

The integration programme

A full integration programme consists of the following sections:

- Dutch language lessons (NT2);
- information about the Netherlands (Social Orientation - MO)
- information on possibilities for working in the Netherlands (Vocation Orientation - BO)
- a final test
- social coaching for further acquaintance with the community, neighbourhood and various facilities. For this the municipality employs a separate agency, usually VluchtelingenWerk (Refugee Work).
- referral for further study or work.

During the entire integration programme you are helped by a programme assistant. This person's job is to keep track of your progress on behalf of the municipality. If you have any questions, ask the programme assistant.

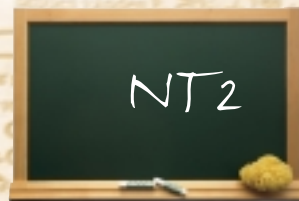
You are required to participate in the entire programme that has been drawn up for you. You are expected to comply with the agreements you made with your programme assistant.

Taking lessons

When the written decision ('decree') states that you must take lessons, you need to enrol at a school (educational institution). The decision will specify which school you are to attend for the lessons of your integration programme. You are excused from attending only when you have a good reason (such as illness). In that case you are expected to inform the school and your programme counsellor. Ask at your school about the rules for cancelling a class.

Test

Within a year of your registration at the school you will be given two tests of your knowledge of Dutch (NT2) and the Netherlands (MO). These tests are no exams you pass or fail, but are intended to measure the level you have attained. They serve to determine whether you have achieved the final target and what the follow-up programme should involve.



Further study or work?

On the basis of this test the municipality, together with the school and Centre for Work and Income (CWI) determines your options after you have completed the integration programme, such as further education, looking for work or doing social or care-providing work. These recommendations will be discussed with you. As soon as the choice has been made for follow-up activities, it is the responsibility of the municipality to place you accordingly. The aim is placement in a follow-up activity no later than six months after the test.

End of integration obligations

After completion of the integration programme, you receive a certificate from the municipality stating which integration programme you participated in and the result. This ends your integration obligations.

Summary of rights and obligations of newcomers

Your rights

As newcomer you have a right to:

- a good quality integration programme
- assistance when participating in the integration programme
- support in placement in a follow-up programme after completion of the integration programme
- an integration certificate after completion of the integration programme
- support for placement in the integration programme

Your obligations

As newcomer you are obliged to:

- apply for the integration inquiry
- request exemption if you (temporarily) cannot participate in the integration inquiry
- participate in the integration inquiry if you are called to do so
- enrol in an educational institution
- attend the lessons in Dutch, MO and BO
- take the tests
- comply with the follow-up recommendations
- cooperate with the social worker
- cooperate with the programme assistant

Questions?

If you have any questions about this information or want advice, do not hesitate to contact the Newcomers Office. The municipality has the address of this organization.

Colofon

uitgave

Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties
Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschappen
Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport
Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid

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A new life in the Netherlands

Integration procedure
for newcomers
2001

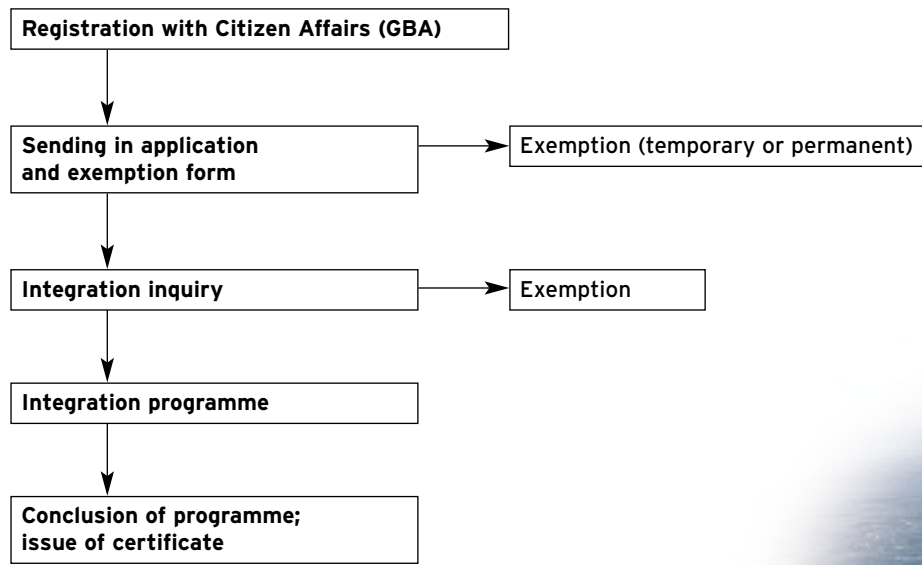
Integration

To help you as newcomer with Dutch citizenship build up a new life in the Netherlands as effectively as possible, the government has drawn up for newcomers to this country an integration plan. This is laid down in the Wet inburgering nieuwkomers (WIN - Newcomer Integration Act) which went into force 30 September 1998. It is the municipality which decides whether you need to participate in this integration programme. It does so by instituting an integration inquiry. Under the law, every newcomer is obliged to apply for this inquiry. This folder tells you whether or not you belong to this group. It also tells you where to apply and which other obligations may concern you. Failing to comply may mean financial disadvantages for you through imposition of a fine.



Wet
inburgering
nieuwkomers

Integration process in brief



Why integration?

Building up a life in the Netherlands demands an adequate command of the Dutch language and a knowledge of Dutch society. Nearly every form of education or job requires this knowledge. It is also important in your daily routine. It may be that, in spite of your Dutch language, society and the job market are not sufficient for building up a good livelihood in the Netherlands.

In an integration programme you receive lessons in Dutch. You also learn things about Dutch society and the job market. In the integration programme a combination is often used of NT2 and work and/or NT2 and vocational training. Participation in such a programme helps you find your way in society more easily.

How do you apply for the integration inquiry?

You are **obliged to report** for an integration inquiry if you come as a foreigner or Dutch national for the first time to live in the Netherlands for an extended period and are above the age of 16. A separate folder is available for foreigners.

The integration programme therefore applies even if you are a Dutch national but have come to live in the Netherlands for the first time. You are expected to register no later than five days after arrival with the basic administration of the municipality (GBA). This is usually the citizen affairs department at your town hall. There you will find a registration-exemption form for an integration inquiry.

You need not apply if you come from a country of the European Union (EU) or European Economic Area (EER).

If you are (temporarily) unable to apply for an integration inquiry - because of illness for instance - you can apply for exemption. The municipality determines whether you are eligible for exemption. If this is the case, temporary or permanent exemption is granted. After expiry of temporary exemption you are required to apply again for the integration inquiry.

You are also eligible for exemption from the requirement to report if you

- are registered here for a temporary purpose such as to study or for medical treatment;
- will be staying in the Netherlands for a longer period but have a satisfactory command of Dutch.

You can demonstrate that you have a satisfactory command of Dutch by submitting a MAVO (lower general secondary education), HAVO (school of higher general secondary education), VWO (pre-university education) diploma or a certificate of unconditional promotion from class 3 to class 4 of HAVO or VWO, if you went to school in the Dutch Antilles or Aruba. You are also expected to show that you received a passing mark for Dutch (by submitting a school report, for example). You can also apply for exemption to report by submitting a certificate issued for Dutch as a foreign language by the Nederlandse Taalunie (Netherlands Language Association), for a basic or comprehensive level.

The municipality will determine whether the diploma, certificate or declaration which you sent in appears on its list. This list is compiled each year by the Dutch government in consultation with the Dutch Antilles and Aruba. If this is the case, you will be exempted from reporting for an integration inquiry. You are therefore not required to do anything further.

If you think you can demonstrate a satisfactory command of Dutch with other diplomas, certificates or declarations, the municipality will determine whether the level concerned equals the level of the state exam NT2, level 1. If necessary the municipality can order a qualified institute to conduct a diploma evaluation.

You report or apply for exemption by filling in the registration-exemption form. You are required to complete this form and return it to the municipality no later than **six weeks after you registered with the GBA**.

The information on the application and exemption form explains how to fill it in and where you need to send it. If you have not received a form, ask for one at the municipality. Should the municipality fail to grant you (temporary) exemption, you will be called for an integration inquiry.

What does the integration inquiry involve?

The integration inquiry determines whether or not you require an integration programme. After you apply, you will be called for an interview to determine whether you have an adequate command of Dutch and are familiar with Dutch society. Your knowledge of language and study proficiency will be tested. During the inquiry your education, diplomas and any work experience are also considered. The results of the integration inquiry are discussed with you at a concluding interview. If the inquiry indicates that you should participate in the integration programme, the contents and final target of this programme will be discussed with you. The municipality can determine the programme itself.

It is important that the programme as much as possible matches your situation, in the case for example, that you are already working or looking for a job. The new law requires the municipality to ensure that all newcomers can participate in a good quality integration programme.

You are required to appear at the interviews for the integration programme and to give information about your educational and working background. If you wish, an interpreter can be present at the interview.

The decision: integration programme or (partial) exemption

After the integration inquiry, the municipality issues the written decision ('decree') on whether you need to participate in an integration programme, along with information on the content and desired result of this programme. This decision should be accompanied by a written explanation. It also tells you what you can do when you fail to agree with the programme that has been drawn up for you.

If the integration inquiry indicates that you already know enough about certain sections, they will be left out of the integration programme. The decision will therefore indicate that you are exempt from these sections. In certain cases the exemption will apply to the entire integration programme.