



Integration strategy in action

Empowering change through co-creation and a child-centered approach'
Marks Integration strategy

Why Collaboration Matters in Integration and Social Inclusion

1- Shared Responsibility for Lasting Impact

- Integration is a **cross-sectoral challenge**—no single actor can solve it alone.
- Municipalities, national and regional authorities, and CSOs each bring unique strengths.

2- Civil Society as a Bridge to Communities

- NGOs often have **trust and access** to groups that public institutions struggle to reach.
- They offer **flexibility, innovation**, and cultural sensitivity in service delivery.

3- Authorities Provide Scale and Structure

- Public institutions ensure **policy alignment, funding, and long-term planning**.
- They hold responsibility for **rights-based and inclusive systems** (education, health, housing).

4- Stronger Together

- Joint planning and implementation ensure **coherence**, reduce duplication, and close service gaps.
- Collaboration builds **social trust**, community resilience, and democratic legitimacy.

EU integration and social inclusion policy

EU Action plan on Integration and Inclusion (2021-2027)



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Key principles and values of the EU action plan:



Inclusion for all, recognizing integration as a two way process.



Partnerships with Member States, local and regional authorities, civil society, social and economic partners, employers, philanthropies and foundations.



Targeted support at all stages of integration.



Mainstreaming **gender and antidiscrimination**.



Harnessing **new technologies** and digital tools.



Making the best use of **EU funding**.

Actions in main sectoral areas are:



Education

- Improve language learning programmes
- Improve educational participation and attainment.
- Improve recognition of qualifications.



Housing

- Promote adequate and affordable housing and accompanying integration services
- Support autonomous housing schemes for asylum applicants.
- Foster exchange of experiences between Member States, cities & regions on fighting discrimination in housing market and reducing residential segregation.



Employment

- Work with employers and social and economic partners to promote labor market inclusion.
- Promote migrants' entrepreneurship.
- Facilitate assessment and validation of skills.



Health

- Promote migrants' access to health services.
- Support Member States on prevention and health promotion programmes.



EU action plane main statement :

- Integration and inclusion of people with a migrant background is a **two-way process**.
- We need a whole of society approach that includes migrant and local communities, employers, civil society and all levels of government.
- action plan gives priority attention to have more migrants participate in consultative and decision-making processes, also to increase the capacity of authorities in involving migrants in decision-making processes.
- Ensuring that migrants and EU citizens with a migrant background **can fully participate and contribute** is key to the future well-being, prosperity and cohesion of European societies.

Developing and planning – Understanding the data | preparations

- Reflection and insights from Marks kommun documents on (Sustainability, Child impact analysis, Integration plan) that helps in the development of "integration strategy".
- Missing elements and areas that could be expanded or added to address gaps and ensure a comprehensive approach to further strengthen the integration strategy.
- Actions to ensure empowerment and active participation of refugees, hosting community, municipal staff, NGOs, CSOs, companies.
- Co-creating this integration strategy with internal and external stakeholders.

Empowerment and active participation of all actors is cross-cutting point through all the integration strategy

To ensure empowerment and active participation of refugees, the hosting community, and municipal staff as a cross-cutting theme throughout the integration strategy, the following actions can be integrated into all phases of planning, implementation, and evaluation:

- 1. Co-Creation of Programs and Policies.**
- 2. Build Inclusive Governance Structures.**
- 3. Capacity Building and Training for All Stakeholders.**
- 4. Mainstreaming Participation Across All Areas.**
- 5. Monitoring and Evaluation Involvement.**
- 6. Transparency and Communication.**
- 7. Promote Social Cohesion and Joint Activities.**
- 8. Long-Term Sustainability.**

Co-create Mark integration strategy with internal and external stakeholders

Co-creating the integration strategy with both internal and external stakeholders is essential for ensuring the strategy is inclusive, responsive, and effective. The following steps outline how we engaged municipality departments, staff, as well as refugees, the host community, NGOs, CSOs, and private sector entities in the process:

- 1. Stakeholder Mapping and Engagement Plan.**
- 2. Internal Stakeholder Collaboration (Municipality Departments & Staff).**
- 3. External Stakeholder Involvement. Total of (35 interview, engagements and focus groups).**
- 4. Establish a Co-Creation Committee.**
- 5. Joint Design Participatory Processes for Co-Creation.**

Key Findings

- **Welcoming Environment:** New residents need to feel respected, safe, and truly welcome in their housing and community.
- **Education and Social Inclusion:** A strong, supportive school environment and supplementary language training are crucial for children and families, helping to build social networks and promote cultural exchange.
- **Employment and Economic Opportunities:** There is a need for tailored career guidance, job placement support, and entrepreneurial mentoring that recognize both formal and informal skills.
- **Active Participation:** Integration is seen as a two-way process where newcomers are not just supported but also contribute their unique experiences and strengths to enrich society.
- **Clear, Concrete Strategy:** The strategy must be understandable and actionable, focusing on step-by-step programs that involve collaboration between public authorities, NGOs, businesses, and the community.

Need for integration strategy that is not only about support but also about empowering newcomers to be active participants in building a more inclusive and cohesive community.



Integration Strategy In Action

Vision & Purpose of the Integration Strategy

- Vision:

A close-knit community with people at the center. All residents should feel a sense of belonging, security, and hope for the future.

- Purpose:

To build a sustainable, inclusive, and rights-based society. Strengthen Mark's goals: (Best Municipality for Children) & (Best Municipality for Businesses).

- Target Groups:

All newcomers to Mark—children, adults, families—regardless of reason for migration.

Inclusion of Children & Strategic Foundations

1- Children at the Center:

Based on the UNCRC UN Convention on Rights of a Child. Emphasis on mental health, school success, meaningful free time, and participation. Use of child impact analysis to guide interventions.

2- Challenges & Opportunities:

Housing segregation, economic barriers, access to services. Special focus on Migrant and refugee women's path to employment.

3- Foundations of the Strategy: Human rights, national & EU integration goals, Agenda 2030. Anchored in local experiences via interviews and consultations. And co-creation process.

Key Focus Areas & Actions

1. Participation & Community:

Local meeting places (schools, libraries). Language cafés, cultural events, and contact persons for newcomers.

2. Empowerment through work, education & language:

Early language support (e.g., in preschool & parent cafés). Pathways to work through practice, guidance, entrepreneurship.

3. Equal Access & Respectful Services:

Multilingual information, intercultural competence training. Prevent discrimination and promote equal treatment.

4. Collaboration & Governance:

Partnerships with civil society and businesses. Inclusive communication and measurable integration goals.

Conclusion

Inclusive integration strategy is a long-term commitment to building a society where *everyone*—regardless of background—has the opportunity to belong, participate, and thrive.

By focusing on **children and youth, equal access, community-building, and strong partnerships**, we are not only supporting individuals—we are investing in the future of the entire municipality.

Integration is not a task for one actor alone. It requires **shared responsibility, courage, and collaboration** across sectors.

With this strategy, we are taking a clear and concrete step toward a more inclusive, sustainable, and united Mark—*a place for all*.



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THANK YOU