



The Ministry of Education and Research

Strategy

# Integration through knowledge

The Government's integration strategy for 2019-2022



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# Foreword

One of the Government's main projects is to reinforce the integration effort. The aim is to increase immigrants' participation in working life and in society in general. Those who are going to start a new life in Norway must be a part of large and small communities in our society.

The most important goal of the integration strategy is that more immigrants should work, so that they are able to provide for themselves and their families. Work also brings people together and ensures their economic freedom and independence. Through their work efforts, immigrants must contribute to development and value creation, and an economically sustainable welfare society.

The Norwegian welfare society is built on trust, cohesion, minor disparities and opportunities for all. To protect this, we must make sure we have a community with room for diversity, and respect for the basic values and norms on which our society is built. We must prevent segregation and promote a community spirit. This is important for securing the sustainability of society. A restrictive and legally sound immigration policy is also necessary for successful integration.

The Government's integration strategy sets the course we need to take to reach our goal of higher labour participation among immigrants and participation in society in general. The strategy specifies the main steps and the most important measures.

We should be neither too optimistic nor too

negative about the integration situation.

Integration presents us with clear challenges, but much is also moving in the right direction. The main challenge is that the employment rate is too low, which also leads to exclusion and children living in poverty. An important explanation for this is that many people, refugees in particular, lack the skills that the Norwegian labor market demands.

At the same time, we see that education is a source of strong social mobility, especially among those born in Norway with immigrant parents. Many children and young people with an immigrant background are making an impressive social journey, and they are powerfully driven towards education. Therefore, a strong and clear investment in education, qualification and skills is a priority in our strategy. This will help many immigrants acquire the skills both they and society need, and enable them to find work and contribute to value creation and welfare.

The strategy also involves strengthening the effort to prevent segregation and exclusion. We will promote participation and togetherness. It is the small and close communities that play the greatest part in ensuring a good life. It is especially important for children and young people with an immigrant background to be able to participate in activities and on social arenas on equal terms as other children. Voluntary organisations, sports and cultural life are key areas where we will cooperate, to make everyday integration a success.



A good integration process and a well functioning society require a common understanding of Norwegian society and culture. The Government will also strengthen support for the basic values and norms on which the Norwegian society is built. Everyone living in Norway should be able to live a free life and pursue their own dreams without coercion or negative social control.

Integration is a two-way process, requiring the authorities to provide good opportunities, and individual immigrants to make their own contribution. To reinforce the integration effort demands input from many players in public services, in working life and in civil society. But, first and foremost, it requires an effort from individuals themselves. Immigrants come to our

country with different backgrounds, resources, challenges and opportunities. Some seek protection from war and conflict, others come to work or to be united with their spouse or family members.

We require everyone to make a real effort to learn Norwegian, understand Norwegian society, participate in the community and contribute. As a society, we will provide good education and qualification measures, and increase participation. Our goal is opportunities for all, regardless of background.

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