“People often think that there is no will to implement these guidelines. What we see is a lot of motivation and perhaps a lack of know-how. People expect big projects. But integration is also a matter of small things we do not necessarily see.” (a civil servant)*



<http://www.bern.ch/stadtverwaltung/bss/kintegration/fintegration/leitbild>



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