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Integration of foreigners in Slovakia

The Integration policy of the Slovak Republic was approved by Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 45 of 29 January 2014 (see: Documents).

Integration is a dynamic two-way process that requires accommodation of foreigners, on one hand, and the creation of conditions for the integration of foreigners, on the other.

The Slovak Republic is inclined to **an integration model based on a mutual adaptation in the integration process**. Foreigners contribute to shape the common culture, and, at the same time, the majority society respects them and supports their diversity.

The Slovak Republic focuses on **the support of properly managed legal immigration of highly skilled third-country labour force** that will contribute to the overall competitiveness of the SR. That involves, in particular, the immigration of students, scientific and research workers, artists, entrepreneurs, and foreign Slovaks in various countries.

From the EU perspective, in the integration process a joint responsibility is borne by all the parties involved. It requires active participation of immigrants based on the respect for their rights and obligations. The integration measures must produce tools and arrangements that enable foreigners to:

- integrate in the labour market,
- manage language courses of the receiving country,
- have access to education,
- have access to heath care,
- have access to social services,
- have access to housing and recognition of cultural specificities,
- have a clear legal status recognised, participate in the civil and political life, or even potentially obtain citizenship of the Slovak Republic.

The Ministry of Interior of the SR is the guarantor of the migration policy in the SR.

The common integration policy towards foreigners is one of the actual and expected priorities for the authorities of the European Union.

The aim of this policy is to provide citizens of the Slovak Republic with information about the legal status of foreigners who are granted long-term residence status in Slovakia, in accordance with The Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the European Union.

As this is a cross cutting theme which relies on the involvement of a number of entities, the integration policy constitutes a systematic policy framework which aims to ensure the execution of measures, put in place to make the process of integration of foreigners more effective. The effective integration of foreigners will enable the society to use the potential of foreigners beneficially as well as to prevent potential radicalisation.

The integration policy has also a preventive role to play in society, as within its aims and measures preventive tools are being identified to prevent society from risks of being economically, socially and culturally divided, as well as to avert it from the formation of excluded and closed migrant communities while the legal order of the Slovak Republic, the European Union and international norms are being observed. The emphasis is put on raising awareness about the life of foreigners in Slovakia and about the means of protection against discrimination, racism and xenophobia. At the same time, the emphasis put on the regional and local level is also considered, as municipalities help the process of integration of foreigners and create social cohesion between various communities and the majority society.

The integration policy is based on the principles of equality, justice and respect for human integrity of every inhabitant of this country, while being an essential programming document in the field of integration of foreigners based on the human-rights principle. In terms of elaboration of targets and specific measurements, the integration policy is going to be detailed in Action Plans in order to take into account the actual needs of the target groups as identified by the relevant actors.

The preparation of the new Integration policy of the Slovak Republic has been supported by the National project: „Preparation of the new integration policy and its mainstreaming“, and executed by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family from November 2012 until April 2014.

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