

FAQ

1. What is the Integration and Participation Act (IntTG)?

The Integration and Participation Act is a new law that aims to strengthen the participation of people with a history of migration in Hesse and promote social cohesion.

The main aim of the law is to improve integration and participation and to shape coexistence in diversity.

2. How long has the law been in force and how long is it valid?

The Hessian state parliament passed the Act to Improve Integration and Participation and to Shape Coexistence in Diversity, and thus also the Integration and Participation Act, on 21 March 2023. It came into force on 4 April 2023.

As a new law, the IntTG is initially valid for seven years, i.e. until 31 December 2030. The reason for the limited period of validity is that new laws must be evaluated in order to determine whether they are effective or whether changes need to be made.

3. What new regulations does the Act to Improve Integration and Participation and to Shape Coexistence in Diversity contain in addition to the central law (Integration and Participation Act)?

The following new regulations will be introduced in addition to the creation of an Integration and Participation Act:

- **Nursing and Geriatric Care Assistance Act:** Diversity-sensitive care was anchored in the training objectives of both laws.
- **Mental Health Assistance Act:** Cultural and social aspects should now also be taken into account when providing assistance and accommodation.
- **Act on the Enforcement of Measures:** The cultural background must now also be taken into account when drawing up the treatment and integration

plan, in addition to personality, age, stage of development and living conditions.

4. Why do we need an integration and participation law for Hesse?

Various levels of authority such as the federal government, the state and the municipalities are responsible for strengthening integration and participation. Many stakeholders such as civil society, politics, administration, but also business and science are involved in this dynamic, long-term and ongoing process. It is therefore a necessary step to establish common principles and objectives of integration and participation policy in a binding manner. The law provides a foundation and framework for Hesse's integration and participation policy.

With its historically grown identity as a cosmopolitan and diverse state of immigration in the heart of Europe, Hessen is home to many people with different national, ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds. This diversity is a great opportunity for our coexistence, our culture and economy as well as the development of our federal state. More than 2.2 million people with a migration background live in Hesse, and these make up 36% of our population. Among them are many Germans, foreigners and also people with a refugee background. The consequences of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, which violates international law - as well as conflicts in other parts of the world - are also being felt in Hesse.

While diversity in society is already a reality, this does not yet apply to equal opportunities and participation in all areas. The Hessian Integration Monitor shows that there is still a gap between the participation of people with and without a migration background in many areas of society such as the labour market or education. A number of studies show that, in addition to a person's migration background, their name and appearance for example can be decisive for their chances of participating in our society.

Hesse should remain a place worth living in for all Hessians, with all their similarities and differences. This is important for everyone in Hesse, because our society needs everyone living in Hesse in order to master the major social and economic challenges that lie ahead. We need their ideas, their creativity and their passion.

This is not the only reason why barriers to access and participation for people with a history of migration must be further reduced. The law therefore contains a ban on discrimination and a commitment to combating racism, anti-Semitism, sexism and all forms of group-based misanthropy and extremism.

5. Do other federal states also have a so-called integration law?

Yes, Hesse was the sixth federal state to pass a so-called integration law. Berlin, North Rhine-Westphalia, Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg and Schleswig-Holstein have already passed integration laws.

6. What are the aims of the Integration and Participation Act?

The objectives of the Act are set out in Section 1 of the Act. With this law, the state government wants to:

1. promote cohesion in society as a whole,
2. improve equal opportunities for people with a history of migration,
3. promote a common understanding of living together in a migration society in which the dignity of every human being is paramount,
4. further open up the state administration to the diversity of its population and continue to support local authorities and civil society organisations in their process of opening up,
5. secure and further develop structures which promote integration and participation at state and municipal level.

7. What does integration mean in terms of the Integration and Participation Act?

The concept of integration has undergone considerable evolution in recent decades. That is why the law defines how we in Hesse understand integration today and what successful integration depends on:

Integration is a process for society as a whole, and its success depends on everyone's co-operation. It requires mutual respect between all people from different backgrounds and openness towards one another. An integrated society enables equal opportunities for all population groups and does not discriminate.

8. Who is the Integration and Participation Act aimed at?

The law is aimed at all Hessians, the state of Hesse and the Hessian state administration. The law contains specific voluntary commitments, particularly with regard to the intercultural openness of the administration, and aims to serve as a model for other social actors.

People with a history of migration and the improvement of their equal opportunities are at the centre of many regulations.

9. What are the main contents and focal points of the law?

- The **objectives and principles** of integration and participation policy are defined in a general sense, but are also laid down for various policy areas such as education, language, the labour market and health.
- The law establishes a common understanding of integration in Hesse, which forms the basis for coexistence in diversity and for all integration policy measures.
- The introduction of the **term "people with a history of migration"** is intended to increase the visibility and representation of people affected by racism (see FAQ 10 for details).
- The law contains **regulations on shaping coexistence in diversity and preserving social cohesion:**

These regulations aim to reduce the obstacles to the participation of people with a history of migration in Hesse. The law specifically includes a requirement for an impact assessment, for example. This means that the effects of measures on people with and without a history of migration are taken into account by the state administration when drafting laws and regulations and in its administrative actions. If there are different effects, the state administration will examine whether measures can be taken to promote equal opportunities for people with a history of migration. It also includes a provision for more co-determination and representation in committees, a ban on discrimination and a commitment to diversity and to combating racism, anti-Semitism and all forms of group-based enmity.

- **Another core element of the law are measures to improve equal opportunities:**

- The law contains specific measures for further intercultural liberalisation of the state administration (see question 12 for details)
- Successful integration and participation structures such as the Integration Conference (<https://integrationskompass.hessen.de/integration/integrationsgremien/integrationskonferenz>), the WIR diversity centres (<https://integrationskompass.hessen.de/foerderprogramm/wir-vielfaltszentren>), support for municipal and non-profit organisations, integration contracts (<https://integrationskompass.hessen.de/integration/integrationsvertraege>) and dialogue with churches, religious and ideological communities (<https://integrationskompass.hessen.de/integration/integrationsgremien/dialog-forum-islam-hessen>) have been enshrined in law and thus secured for the future.

- **Monitoring, reporting**

The law contains regulations on monitoring (status of integration, migration and participation of people with a history of migration in Hesse) as well as reporting to the state parliament on the objectives in accordance with Section 9 (intercultural liberalisation of the administration) and the experience gained with the new Integration and Participation Act.

10. Who does the target group "people with a history of migration" include? What was the aim of the new introduction?

The IntTG introduced the term "**people with a history of migration**". This term covers both people with a migration background and those who are racially discriminated against (regardless of whether they have a migration background). This affects Black people, for example, as well as Sinti and Roma people. The new introduction of this term is intended to ensure that racially discriminated people are also regularly considered and taken into account in future considerations and discussions on participation and inclusion. These people also experience obstacles to participation.

11. Why is the target group of people with a migration background being retained?

Some provisions of the law only apply to people with a migration background. This is the case if the regulation contains a specific target relating to statistical data or variables. Data on people with a migration background, for example relating to the proportion in the overall population in Hesse, has been collected for many years now. Specific targets can therefore be set here. To date, there is no comparable statistical basis for the group "people who are racially discriminated against". However, the IntTG stipulates that the state government must work towards improving the database relating to this group of people.

12. Which goals are being pursued with intercultural or diversity-orientated liberalisation of the state administration and what specific instruments are available for this?

The intercultural or diversity-oriented liberalisation of the administration aims to create an organisational and administrative culture which takes account of the diversity of the population, values it, counteracts discrimination and exclusion among employees and against everyone, and combats institutional racism.

The following measures are enshrined in law to achieve this goal:

- The proportion of people with a history of migration in employment is to be further increased (target: proportion of people with a migrant background in the state administration which corresponds to their proportion of the total labour force in Hesse; people who are racially discriminated against should also be represented).
- The intercultural competence of state employees is to be further increased.
- The state administration's job advertisements should make it clear that applications are welcome from people regardless of racist attributions, ethnic origin, gender and gender identity, religion and ideology, disability, age or sexual identity.
- The state administration regularly reviews its existing structures and routines and develops them further where necessary to ensure that the impact on people with and without a history of migration is taken into account in all administrative actions.
- The state government reports to the state parliament on the effectiveness and implementation of the goals and measures of intercultural openness every five years.