

# Urgent appeal to ensure needs-based integration programmes for refugees with disabilities



## NOW! Nicht Ohne das Wir

### About us

„NOW! Not without the We“ is the self-advocacy organisation of refugees with disabilities. We are refugees ourselves and we have a disability. Since our arrival in Germany we have been facing barriers. But in our group we find solidarity and understanding. We mutually strengthen each other and work together for an inclusive society.

We ensure that refugees with disabilities and their families can live better lives in Germany.



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**The planned budget cuts to integration and language courses in the context of the budget debates in the Bundestag are of great concern to us. These budget cuts would further exacerbate the already difficult situation of refugees with disabilities and massively impair their chances of integration.**

Our members experience systemic barriers on a daily basis, in particular the painful exclusion from language courses. Mahmoud\*, who fled to Germany in 2015, reports: 'I was rejected when I asked for a German test in Braille.' Amira\*, who arrived in Berlin in 2023, feels 'trapped in German Braille without a language course.' Mariam\*, who has been looking for a language course for her son with Down syndrome for years, asks desperately: 'After 9 years in Germany, he is over 30, and it is becoming increasingly difficult for him to learn a new language. What will become of him when I am no longer around?'

### Insufficient and missing offers

Refugees with sensory impairments are often excluded from regular integration courses and referred to rare or non-existent specialised courses, although they and people with physical disabilities could learn successfully in regular schools if appropriate inclusion measures were taken. Access to regular courses would not only shorten waiting times, but also promote social inclusion. Particularly worrying is that there are no suitable courses for some people with disabilities.

Vocational language courses for people with disabilities under Section 45a of the Residence Act are lacking, as are courses for people with cognitive impairments, such as Down syndrome, who require tailored courses with instruction from specially trained professionals. Without such courses, they remain excluded from social life. The planned budget cuts threaten to further reduce the availability of needs-based language courses. The integration of refugees with disabilities is a matter of justice and a responsibility for society as a whole. Their needs and rights can no longer be ignored.

### Unsere Forderungen:

1. **No cuts in integration courses:** The financial resources for language and integration courses must be maintained and inclusive offers expanded.
2. **Promoting inclusion in language schools:** Schools must offer accessible materials and support such as digital infrastructure, braille and sign language interpretation across the board. This also includes flexible learning formats such as online courses to shorten waiting times. In addition, state support is needed, including sufficient financial support and guidelines for inclusive policies.
3. **Development of needs-based offers for people with cognitive impairments:** Tailor-made language courses for people with cognitive impairments must be developed and financed.

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This appeal is supported by:

