

Integration Report



CONCLUSIONS OF THE
EXPERT COUNCIL FOR INTEGRATION
2012

Foreword by the State Secretary for Integration

As the State Secretary for Integration, it gives me great pleasure to present the second Integration Report. The structure of last year's Report proved successful – we will therefore once again detail the Austrian immigration scenario in three volumes. These volumes focus in particular on conclusions, recommendations and statistics, but they also highlight the many actions taken.

In Volume 1, the Expert Council for Integration presents its conclusions on the implementation of the “20-Point Programme” in 2011. A large part of the 20 actions, distributed over the seven Fields of Action as defined in the National Action Plan for Integration (NAP.I), is now in the process of implementation and some actions have already been completed. This demonstrates that the Expert Council has proven itself as an independent body and is widely accepted as a scientific adjunct to strategic integration policy by all players in the field of integration politics. This is borne out not least by the fact that many players in the integration arena have seized upon and implemented numerous Expert Council proposals. Of pivotal significance in this respect is the independence of this panel of 15, chaired by Univ.-Prof. Dr. Heinz Fassmann. Especially the autonomy of the Expert Council legitimises its proposals, thereby assuring continuity of its work .

When the Expert Council first convened in June 2010, its first challenge was to concretise individual NAP.I principles and set priorities. The outcome of this reflection process was documented in the “20-Point Programme”. The Expert Council now defines its task not only as that of critically following the implementation of its proposals for action, but also to offer its expertise in this present phase. Recommendations and plans for future action are for this reason suggested, in addition to a detailed description of the progress of implementation. It is important to us that the Expert Council, as a guarantor of quality, continues to support the Austrian programme of integration. Allow us therefore to express our sincere gratitude in this respect.

In addition to the Expert Council, the Statistical Yearbook “Migration & Integration 2012” (Volume 2 of the 2012 Integration Report) also contributes to the optimisation of Austrian integration policy. Based on 25 indicators of integration, the progress of integration-political actions may be assessed this year again. Especially this evaluation and the long-term monitoring of core areas such as the job market and education allow the formulation of a target group oriented concept for action, including counter action as required.



Foto © BMI

Sebastian Kurz
State Secretary for Integration

Apart from the Expert Council as a scientific integration panel and the Statistical Yearbook as a proven instrument for evaluation, the Advisory Committee on Integration has also proven its worth as a platform for networking and exchange. Volume 3 once again summarises actions taken by the members of the Advisory Committee on Integration. The role of the Advisory Committee on Integration as a forum for exchange of opinion on integration-related matters, thanks to its inclusion under § 18 of the Settlement and Residence Act (NAG), is secure in the long run, strengthening its role as a committee for competence-spanning cooperation. Considering the numerous actions implemented by the Federation, the federal states, social partners and civil society organisations, this networking function of the Advisory Committee on Integration remains a central element. Since many players therefore have integration-political competency, the knowledge gained from experiences and the lessons drawn from projects and initiatives contribute significant added value to future tasks.

As State Secretary for Integration, I shall continue my focus on furtherance of these processes into the future. Access to the topic of integration was positively impacted and the significance of integration to society was emphasised with the creation of the State Secretariat in April 2011. The contribution made to Austrian society by people with a migrant background became increasingly evident through the “Integration through performance” motto. This prioritisation of the merit principle is no one-way street, however. In addition to the merit requirement, the framework conditions facilitating and subsequently also acknowledging performance were also improved. Any foreign national can, for instance, now join a voluntary fire brigade in Austria, after discriminatory statutory regulations were abolished in Carinthia and Styria. First steps were also taken to streamline the recognition of foreign qualifications and certificates.

Apart from integration into the job market, Austria also faces major integration-political tasks in the education sector. I am elated therefore that up to 30 million Euro could be secured until 2014 for early promotion of languages in kindergartens, even in difficult economic times. The earliest possible promotion of learning the German language is the essential basis for further academic achievement and therefore remains a central pillar of the Austrian integration policy.

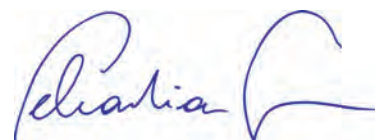
The host society was also, in particular, considered in the integration measures, in recognition of the reciprocity of the integration process. Under the “Zusammen:Österreich” [“Together:Austria”] project, more than 100 persons with a migrant background could be identified as examples for successful participation in Austrian society. Not only VIPs from the sports and cultural sector were selected here, but also people “from next door” – someone working in a voluntary capacity or pursuing a successful career. The added value of successful integration was in this way demonstrated to the majority – a fact often not recognised in the past.

Integration naturally presupposes a strategic course of action – right from the start. People moving to Austria were for decades left to their own devices initially. The “Integration von Anfang an” [“Integration from the beginning”] convention in February 2012 created awareness of this situation for the first time – since Austria cannot afford to ignore the

potential of migrants. Steps towards qualification-related job market integration must therefore be taken as early as possible. Not only should immigrants be exposed to the values and principles of the Austrian Republic in future, they should also be supported in their quest for a fulfilling life in Austria.

We have succeeded in changing the perception of integration in the past twelve months. Different topics such as migration, asylum and integration were often confused in the past, with the result that discussion turned emotional. This undifferentiated perception could be countered by rendering public dialogue more objective.

In closing, I would like to thank all the participating players, especially the members of the Expert Council and the Advisory Committee on Integration for their successful cooperation. I hope that the 2012 Integration Report will give many interested readers a better understanding of the latest developments in Austria's integration policy.



Sebastian Kurz
State Secretary for Integration

Vienna, July 2012

Implementation of the 20-Point Programme

**Actions in Integration Policy
Conclusions and Potentials**

Expert Council for Integration

Vienna, July 2012

Contents

Page	8	1. Introduction by the Chairman of the Expert Council
Page	10	2. Basic notes on the report and terms used
Page	10	2.1 Institutional reorganisation in integration politics
Page	10	2.1.1 State Secretariat for Integration
Page	11	2.1.2 Advisory Committee on Integration
Page	11	2.1.3 Expert Council
Page	12	2.2 The Expert Council's concept of integration
Page	12	2.2.1 Integration by participation
Page	13	2.2.2 Shared integration responsibility
Page	13	2.2.3 Multi-layered integration policy
Page	14	2.3 On the structure of the report
Page	15	3. Priority measures
Page	15	3.1 NAP.I Field of Action: Language and Education
Page	15	3.1.1 Assessing the implementation status in the Field of Action Language and Education
Page	16	3.1.2 German prior to Immigration
Page	18	3.1.3 German for Residents
Page	19	3.1.4 Intensifying participation in the Education system
Page	22	3.1.5 Prospects
Page	23	3.2 NAP.I Field of Action: Work and Employment
Page	23	3.2.1 Assessing the implementation status in the Field of Action Work and Employment
Page	25	3.2.2 Recognition / Validation of Qualifications
Page	27	3.2.3 Ensuring completion of formal schooling through post- qualification
Page	27	3.2.4 Promoting employment of women migrants
Page	29	3.2.5 Prospects

Page	30	3.3 NAP.I Field of Action: Rule of Law and Values
Page	30	3.3.1 Assessing the implementation status in the Field of Action Rule of Law and Values
Page	31	3.3.2 Creation of a Red-White-Red Primer
Page	32	3.3.3 Increase of interest in the attainment of citizenship
Page	33	3.3.4 Prospects
Page	34	3.4 NAP.I Field of Action: Health and Social Issues
Page	34	3.4.1 Assessing the implementation status in the Field of Action Health and Social Issues
Page	35	3.4.2 Promotion of health awareness under health-challenged groups
Page	37	3.4.3 Promotion of diversity awareness in the Health and Care systems
Page	40	3.4.4 Prospects
Page	40	3.5 NAP.I Field of Action: Intercultural Dialogue
Page	40	3.5.1 Assessing the implementation status in the Field of Action Intercultural Dialogue
Page	41	3.5.2 Dialogue Forum Islam
Page	42	3.5.3 Examples of successful life of migrants in Austria (role models)
Page	43	3.5.4 Glossary and media commitment
Page	43	3.5.5 Media award
Page	44	3.5.6 Promotion of young journalists
Page	44	3.5.7 Prospects
Page	45	3.6 NAP.I Field of Action: Sport and Leisure
Page	45	3.6.1 Assessing the implementation status in the Field of Action Sport and Leisure
Page	46	3.6.2 Recreation at school
Page	47	3.6.3 Integration promotion approach in Federal Sport Funding
Page	50	3.6.4 Prospects

Page	51	3.7 NAP.I Field of Action: Living and the regional dimension of Integration
Page	51	3.7.1 Assessing the implementation status in the Field of Action Living and the regional dimension of Integration
Page	52	3.7.2 Improving the allocation/settlement management in not-for-profit and community housing
Page	52	3.7.3 Integration promoting property management
Page	54	3.7.4 Promoting integration skills on a municipal level
Page	55	3.7.5 Prospects
Page	57	4. Conclusion and prospects
Page	57	4.1 Conclusion: Remarkable projects and actions
Page	59	4.2 Prospects: From projects to integration policy all in one
Page	60	4.2.1 Integration from the beginning
Page	60	4.2.2 From Project to Standard Structure
Page	61	4.2.3 Learning from one another in a multi-level system

1. Introduction by the Chairman of the Expert Council

2011 was a good year for Austrian migration and integration policy. The 20-Point Programme of the Expert Council was published in July 2011 and tackled step by step, with first successes of implementation achieved in core areas already. Sebastian Kurz was subsequently appointed State Secretary for Integration in the Federal Ministry of the Interior in 2011, initiating many activities and increasing his profile and popularity among the public as the politician responsible for integration issues. Following many years of general political abstinence on Federal level, the concerns of people with and without a migrant background and their prosperous coexistence became increasingly prominent. Aiding this was the creation or development of

additional policy instruments and institutional structures. By 2012, the integration process had been subjected to regular monitoring for the third time already; the Advisory Committee on Integration, constituted by parliament and representing all the relevant integration-political institutions, serves as a suitable platform for exchange of ideas; the Red-White-Red Card was also subsequently introduced, representing a paradigm shift in immigration control. The Federal Ministry of the Interior has furthermore significantly expanded its staff competencies in terms of integration issues in Austria.

Integration policy is well on track, a fact which is also acknowledged by the population. The third opinion survey of the resident Austrian population, carried out in 2012 with the aim of gauging the quality of coexistence of people with and without a migrant background, again confirms a change in trend of public opinion (see Indicator 25, Statistical Yearbook "Migration & Integration 2012"). Whilst around 69% of the respondents opined that "the integration of migrants ... was going badly or very badly", this figure steadily declined to about 56% by 2012. And, vice versa, the percentage of those rating "integration as going well or very well" increased from 31% to 43%. The percentage of those interviewed stating that "coexistence has improved in recent years" almost doubled from 12% (2010) to 23% (2012).

Whilst a lot has been achieved, a great deal still remains to be done. Integration processes must be supported on an ongoing basis, since new immigration demands integration-political actions to be taken. The Expert Council extends its thanks to the many colleagues who participated in the work within the framework of other expert groups, to the committed and competent co-workers in the Integration Department of the Federal Ministry of the Interior for supporting and assisting the Expert Council in its work and to the political



Foto © Universität Wien

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Heinz Fassmann
Chairman of the Expert
Council for Integration

establishment as such, for acting on our recommendations. The Expert Council shall continue to partner the integration policy in Austria – in a critical, constructive and benevolent way.

On behalf of the Expert Council

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Heinz Fassmann". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Heinz Fassmann

Vienna, July 2012

2. Basic notes on the report and terms used

2.1 Institutional reorganisation in integration politics

Integration-related political governance was restructured on Federal level during the reporting period (2011/2012). The institution of the State Secretariat for Integration certainly was the most noteworthy event. But the Advisory Committee on Integration also took up its work under the Settlement and Residence Act. The State Secretariat, Advisory Committee on Integration and Expert Council are independently operating bodies with different methods of working and different functions and objectives. Jointly, however, they contribute to an improved awareness and quality of political integration actions in Austria.

2.1.1 State Secretariat for Integration

The creation of a separate State Secretariat for Integration in the Federal Ministry of the Interior constitutes an important and also necessary step in integration politics. The State Secretariat has a far more potent political function than other institutions in this field. Not only is basic and strategically oriented decision-making significant in this respect, but also the representation of this new and dynamic political field and the realisation of concrete measures in the media. The State Secretariat quickly profiled itself as the point of contact and discourse in matters of integration politics on a Federal level. The State Secretary gave Austria's integration policy a political face. The Expert Council gives credit to the State Secretary Sebastian Kurz, appointed in April 2011, for his achievements to date and shall continue to support him with its expertise in the field.

With the creation of a State Secretariat for Integration in the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Austria is following a European trend. Several European countries (Sweden, Luxembourg, Great Britain, Spain and Belgium) have appointed additional ministers or state secretaries in highly competent ministries (mainly Justice, Labour, Economy and Interior); only two countries (France and Denmark) created separate Ministries of Integration, although these have in the meantime been disbanded again. Germany is an exception with its model of a minister of state in the Federal Chancellery and a Federal Government representative for Migration, Refugees and Integration and also an independent Federal Ministry of the Interior with executive powers in these sectors. The appointment of State Secretaries or additional Ministers for Integration in highly competent ministries has the advantage that a new political field also gets a representative, yet integration into a ministry prevents political marginalisation. A political contact person such as the Austrian State Secretary, operating on a national level, certainly makes sense.

2.1.2 Advisory Committee on Integration

In addition to the creation of the Expert Council, the institutional reorganisation of integration-political work also includes constitution of an Advisory Committee on Integration. The Advisory Committee on Integration has the particular responsibility of promoting cross-discipline networking, coordination, conformity and knowledge transfer among all active players on Federal, State and community level, including consultation on the findings of the Expert Council. The Advisory Committee on Integration therefore represents an important clearing and mediation body which is an essential element dealing with politically cross-sectoral issues such as integration policy.

The Managing Director of the Austrian Integration Fund chairs the Advisory Committee on Integration. The Advisory Committee on Integration meets twice a year at least. The members of the Advisory Committee on Integration represent the Federal Chancellery, the Federal Ministries of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, European and International Affairs, Finance, Women and the Civil Service, Health, Justice, Defence and Sports, Education, Arts and Culture, Economy, Family and Youth, Science and Research and also the Federal Ministry of the Interior. All the Federal States delegated their representatives, as did the Gemeindebund [Community Association], the Städtebund [Association of Towns and Municipalities], the Chamber of Labour, the Chamber of Agriculture, the Trade Union Federation and the Federation of Industries as well as major NGOs (Caritas, Diakonie, Hilfswerk [Relief organisation], Red Cross and Volkshilfe [Social service]). The Integration Advisory Committee is also legally enshrined in § 18 of the Settlement and Residence Act.

2.1.3 Expert Council

The Expert Council was instituted at the Federal Ministry of the Interior in 2010 already in order to objectify and more constructively organise ideologically overloaded discussions on the integration of persons with and without a migrant background in Austria. As such, the Expert Council was the first institution created within the framework of institutional reorganisation. Its primary mandate remains clear: To promote and support the development of a new political sector through the work of experts increasingly drawn from scientific or practical fields to contribute their various perspectives and observations. The development of policy should not be restricted to party secretariats, targeted lobbying or recommendations by individual expert opinion, but guided by a permanent, technically qualified committee, not beholden to directives or parties. This fairly uncommon new form of quality-oriented policy development has hitherto proven its worth. Two experts in the Expert Council are responsible for each of the total of seven Fields of Action defined in the National Action Plan for Integration (NAP.I). The members of the Expert Council were selected by the Federal Ministry of the Interior in coordination with the Chairman of the Expert Council, Univ.-Prof. Dr. Heinz Fassmann, appointment in turn by the Minister of the Interior. Both scientific expertise and practical experience were considered paramount in the appointments. Every effort was made to recruit prominent persons in the field of integration research and in practical integration to the Expert Council. The following members are

responsible for the individual Fields of Action:

- Language and Education: Prof. MMag. Dr. Ilan Knapp and o. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Ruth Wodak
- Work and Employment: Univ.-Prof. Dr. Gudrun Biffl and Dr. Thomas Oliva
- Rule of law and values: ao.Univ.-Prof. DDr. Christian Stadler and Univ.-Prof. Dr. Andreas Janko
- Health and Social Issues: Prof. Dr. Rainer Münz and Dr. Arno Melitopoulos
- Intercultural Dialogue: Dr. Hans Winkler and HR Prof. Dr. Günther Kienast
- Sport and Leisure: Mag. Rainer Rößlhuber and Prof. Mag. Peter Zellmann
- Living and the regional dimension of integration: Prof. Dr. Klaus Lugger and Dipl.-Soz. wiss. Kenan Güngör.

The Expert Council started its work by studying the measures defined in the National Action Plan for Integration. The criteria in this respect comprised feasibility, socio-political priority and anticipated impacts on the necessary process of social integration. The more than 60 originally recommended NAP.I measures were gradually consolidated, reorganised and the content defined in detail. A programme of work was submitted after about 6 months (early in 2011) defining, in more detail than NAP.I, significant key issues and measures considered essential for successful policies for integration. After about 6 months, following intensive Expert Council discussions also involving persons from external expert groups and after prior submission of general focal points identified by the Advisory Committee on Integration, the 20-Point Programme was presented to the public and the State Secretary in the form of political guidelines in July. The following sections deal with the implementation of these guidelines.

2.2 The Expert Council's concept of integration

A common understanding of the term "Integration" by the members of the Expert Council is paramount to its functionality. It would not otherwise be in a position to fulfil its task of developing and assessing integration-political measures. Unless the objectives are mutually agreed upon, the path leading to these will inevitably be inconsistent.

2.2.1. Integration by participation

The Expert Council defines integration as the empirically measurable, specifically to be supported, preferably equal opportunity participation in the central spheres of society, whereby such spheres include pre-school institutions, school education, job training, gainful activity and living space, all forms of recreational activity and participation in political life and various systems for protection and providence in a welfare state governed by rule of law. The Expert Council in this respect follows the concepts as defined by the Council of Experts for Migration and Integration of German foundations.

The Expert Council does not thereby position itself on a conceptual scale between integration as assimilation on the one hand and integration as a patchwork of different

population groups, each with their own cultural and value system, on the other. The Expert Council in its conceptualisation thereby rejects a vaguely defined and ideologically burdened cultural concept and also does not subscribe to a concept whereby a specific integration suits a specific society. A static and essentialist cultural concept would not live up to the reality of a pluralistic and changing immigrant society. There is neither a perfectly assimilated society, nor a mutually alienated patchwork of different social groups at the end of the path. Persons with a migrant background, who have long been structurally integrated, will shape society, yet will also increase its plurality due to their differing expectations, demands and needs. Both sides of an immigration society must develop a competency to accept and to integrate, but they must also develop something like a plurality competency since, when viewed over time, they will simultaneously become more alike, yet more varied.

2.2.2. Shared integration responsibility

Successful integration requires the commitment of the immigrants as well as the existing population. Both sides of the immigration society function within a politically defined integration-political framework which may promote or block processes. The required efforts of adjustment are not symmetrically distributed since the logic of numbers dictates that the immigration population faces greater challenges than the host society. This should be made clear, to avoid illusions of misunderstanding. The host society should, however, also realise: Taking a seat requires being offered one in the first place. The integration process will fail without a mutual willingness to open up and without natural mutual acceptance of the alleged “others”. Successful integration certainly requires economic self-sufficiency of the immigrant population, trust in the host society and its institutions, respect and compliance with the Austrian and European legal order and value systems and the rule of law based on these, as well as relative content with life in an immigration society.

2.2.3. Multi-layered integration policy

Shared integration responsibilities predominate in the integration-political sphere as well. If there is no integration, one also cannot speak of the integration policy. There are rather different legally and politically defined responsibilities for integration-related measures on the Federal, State and communal levels. Political and administrative players on these three levels each pursue their own, often highly diverse integration-political agendas. This may at best create a laboratory-like situation where players on State and communal level test successful concepts and measures. At worst, however, we may have coexistence and sometimes also conflict of the integration-political measures, preventing a uniform integration policy¹. There was certainly an improvement in this area in 2011 due to changes in the structure of governance.

1) See Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration (SVR), Integration in the Federal system: Federation, States and the role of communities, Annual expert opinion 2012 with integration barometer. Berlin 2012.

2.3 On the structure of the report

This report presents summaries and conclusions: Which measures proposed under the 20-Point Programme have been realised through specific actions or projects and which measures are still waiting for implementation? This summarising ex-post analysis lies at the core of the report and is dealt with in Chapter 3. The following explanation is required in this respect: In the formulation of its 20-Point Programme, the Expert Council already pointed out that the measures should not be interpreted as a detailed blueprint or instruction set, despite the efforts at being precise. The summarising ex-post analysis therefore also elaborates a little, including actions and projects not mentioned in the 20-Point Programme, but useful to the implementation of specific measures. The report represents a summary and conclusions of the 20-Point Programme; it does not purport to document the performance of the State Secretary. The Expert Council also welcomes projects implemented by other institutions and which meet 20-Point Programme objectives. The summary of the realised projects and actions is supplemented by an evaluation and future prospects. Each person is responsible in this respect for his personal résumé on the achievement of his objectives and pending requirements for action. The summarising and concluding chapter gives an overview of achievements and tasks not yet completed.

3. Priority measures

3.1 NAP.I Field of Action: Language and Education

3.1.1 Assessing the implementation status in the Field of Action Language and Education

Three priority measures, each one addressing different target groups, were defined by the Field of Action Language and Education within the framework of the 20-Point Programme:

- *German prior to immigration* for all persons intending to emigrate to Austria,
- *German for residents* for migrants resident in Austria for a longer period already and
- *Encouraging participation in the Education system*, especially for children of migrant families required to attend (pre-)school.

Looking at the measures implemented during the past twelve months, it is evident that the focus was mainly on strengthening the position of children and youth with a migrant background in the education system. The agreement between Federation and State on early language promotion in child care centres, initiated by State Secretary Kurz, deserves particular mention here, since Federation and State have budgeted a total of 30 million Euro between 2012 and 2014 for the promotion of German language skills of three- to six-year-olds, facilitating entry to the first elementary school level, where the language of instruction is German. This measure is particularly welcome, since the promotion of children represents not only an investment in the future, but also reduces the potential requirement for support with further education. The comprehensive development of financial and personnel resources for the support of proficiency in German of school career changers, as a result of positive cooperation between the Federal Minister of Education, Arts and Culture and the State Secretary for Integration, represents a further particularly important measure. The objective of such measures implemented at local schools is to make it easier for children and youth who lack language skills to enter regular schooling, through participation in language promotion courses. Since scholars with a migrant background constitute a significant part of this target group, this initiative and the corresponding legal amendment of the School Organisation Act must be highlighted in particular, also from the perspective of intensified integration of migrant family children of school-going age. The demand-oriented promotion is thereby expanded to a further large and important immigrant group.

The development of two already proven learning projects, co-financed by the State Secretariat for Integration, is also noteworthy in this respect: The extension, in cooperation with Caritas, of the Lerncafé [study café] offer to all of Austria and the development of the internationally successful model of the HIPPY home visit programme. The latter targets

not only the promotion of children, however, but also of their parents – which is why it is also relevant to the target group of migrants who have been living in Austria for longer. The special importance of education and compulsory schooling was furthermore also focussed on. It is also particularly gratifying in this respect that this topic has raised awareness in the political sphere and thereby among the population. The Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture and the State Secretariat for Integration have in this respect agreed on measures (incl. also statutory amendments). This is a particularly important aspect to prioritise and implement, seen against the background of an alarming number of youths who “drop out of the system”, i.e. they are neither in schooling or training nor engaged in an occupation.

Important initiatives were also launched in the German prior to Immigration field of action, where the focus is on the Fremdenrechtsnovelle [Aliens Law Amendment] 2011, which introduced the German prior to Immigration provision – i.e. the requirement that third country nationals submit proof of A1 level knowledge of German with their first application for a residence permit. Referring to our recommendations last year, measures in addition to the parallel promulgated laws were implemented in support of learning German, such as teaching and learning material (especially also including preparatory material for tests), online information on migration / integration and online maps showing foreign providers of courses in German.

3.1.2. German prior to Immigration

Objectives

At the time of publication of the 20-Point Programme, the German before Immigration measure was already anchored in law within the framework of the then Alien Law Amendment. Since 1 July, 2011, some specifically defined third country nationals are required to submit proof of A1 level competence in German as per the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages when applying for certain residence permits. This arrangement, on the one hand, aims at supporting and improving the integration of immigrants in daily life and on the job market right from the start. But it also, on the other hand, makes demands on follow-up migration of family members. The following parallel measures were therefore proposed in order to support compliance with this arrangement:

- A map indicating the places where German may be learnt, or the necessary tests taken,
- Material and aids for learning German where courses cannot be personally attended,
- Adequate information on the mandatory language level and the available courses,
- Simpler recognition of reports and certificates,
- Practical curricula and a tuition and test system adapted as far as possible to the lifestyle of the immigrants, in conjunction with relevant quality management and
- An online knowledge and information portal where the above content is made available.

Status of implementation

Online information on the topic of Immigration

Anyone intending to emigrate to Austria may access pertinent information about visas, residence permit and other requirements on two websites – available in German and in English: www.help.gv.at and www.migration.gv.at. The latter was created with the introduction of the Red-White-Red Card. Since some local offers are very comprehensive, it is desirable to further develop the information function of Austrian representation abroad.

Maps showing providers of courses in German

The Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF) offers an abundance of material and information on learning German on its website (www.integrationsfonds.at). The Austrian Integration Fund website already provides an overview of German courses offered in Austria. An interactive world map on this website also provides an overview of providers of German courses issuing certificates of proficiency in German which are accepted for first applications. Interested immigrants are therefore offered the best possible access to current and authentic information.

Teaching and learning material / Trial tests in preparation for tests

A further menu item on the Austrian Integration Fund website (www.integrationsfonds.at) provides information and material on the formats of the individual examinations. In addition to general information on the individual examinations (not only for A1 before immigration, but also for A2 / B1 within the framework of the Integration Agreement), the ÖIF [Austrian Integration Fund] also offers mock tests for all examination formats for free download. This website furthermore offers supplementary teaching and learning material such as tuition material on alphabetisation or collections of worksheets on basic linguistic skills and studies of Austrian culture.

Simpler recognition of reports and certificates

The State Secretariat for Integration has taken initiatives, in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Economics, Family and Youth and the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Employment, to sustainably simplify recognition of foreign qualifications. Since this pertains especially to the Work and Employment Field of Action, further information is provided in the Chapter Recognition / Validation of Qualifications.

Practical curricula

No new framework curricula were established within the framework of implementation of *German prior to Immigration*. The State Secretariat for Integration opted to fall back on proven methods and declared that only certificates issued by recognised institutions would be accepted as proof of proficiency in German. This in fact qualifies reports issued by the Goethe Institute, telc GmbH, the Austrian Sprachdiplom (ÖSD) and the Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF). It would be desirable in future to develop further supportive learning material.

3.1.3. German for Long-term residents with a migrant background

Objectives

Whilst new immigrants must provide proof of a certain level of proficiency in German as a prerequisite for a residence permit (within the framework of German before Immigration and the Integration Agreement), longer-term Austrian residents receive no or very little language support. The objective of the Expert Council to lift German proficiency of this group to at least A2 level in order to improve their communication competency and thus also their integration and thereby to counter poverty and exclusion, cannot be enacted. It is recommended, however, for such persons to do this voluntarily in order to more successfully improve their chances of integration and a professional career. It is necessary, therefore, to create practical, attractive and cost-effective offers. The following was therefore recommended:

- offering learning opportunities for “community-based learning” located near residential areas, for population groups in need of this (e.g. the *HIPPY* project),
- implementation in cooperation with companies with a high proportion of employees with a migrant background and little knowledge of German (e.g. cleaning companies),
- a positive system of incentives for successfully completing courses in German,
- making courses for adult education more attractive and
- establishing uniform certification or a certification body, in association with uniform standards for examinations and language diplomas.

Status of implementation

Development of the *HIPPY* programme of home visits

HIPPY (*Home Instruction for Parents of Pre-School Youngsters*) is a holistic, cross-cultural and particularly low-threshold programme for learning and promotion aimed at socially and educationally disadvantaged families, especially for families with a migrant background and their children aged three to six years. This concept was developed in Israel. A home visitor from the same culture group as the participating family visits the parents once a week and practices the *HIPPY* playing and learning material with them. The mother is tasked with independently doing the exercises with her child for about 20 minutes every day. The mothers in this way realise that they are personally capable of assisting their children by playing, without pressure, at home and in daily life. The parents get to know the strengths and abilities of their children and independently – complementary to kindergarten – prepare them for school. A group meeting of mothers and experts is convened every 14 days. Topics include upbringing, health, education, personal development, law, cultural diversity, integration, “Austrian way of life”, etc. *HIPPY* projects have so far been implemented in Vienna and Graz. Due to the success of these trailblazer projects, *HIPPY* is being expanded to additional locations with the help of various project carriers, on the initiative and with the financial support of the State Secretariat for

Integration. Based on the positive experience with *HIPPY*, it would be desirable to also support the systematic expansion of other successful and low-threshold offers.

German courses in companies / German courses specific to the job market

The Austrian Integration Fund offers companies the opportunity of defining and implementing German courses to meet the individual needs of their employees. This will, on the one hand, improve general proficiency in German and, on the other hand, provide training in vocabulary specific to a subject.

The Haus der Bildung und beruflichen Integration [*House of Education and Professional Integration*] (Habibi) of the Austrian Integration Fund offers job market specific German courses, in addition. Courses are currently being offered on Introduction to Nursing or German for denizens – Nursing diploma.

Further measures

Based on the already implemented measures described above, it would be desirable to take further initiatives. A positive system of incentives for successfully passing German courses should, for instance, be created. Courses in adult education should also be rendered generally more attractive, however.

3.1.4. Intensifying participation in the Education system

Objectives

The shockingly high number of youths ending their schooling before reaching the 9th level led to the development of this proposal for concrete action. This disturbing development was again confirmed in a recent study by the Johannes Kepler University in Linz: Austria has 75 000 youths (or 8.2%) between 16 and 24 years of age which are neither in training nor in schooling, nor employed, nor involved in further education. These figures are even more alarming considering the immigrant population as such: The figure is just under 18% for first generation youths aged between 16 to 24 and still at 11.7% for the second generation.

A programme of action was therefore developed aiming to reduce the drop-out rates in compulsory schools and also in secondary and vocational schools and, in particular, to clearly increase the opportunities for education of children and youths. We have therefore proposed the following measures:

- provisioning of information on the meaning and significance of education and qualification to social standing in society,
- clarification of the question whether further or punitive measures should be taken in cases of violation of compulsory schooling regulations,
- possible introduction of two-year kindergarten attendance as a prerequisite for attending school; this would be applicable especially to children with little proficiency in German, in order to increase their opportunities for education and development,
- low cost evening school fees for adults towards completion of compulsory schooling.

Status of implementation

Expansion of early language support in institutions for child care (Agreement pursuant to Art. 15a B-VG [Federal Constitution Act])

A particularly important initiative in respect of increasing childhood chances for education should be pointed out: The Federal-State Agreement (pursuant to Art. 15a B-VG) concluded in 2012 for early language support in institutional child care institutions. This agreement aims to support three- to six-year-old children until they have a satisfactory command of German as the tuition language when they enter the first level of elementary school. To do justice to the newly established integration aspect, the focus will be on children with mother tongues other than German. The agreement aims at making it easier overall for children to enter elementary school, in order to optimise their future chances for education and to facilitate their start into professional life. A similar agreement was concluded in 2008 already with the objective, among other, of expanding the pallet of child care institutions and also to support early language proficiency. That part of this agreement dealing with early language support, however, expired in 2010 and was no longer supported by law. A new agreement was concluded, including the following key issues, following an initiative by the State Secretariat for Integration:

To assess the actual demand for support, kindergarten teachers (together with elementary school directors or other qualified staff, if necessary) first of all assess existing language proficiencies. Language support follows in step two, also by kindergarten teachers, in a playful manner that is “age-related, integrated in everyday life and individualised”.

The Federation co-finances the corresponding additional cost to the States: Every Euro a State invests in early language support annually from 2012 to 2014 will be matched by the Federation up to a maximum of five million Euro. Up to the end of 2014, 30 million Euro will therefore be available *for early language support in child care institutions*.

Support of proficiency in German of foreign entrants in schools

Special emphasis was placed on the support of proficiency in German of school-aged children who are accepted in the Austrian school system under compulsory schooling as career changers. Fast attainment of language proficiency is essential, especially in such cases. Building on programmes implemented to date, it was possible, in cooperation with the Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and the State Secretariat for Integration, to obtain comprehensive support, in terms of financing and staff, for language promotion at schools. Funds in the amount of 47.8 million Euro in total will be made available for the 2013 and 2014 school years. This enables the creation of more than 440 additional teaching positions for courses towards language proficiency. Scientific support by the Federal Institute of Educational Research, Innovation and Development (BIFIE) for scientific evaluation of local programmes with scholars is also assured.

Discounted offer to complete the 9th school level

The promotion of courses for adults in the area of *Basic education / Basic competencies* and courses for *Completion of compulsory schooling* constitute further significant initiatives. A total of 54.6 million Euros will be made available under the Federal-State Agreement concluded in 2012 to set up a uniform support programme, coordinated between Federation and States, in the fields of *Basic Education / Basic competencies and Completion of compulsory schooling* across all of Austria.

Since this initiative mainly concerns the Field of Action Work and Profession, it is dealt with in detail in the Chapter “Ensuring completion of formal schooling through post-qualification”.

Information on the meaning of Qualification and Education

In order to familiarise migrants with integration procedures from the start, the brochures *Welcome in Austria, Austria from the beginning* and *The ABC of recognition* inform migrants already before their arrival in Austria about the paramount importance of education and professional qualifications to ensure an independent lifestyle in their new home country. The emphasis here is especially on compulsory schooling and the importance of parents cooperating in everyday schooling of their children. The extent of learning opportunities is also evident. The publication of *The ABC of recognition* further highlights the significance of completed training and professional qualifications (see also <http://www.berufsanerkennung.at>). Since this initiative concerns especially the Field of Action Work and Profession, further information is provided in the Chapter Recognition / Validation of Qualifications.

Nationwide extension of Lerncafés [study cafés]

The Caritas of the Graz-Seckau Diocese opened the first *Lerncafé* already in Gries in 2007, with financial backing by the European Integration Fund, followed by further cafés in Leoben and Knittelfeld. Due to the huge success, the State Secretariat for Integration, in cooperation with the Austrian Caritas head office, decided to extend the *Lerncafés* across Austria. In the first step, new locations were opened in 2011 in other Federal States (Eisenstadt, St. Pölten, Marchtrenk, Salzburg, Imst, Lustenau, Vienna: Per Albin Hansson-Siedlung). A further five locations are planned for 2012.

The *Lerncafés* target especially children with a migrant background. They are, however, basically open to all children – space permitting. The *Lerncafés* are open on at least three weekdays from 13:00 or 13:30 to 17:00, offering free learning and afternoon supervision to all interested (immigrant) scholars between six and fifteen years of age. Their main task is to support and assist scholars learning German, to help them with their homework, to offer specific schoolwork and preparation for tests and especially to render learning fun. Apart from supporting the scholars (as well as their parents) in attaining proficiency in German, the *Lerncafés* also promote overall success of learning, self-development and free social interaction based on respect for different cultures and religions. In view of the ever-increasing global problem of youth unemployment, we regard this as a particularly important measure.

Measures against non-compliance with mandatory schooling

Increasing interest in non-compliance with mandatory schooling in the political and media arenas is clearly evident. The Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and the State Secretariat for Integration have, in this respect, agreed on a plan of action to sustainably address the problem of non-compliance with mandatory schooling, including all involved parties and on several levels: Apart from obligatory parent-teacher discussions, a phased plan prescribes especially improved cooperation between school supervisory bodies and youth welfare authorities and, as a last resort, also more severe punishment. This package of actions is furthermore framed by in-depth research of motives and analysis of problems and will be implemented within the framework of more specific legal regulations.

Kindergarten attendance for two years

State Secretary Kurz has proposed a mandatory second year of kindergarten, also free of charge: free of charge for all and mandatory only for children needing to improve their proficiency in German. Due to the complexity of competencies, concrete legislative changes require lengthy processes of coordination, however. It is therefore particularly gratifying that the State Secretariat for Integration, together with the Federal States of Salzburg and Lower Austria, have created two model regions. A second kindergarten year, including measures for promotion of language skills, is under test in these two model regions. This initiative therefore contributes to the objective of reaching children who, from the educational and integration-political point of view, stand to benefit especially from early integration into pre-school learning and care facilities.

Other activities

Apart from the aforementioned initiatives which contributed to the implementation of our recommendations of last year, there are a number of interesting projects extending beyond our concrete proposals and which also contribute to improved participation in the educational system. Deserving special mention here are the scholarship programmes for particularly gifted and committed scholars with a migrant background in AHS [secondary academic school] or BHS [vocational school] upper levels (START scholarships) or for third country nationals, persons entitled to asylum and students entitled to subsidiary protection in Austria (Liese-Prokop scholarships) as well as the *Oma/Opa* [granny/grandpa] project under which the elderly provide learning aid to children with a migrant background.

3.1.5 Prospects

As previously mentioned, **numerous measures have been implemented** since the Expert Council introduced the 20-Point Programme in July 2011, together aiming to increase opportunities for education and to improve proficiency in German under the various target groups. The following key aspects should be encouraged in future:

It remains beyond doubt that **early acquisition of functionally adequate communicative**

competencies facilitates entry into gainful employment and better orientation in Austrian society. It would therefore be desirable that public perception sees language proficiency as positive and as empowering: Adequate language proficiency is a pre-requisite to participation in professional life and in society. **Proficiency in the official language of the country** is therefore a **cornerstone of successful integration**, both for EU nationals and for third country nationals. This is why mastering basic German is generally a pre-requisite for issuance of a residence permit. An objective of future policy in this connection should therefore be for proficiency in German to be included within the framework of the Integration from the beginning strategy of the State Secretariat for Integration. Accompanying measures in terms of Integration from the beginning should be recommended, starting with initial contact with the Austrian representation abroad and up to settlement and living in Austria. The **intensified support of children and youths** would also be welcome. Especially the nationwide introduction of a second mandatory year of kindergarten should contribute to provision of the best possible care to children requiring support and to increasing their opportunities for education and development from early childhood already.

The **significance of language support of school career changers** should also be emphasised, including training programmes for teachers, which should, following provision of funds, be commensurately enforced.

In view of the alarming number of youths who are neither gainfully employed nor learning or in training, it is necessary to continue including **school drop-out** as one of the **key aspects** in the Field of Action Language and Education and to reduce this through targeted action. It should, in closing, be mentioned that, in respect of the previously suggested key aspects, efforts are being made in the Field of Action Language and Education to make a concrete contribution to discussions on the topics of integration and education. A symposium on “Integration and Education”, supported by the Austrian Integration Fund, will therefore be held on 11 and 12 September, 2012. This symposium will deal with many practical challenges and resources in cooperation with players in the fields of integration/migration – education – language – occupation.

The symposium will address practitioners and scientists of various education sectors. It will serve as a networking platform providing opportunity for exchange between different players in the fields of education and integration.

3.2 NAP.I Field of Action: Work and Employment

3.2.1 Assessing the implementation status in the Field of Action Work and Employment

Measures conducive to better utilisation of the working resources of migrants are addressed in the Field of Action Work and Profession, as seen from the policy perspectives of integration and of job market and employment. Not only does this counter the shortage of skills due to an ageing working population, but it also ensures the economic integration

and development of migrant potentials.

To meet both primary objectives, assurance of employment commensurate with education and post-qualification of migrants took top priority. A further key aspect of the coordinated integration policy of the State Secretariat for Integration, following a proposal of the Expert Council, was the promotion of migrant integration into professional life.

The implementation strategy varied, depending on the task. In respect of support of employment suited to the education of migrants and in view of the complex process of recognition of foreign qualifications, it was decided to survey the modes of recognition in the individual professions and qualification levels by way of a scientific analysis. How to deal with informally attained competencies was also examined, last but not least because the increasing occupational and spatial mobility of work forces for economic and motivational reasons requires more transparency of the actual abilities of people, for the benefit of employers as well as employees.

The insights gained by including significant players in the recognition of educational diplomas and qualifications constituted the starting point for formal cooperation between the State Secretariat for Integration and the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, leading to a comprehensive range of services offered via an online platform (www.berufsanerkennung.at) and a brochure (*Anerkennungs-ABC [ABC of recognition]*). Provision is made for ongoing extension of information on options for recognition or validation of occupational qualifications.

Bundling this information had the positive effect of increasing numbers of participating institutions and joint initiation of further expansion. In terms of post-qualification, the State Secretariat for Integration was able to call on the coordination services in the adult education department of the Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, which concluded a Federal-State Agreement (pursuant to Art. 15a B-VG) supported by the States, for financing of Basic Education and also for post-completion of main qualifications. As from 1 January, 2012, the Federal States, in cooperation with qualified educational institutions, have been offering post-completion of educational qualifications, or basic education, pursuant to uniformly regulated nationwide standards, for persons in need of this, including also migrants. Univ.-Prof. Dr. Gudrun Biffel, member of the Expert Council for Integration, participated in the concept of the programme in her capacity as expert.

Several measures were taken in the field of supporting job creation for migrants, which essentially took over from successful projects in this field, contributing to their expansion. The integration into society of new immigrants with children and their capacities for participating in education and the job market was supported by expanding the home visit programme for pre-school children (HIPPEY). Expansion of the Mentoring Programme of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce, the Austrian Integration Fund and the Vienna *Arbeitsmarktservice [Public Employment Service]* to include all Federal States also significantly contributed to the integration of migrants.

Some main aspects of measures proposed and implemented by the Expert Council are dealt with in more detail below.

3.2.2 Recognition / Validation of qualifications

Objectives

In its catalogue of measures in the Field of Action Work and Profession, the Expert Council for Integration highlighted the demographic job market changes and suggested contributory measures to improvement of the utilisation of migrant human resources.

Dismantling of migrants' stumbling blocks in respect of recognition of their professional and school qualifications is a focal point here. An effective system governing recognition and validation of competencies and skills formally or informally attained in the EU, in third countries or in Austria, is required to achieve this objective.

In addition to the development of a website serving as a guide for migrants, contact points with information on the recognition and possible supplements required for achievement of specific professional goals are being set up nationwide. Recognition procedures are thereby rendered transparent and new possibilities for coordination are created. In the case of regulated professions, recognition plays a special role here, both in civil service and the independent professions.

Status of implementation

Study on the recognition of foreign qualifications and informal competencies in Austria

To work out a method for simplifying recognition and validation, Donau University Krems, under the aegis of Univ.- Prof. Dr. Gudrun Biffli, published a study on the recognition of foreign qualifications and informal competencies in Austria. The final report in this study confirmed the requirement for transparency and simplification of the bureaucratic process of recognition and validation of qualifications and competencies. A recommendation arising from this pertains to the necessity of inter-departmental cooperation in the development and implementation of measures. State Secretary Kurz consequently initiated discussions with the responsible ministries which resulted in the development of a website and a brochure as a guide for the recognition of regulated professions.

Informative website on the recognition of regulated professions

State Secretary Kurz, together with Federal Minister Rudolf Hundstorfer, presented the new info website www.berufsanerkennung.at on 29 March, 2012. With a few online clicks, users across Austria can now, for the first time, find the pertinent authorities responsible for recognition of their qualifications. The website serves as a guide for all regulated professions.

Informative brochure on the recognition of regulated professions

In tandem with the website, the *ABC of recognition* serves as a guide for simplified and faster recognition of foreign professional and educational qualifications. In addition to important information on the Austrian education system and various forms of recognition

of foreign professional and academic qualifications, the brochure contains the responsible public contact persons and points of contact in Austria, classified by profession. The brochure has been available at the Public Employment Service Austria, the Austrian Integration Fund, the ENIC-NARIC and various associations and institutions since the end of May.

Faster recognition of professional academic qualifications

State Secretary Kurz and Federal Minister Karlheinz Töchterle presented the so-called 5-point programme for improved recognition of professional academics in March this year. This overall package aims at optimally exploiting existing potential. The 5-point programme comprises:

- **One-Stop-Info:** This is intended as a central point of contact for recognition. The intention is to promote information of the general public about the accessibility of the existing info centre ENIC-NARIC (European Network of Information Centres - National Academic Recognition Information Centre) at the Federal Ministry of Science and Research. An own website (www.nostrifizierung.at) will present the most important information and provide users with material in various languages.
- **Central submission point at ENIC-NARIC:** To reduce the bureaucratic workload, applications may in future be submitted also at ENIC-NARIC, in addition to responsible departments at universities.
- **Shorter waiting periods:** After submission of complete documentation, applicants will in future receive feedback within three (instead of six) months.
- **Central branch office as the centre of competence in the Medical sector:** To speed up the recognition procedure, a common branch office will be created for the three medical universities (Vienna, Graz, Innsbruck), for processing applications.
- **Free assistance with applications, with no bureaucracy:** Apart from regulated professions there are also occupations that are not regulated and therefore do not require recognition. The information on the equivalence of such foreign training to Austrian standards then often suffices for a potential employer to employ the person in accordance with his/her qualifications. ENIC-NARIC offers free assistance in the establishment of such equivalence.

Working group for processing matters relating to recognition of foreign qualifications

The Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, together with the State Secretariat for Integration, has convened an inter-ministerial working group dealing with matters relating to the recognition of qualifications and informally acquired competencies, within the framework of coordination and institutionalisation of a lifelong learning system.

3.2.3 Ensuring completion of formal schooling through post-qualification

Objectives

Since people leaving school without a formal qualification have little opportunity of finding a good job and no chance of furthering their occupational career, the objective is to offer such people a second chance to obtain their school-leaving qualification or to offer them basic qualifications which are decisive to their chances of participation in the education system.

Reducing the number of school drop-outs and supporting measures aiming at enhancing the potential of migrants for education and qualifications is particularly close to the heart of the Expert Council.

A package of individual actions was created with this in mind. A mixed working group, with social partners and the Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture as main players, was created to coordinate and intensify the support profile.

Status of implementation

Free later attainment of educational qualifications

The Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture initiated a Federal-State Agreement (pursuant to Art. 15a B-VG) on the promotion of Basic Education and Basic Competencies courses (www.bmukk.gv.at/schulen/bw/zb/basisbildung.xml) for adults, essential to the chances of further education. This constitutes an important step towards improving the chances of employment of people without formal educational qualifications and furthermore also promotes participation in society, politics and culture.

Federation and States agreed on funding support in the amount of 54.6 million Euro for the period 2012 to 2014, deemed sufficient to enable about 12 400 people to catch up on educational qualifications.

3.2.4 Promoting employment of women migrants

Objectives

The Expert Council for Integration under this title summarised measures aimed at increasing employment of young women with a migrant background. Focal points include facilitating the balance between work and family and overcoming hurdles to entry into working life and ensuring employment commensurate with skills. Expression of the potentials of young women migrants who, on the one hand, have foregone education and further training due to starting a family early in their lives and, on the other, find entry into working life difficult due to lack of integration into national education networks, is paramount. Based on the complexity of the situation, realisation of the objective focused on networking of measures and institutions which are active in one area or another. The objective was to identify existing and proven programmes and to work towards expanding and intensifying these.

Overall, a gradual approach was selected which aims at cooperation with other ministries, social partners, the AMS [Public Employment Service Austria] and other institutions, especially NGOs.

Status of implementation

Mentoring for migrants

Mentoring for migrants is a joint initiative of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce, the Austrian Integration Fund and the Public Employment Service Austria. The project was launched in 2008 and continues to this day. This initiative aims at assisting migrants with integration in the job market through the support of experienced business personalities – so-called mentors.

The mentors support their mentees with advice, assistance and intensive direct contact over a period of six months. A form of coaching at eye-level is in this way achieved. The mentors have know-how and networks which allow them to make entry into the job market easier for their mentees.

The *Mentoring Programme* is constantly developed further, since there is a great demand by companies as well as mentors and mentees.

The tremendous success of this programme is statistically supported: In Vienna and Lower Austria, the *Mentoring Programme* is being offered for the sixth time already (boasting 133 participants, 56% of whom are women). 39% of the mentees could already be integrated in the job market. The fourth *Mentoring Programme* was completed in Upper Austria in March 2012. 40% of those mentees have already found their way into the job market. 75% of mentors surveyed stated that they see great personal benefit in their participation in this project. The level of interest in further participation correspondingly stood at 75%².

Home visit programme for parents with pre-school children

Home Instruction for Parents of Pre-school Youngsters – HIPPY for short – was originally conceived in Israel and boasts a record of global success since the seventies. This project, also offered in Austria in some cases, is supported by the State Secretariat for Integration and its expansion to other regions is under consideration. The home visit programme addresses parents with pre-school children and aims to accelerate learning of German and integration into Austrian society. The intention here is to positively influence the motivation for job integration and to create the framework conditions for a better balance between work and family.

Further information is provided under German for Residents in the Field of Action Language and Education, since the home visit programme is considered a spanning measure which will also contribute to faster integration by improving proficiency in German.

Support and coaching of migrants in the job market

The Integration Assistance Programme, supported by the State Secretariat for Integration,

2) <http://wko.at/sp/mentoring/Projektbericht-Mentoring.pdf>

is a project aiming at ensuring employment commensurate with qualification and creating career opportunities for migrants. It was developed by Crosslink & Company and features the following:

- Individual qualification: occupation-specific German courses, further training, late attainment of qualifications
- Coaching: sensitisation to cultural differences, involving the employer
- Social work: consulting on child care, financial or personal strain, etc.
- Mediation: solving cultural and language-related misunderstandings at the workplace, assuring mutual understanding

Close cooperation with businesses is an important implementation factor. Such cooperation has to date been established with large companies such as the REWE Group and Spar. The specific needs of the employees and the demands of the local workplace are in this respect addressed in coordination with the companies.

Specific support of migrants in the job market

On the initiative of the Federal Minister Rudolf Hundstorfer and State Secretary Kurz, a so-called AMS Migrant Index was created to allow more targeted support of migrants in the job market. This guideline, set up in the autumn of 2011 and having entered its first implementation phase on 1 January, 2012, focuses on the specific needs of migrants in the Public Employment Service Austria. In addition to gender, age and citizenship, the migrant background of job seekers is now also recorded. This allows for selective and targeted measures or promotion for the target group of people with a migrant background, facilitating faster entry into working life and a stable job.

3.2.5 Prospects

The main steps towards implementing the measures proposed under the 20-Point Programme were taken in the Field of Action Work and Profession. The framework conditions for **increased transparency** and **acceleration of processes** were created in the field of **Recognition of Foreign Qualifications**. The first building blocks for further action were laid.

The objectives of future work comprise especially creation of transparency, simplification of processes and recording of applications using uniform concepts and standards. The aim is not only to statistically record the needs and the implementation at responsible authorities, but also to keep a **central statistical database**. Another objective is to capture informally obtained competencies and to promote certification of these within the framework of implementation of the Federal strategy of life-long learning. This constitutes a project which facilitates not only entry into working life and professional mobility of migrants, but also of many locals. Cooperation between the responsible Federal Ministries, the social partners, the AMS and other players should to this end be enforced. Local and foreign examples of Good Practice are referenced here and options sought for effective implementation in Austria. Simplification of processes should be promoted in this area of

recognition as well. The centrally available website information could be supplemented in order to support orientation of visitors to the website.

Further simplifications in respect of recognition of foreign professional and educational qualifications are scheduled.

Nationwide expansion of successful measures should in future be another focal point in the Field of Action Work and Employment. This is applicable equally to Best Practice projects and Mentoring for Migrants and also to initiatives in respect of recognition of qualifications attained abroad and establishment of competencies.

Another focal point should be established in the area of **transition from school to working life**, based on an analysis of the current means and filtering out of examples meeting the special need of promoting entry into working life by migrant youths. Special attention is also due to integration of the older work force, however, in order to prevent inability to work and to promote good health and continuing participation in working life.

Another focal point should be established in the area of transition from school to working life, based on an analysis of the current means and filtering out of examples meeting the special need of promoting entry into working life by migrant youths. Special attention is also due to integration of the older work force, however, in order to prevent inability to work and to promote good health and continuing participation in working life.

3.3 NAP.I Field of Action: Rule of Law and Values

3.3.1 Assessing the implementation status in the Field of Action Rule of Law and Values

Two measures were at the centre of the Field of Action Rule of Law and Values under the 20-Point Programme: the development of the *Red-White-Red Primer*, on the one hand, and the measures for promoting interest in obtaining citizenship, on the other. The *Red-White-Red Primer* is presently in draft form and it may be assumed that it will be ready for introduction to the public by the end of the year. Work to date has led to a concept where the *Red-White-Red Primer* is seen as an orientation aid to a culture of welcome and recognition which is presently being developed – particularly appreciated in the Field of Action Rule of Law and Values. The essential basis was created through the convention Integration from the beginning in February 2012, which offered the opportunity for a first nationwide exchange between all the relevant players in the integration field, with international participation. Flowing from the convention was the brochure Welcome in Austria, which is made available by Austrian representatives abroad, offering immigrants a first introduction to basic attitudes of Austria and its people in advance. In a systematic extension and enhancement of these approaches, the *Red-White-Red Primer* may be viewed as a further extension of the strategy Integration from the beginning, whereby this primer is significantly different from this first and necessary step, however. It may be stated now already that it is based on a significantly more complex conception, yet it will also

represent a fundamentally critical aid to substantial integration efforts of both the migrants and the majority society. The fundamental revision of the Citizenship brochure which has been in progress in the relevant department of the Federal Ministry of the Interior in cooperation with the Expert Council members of the Field of Action Rule of Law and Values for quite a while, should be seen as a central measure in the field of citizenship and should preferably be drafted in synchronism with the development of the Red-White-Red Primer. The Citizenship brochure should in future meet the legal requirements in a significantly optimised way by communicating the essential basic elements and institutions of the democratic Austrian political system. The developments in law and culture underlying the political system must first be explained by motivating communication and in the appropriate language.

The implementation of a systematically coordinated holistic concept is to be introduced in this way by the end of the year. This serves, on the one hand, to satisfy the evident requirement for knowledge of basic structures of the Austrian constitutional order and, on the other, optimises the legally prescribed acquisition of knowledge. Such knowledge can therefore, in the interest of promotion of early integration and as provided for already in NAP.I, be the key to successful integration which may be presented as motivating and interesting both to the majority population and the migrants.

3.3.2 Creation of a Red-White-Red Primer

Objectives

Within the framework of the 20-Point Programme, the creation of a *Red-White-Red Primer* was regarded a significant measure in the Field of Action Rule of Law and Values. Imparting the Austrian rule of law principles and social values, both as a basic common consensus of society and as orientation in terms of attitude and actions of the Austrian population, was defined as the objective of this process – in an easy to comprehend form and targeting different groups. In its design, the *Red-White-Red Primer* intends to invite the reader to reflect over and discuss the constitutional base of the Austrian polity but also especially, as defined for this Field of Action, create a link between rule of law and values, addressing those social values and individual virtues which are indispensable to the success of our community as a united liberal state based on rule of law. The intention with this work to date is not so much an empirical survey of the value systems actually applied in Austria (this may be of supplementary interest) but rather a transcendental philosophical reflection on those values and virtues on which success of the “Project Austria” should in fact be based. The point of departure in this respect should be those pillars of the Federal constitution which should generally be accepted in Austria as at the core of our polity.

As opposed to a primarily social-empirical “status quo” representation, which has an exclusion effect on migrants since this would limit them to adapting to “local” majority customs (or not), an ethnic normative approach is adopted, which also openly and honestly recognises differences between the (necessary) ideal and experiential reality. Migrants

are hereby given the opportunity of making valuable contributions to the “Project Austria”, based on their own context of values and virtues, thereby experiencing substantial recognition in the practical sense. Especially the exposure of differences, i.e. including any weaknesses, in Austrian reality enables the opportunity of fruitful discourse with empirical “foreign” cultures and value systems, both for the majority population and for migrants.

Similar to the process of integration of European nations in the European Union, it is again true that less frozen values and traditions have a cohesive effect. The variety of values and virtues rather represents a great potential for mastering common challenges, based on normative principles of a united liberal state based on rule of law. This is what actually unites Europe and its people.

Statement of this basic consensus, or this vision of societal and personal attitudes, in terms of all Austrians, i.e. all of Austria’s population including specific groups such as children and the youth and also the immigrants, has the purpose of facilitating harmonious social cohabitation by communicating rules of public life. Communicating these basic principles and the desired discussion of the Austrian principles of rule of law and values of importance to cohabitation in Austria eases equal opportunity participation for all, at the least. This claim is relevant particularly to the special group of immigrants regarding the Red-White-Red Primer as a key to successful integration, not as an obstacle. It will, in addition, serve not only to assure everyone living in Austria of the rule of law, but also to promote mutual trust between people, since such trust may be based on the common application of principles and rules.

Status of implementation

Following the definition of objectives, a working group was created within the State Secretariat for Integration with members drawn primarily from the experts in the Field of Action Rule of Law and Values. This group has to date developed the basic concept of the *Red-White-Red Primer*, whereby the comprehensive basic concept includes aspects of legal doctrine, philosophy, history and sociology. In terms of content, the basic concept is based on the constitution as well as significant basic and human rights, whilst also including questions of requisite societal values and personal virtues necessary for functioning and validity of these basic principles. Indispensable loops of reflection have been provided for to assist in drafting of the Primer, in the form of additional expert opinion, under the specialist aegis of the Expert Council. After completion of a scientific final draft on this basis, the Red-White-Red Primer is ready for publication in several languages, in several educational forms and by way of several media types.

3.3.3 Increase of interest in the attainment of citizenship

Objectives

It was stated in the 20-Point Programme of the past year that Austria has a growing number of persons without Austrian citizenship, even though these persons are eligible for

naturalisation. This fact should be seen in the light of the programme of the National Action Plan for Integration which culminates in the attainment of Austrian citizenship as the end result of a comprehensive integration process. Citizenship without doubt represents a significant factor in the identification with and relationship to a country. Persons who are eligible for citizenship yet do not apply also waive significant rights. It was against this background that the 20-Point Programme of the Expert Council in its 2011 Integration Report provided for efforts to raise the interest of those persons complying with all the significant prerequisites for Austrian citizenship to actually obtain such citizenship. It deserves mention in this respect, however, that the number of naturalisations increased by 9.1% in 2011, compared to the previous year.

Status of implementation

Information campaign aimed at the established target group

An information campaign to increase the interest in obtaining citizenship may be advantageous in association with the possible launch of an information campaign about the issuance of a revised Citizenship brochure.

Further development of citizenship

Without any change to the principle defined in the 20-Point Programme of the Expert Council, which states that citizenship is the final point of successful integration, the possibility of making the attainment of Austrian citizenship dependent on specific integration results should be assessed in the course of the next amendment to the law on citizenship.

Concept for revision of the Citizenship brochure

A revision of the Citizenship brochure was identified as a significant prerequisite in terms of increasing the attractiveness of obtaining Austrian citizenship. The revision should describe the requirements for the citizenship test. Requisite improvement was assessed and a concept drafted for the revision in consultation with experts. The above initiatives are a basis for the prompt completion of the revised Citizenship brochure, which should take into account the level of language and didactic proficiency of the target group and which should impart the basic knowledge of the Austrian political system required to pass the test, in an attractive, accessible and explicative way. This would offer fundamentally improved access, compared to the existing tabulated form.

3.3.4 Prospects

The Field of Action Rule of Law and Values also exhibits high dynamism and complexity, since the objective with the *Red-White-Red Primer* and the Citizenship brochure is to provide the, for practical reasons, quite demanding **orientation** representing the fundamental aspects of a **culture of official welcome**, in turn paving the way for successful integration into the centre of society.

It is necessary to learn from the past, which demonstrated that unsuitable offers of orientation will prevent integration. Dispensing with integration is also no solution, however. Against this background, it is absolutely necessary to ensure, especially with implementation of the measures, that serious effort will lead to successful integration and provision of existential necessities to both the majority society and migrants.

The *Red-White-Red Primer* should in this sense be highly informative in order to offer the opportunity of substantial evaluation of Austria. This **discourse** must always involve the majority society and should be subject to open discussion, certainly in schools, but also in adult education centres and other public and private educational institutions and through the new media. The purpose of this discourse is to reinforce **critical awareness** of integration issues, which is an essential prerequisite to the success of this process and which, in turn, is of existential importance to Austria.

It should also in this respect be an objective of the new Citizenship brochure to produce relevant information about the Austrian political system and its historical development and simultaneously to promote the positive evaluation of that **knowledge base**. Austria should in this respect be recounted, in its history and presence and in a way to fascinate the reader, as a community shaped by both harrowing and inspiring events, finding its way to today's united liberal state based on rule of law and membership of the European Union. The measures of the Field of Action should in this sense be interpreted as small yet relevant components of the Integration from the beginning strategy, which should certainly be enforced as early and intensively as possible, preferably in the country of origin already. Consistently continuing this approach, the measures of the Field of Action Rule of Law and Values should **critically orientate** (*Red-White-Red Primer*) on the one hand but also provide **factual information** (Citizenship brochure) on the other, to ensure the substantial success of integration. They will thereby ensure not only legality under rule of law, but especially also **value-based loyalty** following integration. They will also ensure not only knowledge of the basis of Austrian rule of law, but also a **commitment** to this and acceptance of Austrian citizenship.

3.4 NAP.I Field of Action: Health and Social Issues

3.4.1 Assessing the implementation status in the Field of Action Health and Social Issues

The objective of the Field of Action Health and Social Issues is improvement of the health and well-being of immigrants and their children. This is based on two assumptions:

There are sections within the target group (i.e. the growing number of immigrants and their children annually) which the existing Austrian health programmes do not adequately cover. Inadequate access to information and the resultant lack of knowledge and inadequate use of preventive programmes are the primary reasons here. Not to forget barriers of a language, cultural and social nature. Examples range from wrong dietary habits to lack of physical exercise during time off. Awareness of preventive measures is important especially among

persons originating from countries where health is mainly of a restorative nature. It is of equal importance that immigrants and their children may regard the existing facilities as available also to themselves (not only to the local majority). This has been achieved already in places through numerous projects targeting specific groups. The implementation should in future be extended nationwide, with clear objectives.

Our present day Healthcare system, on the other hand, originated under social framework conditions where the population was of clearly younger average age and with significantly greater linguistic and cultural homogeneity. Handling the increasing diversity over the past decades demands a learning process which has started already and which our Healthcare system must promote in the interest of better care of patients, or persons with a migrant background needing care. This requires the development of intercultural competency among staff in the Healthcare system, on the one hand, but also increased employment of persons with a migrant background on the other. This applies especially to medical practitioners at hospitals and to established doctors. The percentage of immigrants is significantly higher already in the care sector, however. This success is due to initiatives which succeeded in increasing diversity in the fields of health and care through preparatory occupational courses for migrants, targeting specific groups. Projects such as e.g. Diversity@Care, described in more detail later (see Projects supporting management of diversity in the Healthcare system), will intensify this project into the future in order to improve the mix of original cultures, thereby improving care for persons with mother tongues other than German. It is our objective also in this Field of Action to develop existing approaches further, defining clear goals in order to consistently improve the situation.

3.4.2 Promotion of health awareness under health-challenged groups

Objectives

It is necessary in the promotion of health awareness to drive home the concept of prevention and to support a conduct which will reduce the probability of occurrence of physical and psychological illness or improve early diagnosis. Linguistic, cultural and institutional barriers in the Healthcare system must to this end be dismantled. Programmes for care and early detection must be developed specifically to allow persons with a migrant background to access and exploit these. By creating awareness and through low-threshold offers, it should be possible to increase utilisation of preventive measures. Accessibility and accurate communication of information should be emphasised. Optimal channels of information suited to credibly address target groups should be carefully considered. Engendering of trust between medical practitioners or health care staff and patients with migrant background is of major significance here. Success in this respect will allow both more effective medical treatment and better prevention.

Status of implementation

Since the competencies in the Field of Action Health and Social Issues are found especially with the Federal States, social security institutions, hospitals and the Federal Ministry for

Health, a large part of the projects is carried out by these cooperation partners. Close cooperation and regular discussion with these is therefore indispensable. Selected examples of Best Practice, dedicated especially to our declared objective of increasing the “health literacy” among migrants and thereby increasing the motivation for migrants to assume responsibility for their health, are discussed below.

“Preventive examination New” of the Austrian Social Security

Preventive examinations pursuant to the stipulations based on the Allgemeines Sozialversicherungsgesetz [General Social Security Act] are available to all Austrians. Social security, in the implementation, has fully revised this programme, extending it in the form of lifestyle advice. A clear emphasis was also in the meantime placed on persons with a migrant background. Information brochures have been compiled already in Turkish, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian and English as well as multi-language posters on clinical examination. Targeted cooperation with associations and institutions dealing with migrants was furthermore initiated. The Competence Centre VU of the Vienna Regional Health Insurance Fund is offering a service to the individual social insurance carriers to assist in addressing specific target groups in the Federal States and to support and statistically monitor these.

Programme of the Federal Health Commission for early detection of breast cancer

Following a decision of the Federal Health Commission on 25 November, 2011, a comprehensive nationwide programme was launched for early detection of breast cancer, for all women in Austria aged 45 to 69. The nationwide implementation will be completed in the spring of 2013. Special emphasis is also placed on the inclusion of women with a migrant background in the development and implementation of the programme. Based on experience with the current pilot project in Vienna, the responsible officers are well aware of the inherent challenges.

Gekona: Health comes home – it helps to know more!

The objective of this project of the “beratungsgruppe.at – Association for Information Transfer, Education and Advice” is to deploy health tutors to increase the “health literacy” of female migrants of Islamic culture and very low socio-economic status. The target group includes women and mothers from groups in need of education who speak little German and who cannot be fully reached even through education in their mother tongue. Fears and prejudices should be easier to dispel through health tutors of similar socio-cultural background, trained specifically for this purpose. The health tutors visit the mothers at home in their personal environment, educating them about health issues and sustainably transferring knowledge. This is further intensified through common excursions, group meetings and informative material.

Dossier “Migration and Health: Options for escaping from the prevention dilemma”

This dossier was compiled in May 2011 by Julia Mayer of the Austrian Integration Fund, dealing with the barriers preventing access to and utilisation of health-promoting and preventive measures aimed at persons with a migrant background. It also examines factors which might promote access to and utilisation of such programmes. This included systematic and extensive research of the literature, including the evaluation of twelve primary studies on the topic of preventive and health-promoting measures for migrants.

IKONE – Initiative Cooperation Network 2

This is an initiative of the “beratungsgruppe.at – Association for Information Transfer, Education and Advice” with the purpose of developing cooperation networks for educational, health-promoting and integration projects. The intention is to facilitate regional and local projects for the support of social integration of migrants of low socio-economic status.

UMIBERA – Comprehensive Multi-professional Consultation and Care for Migrant Women in particularly stressful situations in life

This project of the association “Frauenservice Graz” [*Women’s Service Graz*] offers migrant women (women with non-Austrian citizenship, female asylum seekers and women entitled to subsidiary protection) multi-professional advice and care specifically tailored to female needs. Based on many years of experience in female-specific consultation and education, successful and sustainable integration may be assured today by precise targeting of the increased requirement for consultation and care among the target group.

3.4.3 Promotion of diversity awareness in the Health and Care systems**Objectives**

The ability of the health and care systems to handle diversity should be enhanced in order to better equip them to handle the requirements of immigrants and their children. This includes fundamental sensitisation of the systems to the treatment of ethnic, religious and cultural differences between immigrants and the local majority society. This demands fostering the corresponding awareness of the employees in the health and care sectors. The numbers and ratio of employees with migrant background in the health sector should in addition also be increased. This is applicable especially to medical practitioners. Following the significant simplification of validation of foreign qualifications (see below), the intention is that third country qualifications should soon also be recognised faster and more easily. This is a particularly complex challenge. A decisive base for future developments could be established already after first discussions with the relevant stakeholders. Attainment of intercultural competency should also be an important component in the training phase of medical practitioners already and should be reinforced by relevant subjects in advanced and further training in order to ensure sustained quality in the Healthcare system.

Status of implementation

Only a few of the satisfying initiatives, selected from the abundance of measures implemented to date by the State Secretariat for Integration and all the cooperation partners in the health sector, will be discussed below. These are, however, exemplary in their contribution towards preparing the health and care systems as best as possible to the challenges of an increasingly diverse society.

Framework Austrian health objectives

This is an overriding strategic measure taking into account all the aspects of a healthy life and serving to turn the vision “health for all” into reality as soon as possible. This process includes players from all walks of political life, since virtually all of the factors affecting human health are located outside the health sector (e.g. work, social status, migrant background, environment, education) and should therefore be included in the process. The State Secretariat for Integration will also, as from autumn 2012, participate in the implementation of the ten framework health objectives, as a member of the expert group - this, because the issues of the integration policy demand special attention under a “health in all policies” approach. The realisation of equal opportunities in health will require prime of place, especially when deducing the first concrete measures from meta-levels.

The ten framework health objectives were developed by over 30 institutions in cooperation with Austrian citizens, starting in May 2011. The first draft of this was presented in the course of the second Conference on Federal Health in May 2012. For more information, see: www.gesundheitsziele-oesterreich.at.

Recruiting and pre-qualifying migrants for care and support (Diversity@Care)

This project of the *Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Freie Wohlfahrt (BAG)* [Federal Working Association Free Welfare] offers applied training to migrants interested in a career of long-term care and support, optimally preparing them for the job market. Four modules have been developed to achieve this goal: Comprehensive information and advice to the participants, Preparation for education and occupation with emphasis on German (raising proficiency in German of the migrants to B2 level), Compilation of informative material and public relations, Close cooperation between project partners. This concept builds on an existing successful project which developed and implemented models aimed at facilitating migrant access to careers in care and support and service in everyday intercultural life. The project was developed by the members of the BAG (Caritas, Diakonie, Hilfswerk, Volkshilfe and Austrian Red Cross) with the support of the State Secretariat for Integration and started in Vienna and Upper Austria in June 2012. The Public Employment Service Austria plays a significant role here, guaranteeing qualified education.

“Migration and Health” course

This course at the Donau University Krems deals, on an academic level, with health-related questions arising through international migration and the resultant intercultural

gap in the health sector. Both the opportunities and the challenges are dealt with in this respect and any requirements for integration are pointed out. The next course will start in the autumn of 2012. The students qualify as academic experts after four semesters and are awarded the Master of Science degree after a further seven semesters, all including practical experience.

Guideline and Manual “Interculturally competent – a Manual for Medical Practitioners”

This manual and the accompanying guideline were published by Dr. Michael Peintinger in June 2011, with the purpose of assisting medical practitioners in offering improved advice and care to people with a migrant background. This new basic manual aims to improve the understanding of patients from other cultures and with other religions, thereby covering a field which has to date received inadequate attention in the training of medical practitioners in Austria. The intercultural competency of medical practitioners is enhanced through in-depth information, enabling treatment tailored to suit target groups and addressing patient fears, concerns and questions. The manual contains contributions by experts dealing with the wide range of different value systems, concepts of disease, pain and death, self-determination and religious diet prescriptions which medical practitioners must deal with in daily work. This book also discusses translation and language problems which often complicate dealing with persons with a migrant background. The guideline, of the same name, to this book serves as a quick and concise reference made available to all Vienna medical practitioners with health insurance contracts.

German course “Entering health care”

The German course of the Austrian Integration Fund *Entering health care* prepares migrants for a career in home care and/or as a care worker. This course has been presented three to four times per year since 2010. In Habibi, the house of education and occupational integration, migrants are taught important terminology specific to the field, to assist in their later positioning during training and in the job market. This German course therefore is an important and targeted means of further education, aiding occupational integration of migrants in the health sector. The eight-week course also includes a two-day trial internship to gain better insight into the occupation.

German course “Applied language for care workers”

This eight-week applied German course of the Austrian Integration Fund teaches the participants German on the B2 level for graduate health and hospital care workers. The objective of the course is to pass the aptitude test, or the recognition course for a foreign diploma at the AKH [General Hospital] Vienna. The course has been presented biannually since the summer of 2011.

Recognition/validation of qualifications

Due to the successful implementation of the action Recognition / Validation of qualifications in the Field of Action Work and Profession (see NAP.I measure 3.2.1), persons with a

migrant background will find it easier in future to start a career in Austria and find work commensurate with their qualifications and training. The successful cooperation of the State Secretariat for Integration, the Federal Ministry for Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection and the Federal Ministry of Science and Research made it possible to publish the ABC of recognition and to launch the website www.berufsanerkennung.at. This significantly facilitates the recognition of both academic and professional qualifications.

3.4.4 Prospects

The objective of the actions decided upon in the NAP.I for the Field of Action Health and Social Issues is the improvement of health and well-being of immigrants and their children. Due to the diversification of competencies, especially the Federal States, the social security carriers and the Federal Ministry of Health have much leeway in this field, which is why **increased networking and cooperation of the Federal authority** with these **players** is indispensable here. Since the **low-threshold approaches targeting certain groups** have, in various fields of action, already proven effective in reaching the migrants in their environment, these offers will now be **developed on Federal level** as well. Structural actions are therefore able to meet the challenges directly at their base, enhancing response to the needs of the migrants.

The **improvement of intercultural competency** and the corresponding **linguistic skills**, both of the **medical practitioners** and the **migrants**, are future focal points in this Field of Action. **Increased diversity in the health and care sector** would undoubtedly contribute towards relieving the demands on hospitals and ambulances.

3.5 NAP.I Field of Action: Intercultural Dialogue

3.5.1 Assessing the implementation status in the Field of Action Intercultural Dialogue

All the Expert Council recommendations for the Field of Action Intercultural Dialogue have been initiated already and one of these implemented. It is to be expected that the remaining proposals will be realised this year still. The following measures are recommended for priority implementation under the 20-Point Programme: The creation of a platform for institutionalised exchange of ideas with persons of Muslim denomination – the *Dialogue Forum Islam, Examples of a successful life – Together:Austria*, compilation of a glossary of integration-related terms and, based on this, drawing up a code of conduct on how the media should deal with integration, creating a media prize for outstanding journalism, for comprehensive coverage of the topic of integration as well as the promotion of young journalists to strengthen the representation of people with a migrant background in editorial departments. The measure *Examples of a successful life* has been implemented already and contributes towards spreading these positive examples of successful careers for increased impact also among the host society.

The establishment of the Dialogue Forum Islam is an overall positive contribution to the formulation of results. A detailed assessment of the implementation appears sensible only after presentation of a final report on the results.

The implementation status of the Glossary is also satisfying. Intensified sensitisation of journalists and the availability of a “language tool” should be consistently promoted and the award of a media prize remains an incentive for comprehensive coverage of the topic of integration.

Training and introduction into journalism of people with a migrant background is paramount in this respect. Implementation of this measure is proceeding successfully, but should also be expanded.

3.5.2 Dialogue Forum Islam

Objectives

A sustainable integration policy must also address religious issues, since this component must receive adequate coverage. Numerous studies indicate that the perception of Islam by sections of the population is highly critical, especially concerning the visible symbols of Islam. On occasion of the centennial recognition of Islam in Austria, the Dialogue Forum Islam provides an opportunity of creating an institutionalised platform for open exchange of ideas, where problems of coexistence may be addressed and options for solutions put forward. The Dialogue Forum Islam was established jointly with the Islamic Religious Community in Austria (IGGiÖ).

Status of implementation

State Secretary Sebastian Kurz and the President of the IGGiÖ, Dr. Fuat Sanac, introduced the Dialogue Forum Islam to the public at a press conference on 23 January, 2012. Seven working groups headed by independent experts deal with topics requiring concrete action, also developing potential approaches for solutions. The seven working groups are:

- Basic, advanced and further training of Imams in Austria
- Integration and Identity
- Issues concerning values and society
- Islamism and hostility towards Islam
- Roles of gender
- State and Islam
- Islam and the media

Discourse in the Dialogue Forum should be restricted exclusively to issues specifically concerning practicing of religion. Clear differentiation is therefore made between general integration-political challenges, social or cultural issues and issues associated with daily religious practice.

The first key issues of the discussions will be summarised in an interim report to be released mid-July. Here, the working group leaders will introduce current focal topics, but with no concrete proposals for action. This will be included in the final Dialogue Forum

Islam report scheduled for end 2012, which will discuss working group leader approaches to solutions.

3.5.3 Examples of successful life of migrants in Austria (role models)

Objectives

This proposal aims at bringing youths with or without a migrant background into contact with persons who have a migration story to tell and who have built a new life in Austria. This contact serves to inform youths that Austria is a country of opportunities and potential advancement, showing that even persons with difficult starting conditions can be successful in Austria. The diversity of experience and success of the integration ambassadors are pivotal here – not only prominent persons should serve as examples to young people, but also the guy next door.

Status of implementation

This measure was implemented under the project *Together:Austria*. By June 2012, the pool of integration ambassadors comprised roughly 150 persons and growing.

The project was introduced at a press conference on 13 October, 2011. Following this kick-off, State Secretary Kurz and various integration ambassadors had visited more than 50 schools by June 2012. These visits focussed especially on interaction with scholars and talking about a successful life in Austria.

The project was covered by media advertisements in Austrian dailies. This was done to highlight the contribution made to Austrian society by people with a migrant background and to explain to the host society the value migration and integration may bring the entire society. Recounting the achievements of people with a migrant background helps to reduce prejudices and resentment which often exist and therefore has an anti-discriminatory effect.

Apart from this pool of integration ambassadors, numerous organisations and companies dealing with the increasing diversity of their employees were recruited as supporters.

A website (www.zusammen-oesterreich.at) was created for project documentation, featuring short resumés and videos on the integration ambassadors, information on the supporting organisations and companies and reports on the school visits. Ongoing activities are in addition featured daily on Facebook under *Zusammen:Österreich* and a monthly newsletter is published for project partners and interested parties.

This was extended in June 2012 by the initiative *Together:Austria – Now you! Your country needs you*. The motto “Associations open their doors – migrants join in” places the focus on associations, organisations and volunteer work. This initiative aims at encouraging young migrants to participate more in sport and relief organisations (see Chapter 3.6 of the NAP.I Field of Action Sport and Leisure).

3.5.4 Glossary and media commitment

Objectives

Media have an important role to play in intercultural dialogue. Competent, fair and sensitive reporting and commentary on the topic of integration, on people with a migrant background and on co-existence in Austria requires in-depth knowledge. Concepts associated with integration, asylum, rights of foreigners and migration are often reported incorrectly and undifferentiated, or interrelationships may be confused. A glossary will for this reason be compiled for journalists, clarifying the meaning of integration-related concepts and facilitating their work in this field. To differentiate the areas, migration-related terminology will also be explained. A code of conduct to serve as the basis of journalistic commitment to ethical conduct will furthermore be compiled in cooperation with media representatives and journalistic bodies (Press Council, Press Club Concordia, National Union of Journalists, among other).

Status of implementation

A catalogue of terms was compiled together with media representatives; the catalogue is currently in final revision and will be introduced within the framework of the Media Award Presentation (see Measure 3.5.4).

The catalogue and the definition of terms are based on existing glossaries and definitions. Differing from the above, the added value of this description of terms will lie in its target group aware content, to serve as a reference to journalists and editors.

The final product will be available as a handy booklet and also online, allowing for continuous extension.

In addition to these definitions of terms, recommendations for balanced and differentiated reporting are being developed in cooperation with the media and journalistic bodies.

3.5.5 Media award

Objectives

This award is to honour journalists who are addressing the topic of integration in a differentiated and comprehensive manner. The status inherent in this award will be an incentive to media workers to strive for the same quality standard when dealing with integration.

Status of implementation

The award is presented for outstanding journalistic achievement on the topic of co-existence of the majority population and migrants in Austria. The work should promote tolerance and understanding in dealing with people of different origin, traditions, cultural imprint and religion. The award goes to a journalist who, through his/her work, makes a valuable contribution towards de-emotionalising the debate and whose work has made the greatest contribution to objective public discourse.

Journalists working for daily or weekly media in the printing, TV or radio sectors or over the Internet qualify for nomination. This excludes journalists who address specific ethnic or religious groups in their work. Media with a wide circulation among the host society and where balanced reporting on the integration topic is particularly significant are a target group. A 9-member jury was convened to evaluate the quality of the submitted articles and reportage. The award is worth 10 000 Euro and as such represents one of the highest awards in the Austrian media landscape. The prize will be awarded for the first time on 25 September, 2012, in the course of the *Österreichischen Medientage* [Austrian media days].

3.5.6 Promotion of young journalists

Objectives

This measure serves to encourage young persons with a migrant background to enter the journalist profession. The intention here is to break down any inhibiting thresholds. Whilst almost every fifth person living in Austria has a migrant background, their presence at editorial desks is much lower. In view of the social diversity, journalists with a migrant background are able to open up new perspectives and create awareness of new topics. This wider perspective will also result in persons with a migrant background finding themselves in the mainstream media, thus reducing the incentive to fall back on community-focussed media. The objective of this programme is to promote reporting in the Austrian media on the topic of intercultural competence. Media should be sensitised to the added value of a diversified staff.

Status of implementation

The scholarship programme for young journalists was published in the *DasBiber* magazine on 20 September, 2011. This programme aims at assisting graduates in their entry into the media sector.

The “mit scharf” academy is offering 20 places for journalists with a migrant background aged 18 to 28. Every participant will complete a two-month basic course which will teach the basics of journalism. The students also have the opportunity of publishing their work in the printed and online edition of *DasBiber*. Training continues with a one- to two-month stint at an Austrian daily or at the ORF [Austrian Broadcasting Corporation], where they will be guided by mentors in the editorial office. Prerequisites to participating in this scholarship programme are perfect command of the German language and (imminent) completion of relevant studies.

This project is supported by the State Secretariat for Integration, the Federation of Austrian Industry, BAWAG-PSK, Novomatic and OMV.

3.5.7 Prospects

All the measures proposed by the Expert Council **were dealt with** in the field of Intercultural Dialogue. Some measures are currently in the implementation stage and the Expert Council will continue to monitor this process and evaluate it on completion.

Supplementary recommendations may thereafter be formulated, based on the results of this evaluation.

Overall, it may be said that immigration policy has undergone a **paradigm shift**. Because immigration is accepted as a necessity, it is no longer left to chance, but managed. A range of legal instruments was developed in this respect in recent years, the latest one being the *Red-White-Red Card*. For integration to succeed, a start must be made immediately upon arrival in Austria and even earlier (through the German prior to Immigration action). A **necessity** therefore exists to develop a framework within which **immigrants are supported and challenged from the beginning**. In the course of the convention **Integration from the beginning** on 27 February, 2012, the relevant prerequisites were discussed for the first time, on the initiative of the State Secretariat for Integration and involving all the relevant players. The cross-sectional character is evident here also: Measures towards promotion of a climate of acceptance naturally involve not only the Field of Action Intercultural Dialogue, but also other fields of action.

In respect of the *Dialogue Forum Islam*, the objective is to **openly address challenges** as a first step towards identifying existing problems, involving representatives of the Islamic denomination, experts from practice and science and the State Secretariat for Integration, and to develop proposals for solutions on this basis. In addition to communicating basic Austrian values and rights, the purpose is especially to **counter social polarisation** and to **promote the sense of belonging in Austria**. Based on this necessity for action, possible proposals for solution must be developed and corresponding recommendations put forward. These recommendations are directed not only at the specific competent bodies – ministries, the Islamic denomination or civil society organisations, depending on the problem – but also at society in general. These recommendations by the *Dialogue Forum Islam* will be submitted in a final report by the end of 2012.

To further promote exchange of experience on the subject of intercultural dialogue, in-depth networking of the relevant players within the expert group Intercultural Dialogue would appear conducive to success.

3.6 NAP.I Field of Action: Sport and Leisure

3.6.1 Assessing the implementation status in the Field of Action Sport and Leisure

The Field of Action Sport and Leisure has established that the integration of migrant target groups is increasingly recognised as a social challenge and accepted as such by institutionalised representatives of sport. These are mostly top-down approaches, however, initiated by promotions and incentives of Federal sports promotions and by regional and community initiatives. The general social discussion about the immigrant society, strongly dominated by politics, has also led to more dynamism in dealing with the topic on local level of sport associations. This is attested to by more than 200 projects submitted to the Integration Award Sport in recent years.

Overall, the leisure component of life, which is increasing in significance in our lives and taking up more and more time, is amenable to further development in the integration area. In cooperation between the fields of action, suitable measures in support of integration, reaching both the local and immigrant population, should still be developed in this field. Especially bottom-up models should be considered in this respect. Against this background, measures promoting recreational activities as a “service to society” are particularly welcome. The State Secretariat for Integration in this respect launched initiatives promoting common activities of the local and immigrant populations in the recreational field, such as Lerncafés within the framework of measures outside of schooling. The statutory changes enabling migrants to join voluntary fire brigades in Styria and Carinthia, initiated by the State Secretariat for Integration, deserve special mention here, as does the recently launched initiative *Together:Austria – Now you! Your country needs you*.

Together:Austria – Now you! Your country needs you is an extension of the *Together:Austria* project (see Chapter 3.5.3 Examples of successful life of migrants in Austria (role models) of the NAP.I Field of Action Intercultural Dialogue). Locally active players – associations and organisational structures – are a noteworthy aspect of this extension. This project extension highlights the voluntary contribution people with a migrant background are making in their leisure time, within the framework of associations and organisational structures. Similar to the original *Together:Austria* project, this expansion in the form of voluntary activities is particularly welcome, since it facilitates common activities of immigrant and local populations and may ideally also exert a positive influence on the integration climate overall.

3.6.2 Recreation at school

Objectives

The measures in this field aim to open up infrastructural possibilities for forms of recreational activities at schools to a wider group of people, especially in areas with a high percentage of people with a migrant background in the population. Since schooling systems are currently undergoing significant organisational change towards all-day care, these developments must also be taken into account in planning of the measures. The representatives of the Field of Action advocate the implementation of three models here – in different Federal States, in metropolitan areas and in rural areas. Within the framework of school autonomy, concrete options and limits should be developed in the form of models.

Status of implementation

Curriculum for leisure time pedagogy

Changes within school organisational systems (e.g. trend towards all-day care) also affect the training of teachers. This triggered an (additional) change last year which brought about an extension of the regulation governing the curriculum for leisure time pedagogy. These changes and extensions entered into force in the 2011/12 winter semester.

The concept of recreational activities at school provides for guidance of scholars in terms of meaningful yet self-determined recreational activities including, for instance, playful, creative and sport activities as well as dealing with the media. The aim is to arouse the interest of the scholars and to introduce them to meaningfully shaping their leisure time. A leisure time pedagogue should therefore have relevant qualifications in pedagogy and specialised subjects which may, however, differ fundamentally from the traditional concept of school pedagogy.

Concerning organised sport, it should be noted that the hurdles facing sports club instructors in terms of mandatory training also in the artistic and creative field and the overly comprehensive training in pedagogy and didactics are excessive. The Leisure Time Pedagogy course kicked off with a workshop at the Pädagogische Hochschule Lower Austria on 14 January, 2012, attended by more than 70 participants. The first Leisure Time Pedagogy course at the Pädagogische Hochschule Vienna started on 16 April, 2012.

Networking discussions

Representatives of Federal schools in Vienna and other cities with a high ratio of population with a migrant background are currently being approached to gauge their interest in participating in pilot projects.

The models of voluntary all-day care at schools (see above) introduced by the Federal government in 2011 should certainly be taken into account in the implementation of the concept. Especially considering regulations governing liability, it should be investigated whether training of qualified leisure time pedagogues as leisure time managers would be possible for other population groups as well, against the background of optimised utilisation of the school infrastructure outside school care times. Following experience with the new training and the demand, the framework conditions should be correspondingly adapted in consultation with the political authorities.

Sport and other associations in the leisure industry should, in addition, be given the opportunity of direct participation in all-day care at schools. This requires an adaptation of regulations governing school organisation. Both measures contribute to a significant improvement of the integration concept in everyday life. The present options for implementation are for this reason being investigated in this respect.

3.6.3 Integration promotion approach in Federal Sport Funding

Objectives

Financial incentive systems are the best and most direct way of addressing players in the institutional sport environment. Federal Sport Funding constitutes such a system. This measure under the 20-Point Programme of the Expert Council aims to create awareness of the integration topic among players in the sport sector through financial incentives for integration measures, through support of networking of players in sport and institutions active in the areas of migrant and social care and by creating public impact through media reporting on supported projects. A further objective here is the statutory anchoring of

financial measures in support of Federal Sport Funding.

Status of implementation

“Sport and Integration” expert working group in the Federal Ministry of Sport and Integration promotion approach in Federal Sport Funding

Institutionalised treatment of the integration topic by the convened expert working group in the Federal Ministry of Sport culminated in a first assessment of the initial position in organised sport. The situation considering different aspects of organised sport is discussed in approx. 2-monthly meetings and measures or recommendations for support are developed. Apart from experts from the Field of Action Sport and Leisure, the expert working group includes representatives of the Federal Ministry of Defence and Sport, the Federal Ministry of the Interior, the three leisure sport associations ASKÖ, ASVÖ and SPORTUNION, the Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC), the Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF) and the Institute for Children’s Rights (IKEB).

A system of criteria was developed under the technical coordination of the Institute of Children’s Rights, for project applications and evaluations, based on experiences gained from completed integration projects in the field of Sport and Exercise. The report was compiled based on the working group’s evaluation of several projects and recommendation of some of these for support. The Federal Ministry of Defence and Sport will make 770 000 Euro available from 2011 to 2015 for funding of these projects.

The issues of “Obstacles and barriers to migrants in organised sport”, “Inculcation of intercultural competence in training and advanced training in sport” and “Promotion of health through sport and exercise in target groups with a migrant background” were addressed in three round table meetings of experts and stakeholders. This yielded conclusions in respect of measures to be taken.

The insights gained from developments over the past two years were decisive in the specific inclusion of integration promotion in the supported measures of the leisure sport associations in the new Federal Sport Funding. The relevant legislative text will be assessed shortly.

Intercultural Workshops in Sport

Five regional workshops *Intercultural cooperation in the sports club* will be held during the sport year 2012/2013, on the initiative of the expert working group of the Federal Ministry of Defence and Sport. A start will be made in the autumn of 2012 in Vienna, Graz and Salzburg, each offering an approx. six-hour free workshop for representatives of sport institutions. These workshops will be held in cooperation with experts in the field of integration from organisations such as SIQ (Caritas Graz), Migrare (Linz) and the Intercultural Centre (Vienna). To ensure a high degree of awareness, the workshops will be widely advertised via specific sports associated media and by electronic means via a website, newsletters and Facebook. In the course of initial discussions with Austria’s largest trade association ÖFB [Austrian Football Federation], an agreement was reached

on the inclusion of material and content on the topic of integration in the training documentation of the exercise managers and trainer's training. The topic will also be included in training of sports officials within the framework of the BSO's [Federal Sport Organisation] sport manager training.

Mentoring in Sport

A *Mentoring project* in sport is currently running in several Federal States, in cooperation with the Austrian Integration Fund. The sports organisations are assigning mentors who are introduced to mentees applying via the ÖIF. Outstandingly trained sport trainers with a migrant background have in this respect already been introduced to sport organisations in Austria, which complained about a shortage in precisely this field. Mentoring has on occasion even led to employment.

The six-month project is currently running in Tyrol and Styria and is scheduled to also start in Vienna, the Burgenland and in Lower Austria in the autumn of 2012.

Integration Award Sport

As mentioned in the objectives of the Expert Council in the Field of Action Sport and Leisure, one of the objectives is to achieve "a certain public exposure through media reporting" on supported projects. Increased media interest in the Integration Award Sport 2011 was generated in December 2011 through participation of the Federal Minister Norbert Darabos and the State Secretary for Integration, Sebastian Kurz, who also handed over the awards.

This public award ceremony awarded 19 winners for their particularly sustainable and innovative projects which contributed to the integration of people with a migrant background. This year's Integration Award Sport will be awarded in November 2012. The deadline for applications is 27 September, 2012.

Sport against racism & the positive role of sport in the Integration process

The *Sport against racism & the positive role of sport in the Integration process* project of the SAR Austria strives to promote public awareness of the problem of racism by staging various sports events, delivering a series of lectures at schools and other venues throughout Austria and developing appropriate measures and projects. Sport has the potential to play a significant role in the process of integrating migrants.

SIQ! VI Sport – Integration – Qualification

The SIQ! Sport – Integration – Qualification project of the Caritas of the diocese Graz-Seckau aims to deploy the social integrative potential of sport to its full extent (from low-threshold leisure activities to organised and leisure sport up to competitive sport) and to thereby expand the integration offer by adding a significant element. Children and youths may participate in the regular sport modules, sports events and adventure days, establish ties with associations or become members of one of the SIQ! partner associations. The SIQ! in addition offers its clients the opportunity of attaining qualifications in the field of

sport (trainer, etc.), thereby ensuring an additional qualification and, in the ideal case, even a professional career.

3.6.4 Prospects

As a cross-sectoral issue, **integration demands close coordination between the Fields of Action and the responsible political and administrative authorities**, especially in the Field of Action Sport and Leisure, where the competencies are quite fragmented. Progress in integration measures depends strongly on external developments in other sectors, as demonstrated by the delay in completing the **draft law on a new Federal Sport Funding Act** of the Federal Ministry of Defence and Sports, for instance. Should the promotion of integration measures in sport make it into final draft law and subsequent implementation, this may be considered a great success of the measure “Integration promotion approach in Federal Sport Funding” of the independent Expert Council for Integration.

This interdependence of the Fields of Action is also clearly documented in the **discussions of the expert working group on Sport** on the topic of **Health promotion through Sport and Exercise in target groups with a migrant background**. Concerning further work of the Expert Council, it is recommended that measures of several Fields of Action be interlinked and be jointly implemented, in the interest of widely evident prioritisation.

Voluntary work and various **forms of work in an honorary capacity** play a significant role in the **leisure component** of life; not only do these offer the individual a sense of fulfilment, but they also significantly contribute to co-existence in society – also from the integration-political point of view. This has been demonstrated already by the initiatives and projects in 2011, the European Year of Volunteering. Apart from the promotion of projects with corresponding objectives by the State Secretariat for Integration, the initiative enabling **participation of migrants in voluntary fire brigades**, irrespective of citizenship, deserves special mention here, in particular.

Based on the positive integrating effects arising from increased **participation in society** and the **dismantling of discrimination**, voluntary work deserves more future attention in the Field of Action Sport and Leisure. The *Together:Austria – Now you! Your country needs you* project may be seen as the first cornerstone of a sustainable integration initiative on which to build and expand further developments in this area. New approaches and content, specifically aimed at developing these key aspects should be defined.

3.7 NAP.I Field of Action: Living and the regional dimension of Integration

3.7.1 Assessing the implementation status in the Field of Action Living and the regional dimension of Integration

Cities and communities have the task of locally shaping the increasing ethnic, social and cultural plurality, actively and future-oriented. The Expert Council has developed various measures under the 20-Point Programme designed to strengthen the local integration and plurality capacity. In this context, social-integrative allocation management, integration promoting property management and the promotion of integration competency on municipal level were regarded as central focal points.

Since the measures comprise areas hitherto hardly dealt with nationwide, work during the past year focussed mainly on creating awareness, networking and solution concepts which should as far as possible be tailored to suit target groups and also in their implementation reflect the different circumstances in the Federal States, cities and communities. The second phase will deal with concrete approaches to implementation and measures.

The numerous projects funded within the framework of the support focus Communities of the State Secretariat for Integration also demonstrate the many approaches already being implemented in this field.

Initial approaches succeeded in making communities increasingly aware that allocation and re-assignment of not-for-profit and community flats or apartment complexes represents an important instrument for social-integrative and ethnic intermixing. Since the number of council flats is unknown, however, this is estimated empirically. The objective here is to reduce excessive concentrations and often also problematic constellations of socio-economically weak sections of the local and immigrant population. This may, but not necessarily will, favour specific conflict constellations and tendencies towards isolation and segregation.

On the apartment level, it is noticeable that the quality of building management is high already, yet clearly requires optimisation of social and integration aspects. This topic was addressed already in expert discussions, but is not yet in the implementation phase. In terms of regional integration competency, a concept has, in sector-spanning cooperation with the Federal States, the Association of towns and municipalities and the Community association, been developed this year which should significantly contribute to sensitisation of communities to integration and also to enable them in future to address the topic independently and to sustainably anchor integration on the local level. This may be seen as a highly positive first step, to be furthered in the course of implementation. Viewed overall, the cooperation which has been successfully established with all the responsible bodies, enabling wide-ranging common discourse over essential aspects of the Field of Action is very satisfactory. The creation of the support focus Communities by the State

Secretariat for Integration is seen as an important sign and a significant step. It should also be endeavoured to promptly implement the developed mature concepts in order to address further challenges under the Field of Action.

3.7.2 Improving the allocation/settlement management in not-for-profit and community housing

Objectives

The Expert Council for Integration recommended utilising the options offered by housing for developing an individual living environment and integration into a local community. The stock of public and council housing in Austria constitutes a useful instrument for socially integrating allocation policies by focussing on intermixing as a primary objective, thus preventing separate settlement. Since the private housing market offers steadily less affordable housing, the pressure is increasing on communities and not-for-profit housing developers. Concrete actions were recommended, such as organising a convention on intelligent, integration promoting and conflict reducing allocation management in Austria, intensified sensitisation of bodies allocating housing and optimisation of communication between community bodies allocating housing and caretakers.

Status of implementation

Convention “Habitation and Integration as a regional challenge” in November 2011

Based on the proposal under the Expert Council 20-Point Programme, the Donau University Krems organised a 2-day convention in November 2011, in cooperation with the State Secretariat for Integration, on the topic “Habitation and Integration as a regional challenge”. This represented the first nationwide exchange of experiences on the topic. Strategies for implementation were discussed with experts from the housing sector, developers, the Federation, State and communities as well as NGOs and affected parties. The convention defined concepts and developed the questionnaire on municipal settlement competency referred to below.

Survey on municipal rights for allocation

A questionnaire was compiled in the second quarter of 2012 to provide an accurate overview of the rights of allocation and practices in Austrian communities counting more than 15 000. In addition to the survey, communities will be analysed in respect of criteria such as age structures and migration. This will, for the first time, offer an overview of the annually allocated number of flats in Austria and the criteria for allocation.

3.7.3 Integration promoting property management

Objectives

The Expert Council endeavoured under the 20-Point Programme to stress that the quality

of property management is very important for daily co-existence and for “feeling at home”. Many everyday conflicts may in this way be minimised or solved in advance. Improvement of this service requires extensive debate, possibly even requiring legislative change. In terms of concrete activities, it was recommended that property management and its employees, caretakers and staff of caretaker service firms be offered enhanced training. The property management certification mark could furthermore be revised to cover also integration management. It deserves mention here that positive initiatives are in place already in this area, serving as an incentive for additional interested project managers. Two projects with innovative approaches, funded by the State Secretariat within the support focus Communities, are given as implemented examples.

Status of implementation

Convention on the topic of integration-promoting property management

A convention on integration-promoting property management offers the framework for networking of all involved parties and a first nationwide dialogue. In addition to the presentation of examples of good practice and offers for training, the convention should focus on the topic of services in particular. The convention is scheduled for the coming months with the aim of actively promoting this central aspect of residential integration.

Hello neighbour!

In the project of the Graz Bureau for Peace and Development, supported by the State Secretariat within the support focus *Communities*, the first barriers to intercultural co-existence in community settlements are being dismantled through improved information and communication following the application of activating community work. Responsibility for initial contact and care is being fostered in building management on the one hand and cultural barriers to acceptance in a new neighbourhood (who speaks to whom first) are on the other hand being dismantled. The neighbours get to know one another through controlled contact and the rules of co-existence are clearly explained to new lessees (in German and in the specific mother tongue). This minimises unintentional disturbances in the neighbourhood due to abuse, noise disturbance etc. in advance already. The requisite structure for coordinated joint monitoring of the project is being developed in cooperation with the administration of municipal community flats, making use of existing offers for intercultural support.

The Mürzbogen connects

The project of the ISGS Kapfenberg, supported through the support focus *Communities* of the State Secretariat for Integration, is a community project in the district Mürzbogen, including the bordering settlement areas Schinitz and Grazer Straße. The project aims to improve the integration of migrants in the settlement areas, to increase the acceptance of migrants by Austrian citizens and to improve the quality of life of the residents in respect of co-existence in the settlement area. This method of activation offers migrants new

opportunities for participation in society. The community workers also act as mediators in intercultural conflicts. Case management as well as individual support is also offered, as required.

3.7.4 Promoting integration skills on a municipal level

Objectives

Integration occurs locally in the residential areas of the immigrants who also increasingly find a home in smaller communities outside the urban centres. Communities are thus faced with the challenge of creating structures for successful integration and to also institutionally prepare for the cross-sectoral topic of integration. The compilation of concepts and models was recommended towards promotion of integration skills, including local initiatives and projects.

Status of implementation

It should be emphasised that work in this area focussed last year on developing sustainable concepts in cooperation with all the relevant stakeholders, constituting the core implementation element. This was regarded as essential, since a wide legitimating basis for this concept could only be created through mutual dialogue, as explained in detail below. It was furthermore endeavoured, through participation in existing networks, to avoid duplication of work in integration agendas and to rely on exploiting synergy effects instead.

Network and concept “Integration in rural areas”

Since integration of migrants is mainly local, rural areas are correspondingly significant. The network Integration in rural areas was launched for this reason, supported by the State Secretariat for Integration, which developed an integral concept for improvement of integration skills in rural areas, in coordination with the Association of towns and municipalities and the Community association, the Federal Chancellery and the Integration departments of the Federal States. The added value of this access lies in the fact that rural areas and communities are empowered to personally guide integration processes, proactively and sustainably. Communities are to be made aware of the integration topic and its significance via the focal points Promotion & Communication, Moving Regions, a Toolbox and a Guiding project and furthermore also obtain practical support in order to sustainably anchor these cross-sectoral issues on the communal level as well. The projects are interactive and in the implementation phase. The Austrian Community Association is a central implementation partner, especially in the area of Promotion & Communication.

ÖROK Implementation partnership “Spatial Diversity and Integration”

Active accommodation and settlement management was incorporated in the ÖROK 2011 [Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning] spatial planning concept to prevent ethnic concentrations. It is gratifying to note that the cross-sectoral topic of Integration has been incorporated into this process, not least through the initiative of the State Secretariat for

Integration, and is now dealt with in the ÖROK implementation partnership *Spatial Diversity and Integration*, together with spatial policy issues. In the interest of competence-spanning networking, prevention of duplication of work and utilisation of synergy effects, all of which are essential components of a cross-sectoral topic such as integration, this working group under the aegis of the Federal Chancellery and comprising representatives of Federation and States, was appointed to serve until 2013. Objectives include the development and spread of specialist bases for a diversity cognisant spatial and regional policy, sensitisation of the active players, support of the latter on the communal and regional level and improvement of the structural prerequisites.

Support focus “Communities”

New immigrants are offered support with settling in their new living space from day one, through effective and interlinked support systems. New opportunities for successful integration are also offered to persons who have been residing in Austria for some time already. The community package of the State Secretariat for Integration, which makes extensive provision for metropolitan areas as well, constitutes a significant focal point.

3.7.5 Prospects

The implementation status mentioned above shows that the **concept phases** are **well advanced** in all areas and that **results of implementation** may be expected in the **coming year**, whereby targeted implementation should be sustainably advanced.

In terms of improvement of allocation management, this in fact means that the mentioned **survey on communal rights of allocation** should not be a once-off event but be presented to and discussed with bodies responsible for allocation of housing and the surveyed communities in the form of a **workshop**. The common discourse may contribute to learning more about integration-inhibiting circumstances in order to identify these earlier. This should contribute towards optimising communication between the caretakers and the community organs allocating housing.

After acquisition of the facts, the **effects of housing allocation practices of regional authorities** should be **analysed in-depth**, in a next step based on the questionnaire and workshop. An important issue in this respect would be establishment of the legality of control mechanisms in the allocation of public housing.

In order to implement promotion of integration competency on the communal level, **Promotion and Communication of the focal point *Integration in rural areas*** will increasingly be pursued in the coming year as well, in the form of cooperation between the State Secretariat for Integration and the Community Association. The topic should furthermore be included in the agendas of mayoral conferences on State level and be discussed against the background of regional development and demand. It is also recommended that ***Co-existence and Integration in Communities*** be included as a **focal point** on the website of the Community Association and this topic be included in the **magazine *Kommunal*** as a central national platform.

It might also be considered, in cooperation with the Federal States, to define **community-spanning focal regions** where integration skills are locally enhanced through a broad participatory process, taking into account local needs.

A **practical manual** is being compiled to support communities in the development of integration skills. This manual addresses the need for knowledge and decision-making competency of local and communal players and supports the implementation of local integration action, using suitable tools. The manual is designed to cater both for communities with little experience in integration and for those who have already taken first steps in this direction. As the Expert Council, we furthermore recommend that regionally existing concepts of education sponsorships be expanded nationwide.

Through these coherent parts of an overall strategy, sensitisation of all involved parties, be they in residential areas, in property management or municipal administration, to the opportunities which integration promises communities is bound to succeed. All interested communities should in addition be given concrete know-how and tools empowering them to independently shape integration agendas.

4. Conclusion and prospects

4.1 Conclusion: Remarkable projects and actions

The discussion of the integration-political measures clearly shows that the actions taken have resulted in remarkable progress in all areas. Measured by financial resources made available, integration-political relevancy and public impact, the following 10 projects or actions during the reporting year 2011/12 deserve special mention, whereby the selection does not purport to be based on an objective appraisal.

1. The further development of the **support of language skills in institutional child care centres**, based on an Art. 15a B-VG agreement initiated by the State Secretariat for Integration, represents a significant step in the Field of Action Language and Education, targeting early elimination of possible weak points in the command of the German language in order to level the playing field for children entering primary school with or without a migrant background. The early support of language skills is a significant measure in support of integration and should be extended to the **2nd year of kindergarten**. The second year of attending kindergarten, for children with special needs for support with German, has been announced already and should not be lost sight of. The introduction of two model regions in Salzburg and Lower Austria is gratifying in this respect.
2. The Federal-State Agreement (pursuant to Art. 15a B-VG) initiated by the Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture supports **courses for adults in the fields of basic education and competencies**, which may also lead to the retroactive attainment of formal educational qualifications. This action falls under the Field of Action Work and Profession, again targeting people with and without migrant backgrounds and potentially increasing their chances of participating in the job market, which is undoubtedly a significant measure. The objectives of integration are out of reach without gainful work and a regular income: the basis of an independent existence in Austria, without requirement for aid.
3. The Federal Ministry for Science and Research and the State Secretariat for Integration introduced a joint plan of action in 2011 to speed up the **recognition of academic and professional qualifications**. The complicated and long winded recognition procedure of the past was often regarded as unfair by those affected and also resulted in above average numbers of third country nationals being compelled to work below their actual qualifications. This initiative provides especially for existing ENIC-NARIC (European Network of Information Centres - National Academic Recognition

Information Centre) to be improved to operate as one-stop-shops. Even though this initiative is rather late in coming, since many well qualified third country nationals have for many years been working below their qualification, it should continue to be actively promoted.

4. The Federal Ministry for Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, together with the State Secretariat for Integration, also decided in 2011 to register the **migrant backgrounds of job seekers**. This measure requires minor financial resources and is aimed at analysing basic statistical data in terms of the problem, in order to better match consultation and support measures to unemployed groups.
5. **Teaching and learning material** was developed, **trial tests** were published in the Internet and **maps of places offering German courses** were created in order to motivate longer term residents to enrol for German courses and also to assist new immigrants in their search for learning material and courses in German. It should be endeavoured to match the material on offer to the realities of life of those wishing to learn. Through provision of information and the positive branding of new immigrants and even of those having immigrated much further back, such persons could be convinced that economic success and social participation outside the own group may be substantially enhanced through the improvement of their knowledge of German.
6. The institution of a **Dialogue Forum Islam** in 2012 also constituted a significant integration promoting step which also, through open dialogue, served to bring to the fore an area of social interaction which is often characterised by distrust and misunderstanding. The Dialogue Forum Islam addresses the population with or without a migrant backgrounds and focuses on topics such as the relationship between Islam and the structures of the Republic or the lawful value system of this society. The topics also include the role of the genders, the relationship towards the State, democracy and rule of law and the future of schooling of Imams in Austria.
7. The **Together:Austria** project is based on approx. **150 integration ambassadors**, all of whom have a migrant backgrounds, and who tell of their personal integration experience within the framework of public events, especially visits to schools. This project aims at communicating authentic personal experiences of integration processes, without superficialities and generalisations. This project has been remarkably well accepted to date and has the potential of changing the perception of integration processes. It was complemented in June 2012 by the initiative **Together:Austria – Now you! Your country needs you**. The emphasis is now increasingly placed on associations, organisations and honorary offices with the aim of creating enthusiasm among migrant youth for participation in sport and relief organisations (“Associations open doors - migrants join in”).

8. **Basic framework objectives for health**, which will thereafter influence concrete measures, planning and actions have been developed for the Austrian Health system since 2011. The State Secretariat for Integration is increasingly being involved in the realisation of equal opportunity in health in Austria, based also on increased sensitisation to the migrant backgrounds of the population and the necessity of reaching population groups with home languages other than German (both as patients and employees in the health sector).
9. **A scientific survey**, including all communities with more than 15 000 inhabitants, will be launched in 2012 in order to assess the capacity of Austria's communities to accommodate households with and without a migrant backgrounds. This will, for the first time, allow an assessment of the **capacity of larger communities of providing accommodation** for their residents. This survey is a basic prerequisite to estimating the effectiveness of intelligent management of the allocation of accommodation based on social and ethnic criteria, with a view to avoiding excessive and conflict-prone concentrations.
10. The **Integration Award Sport** and the **Action Sport against Racism** have a common focus: Sport unites people of different social and geographic origin and, for a limited period at least, creates a form of community spirit which sends prejudices and conflicts into the background. The display of integrative measures in associations and also the message of sport against racism are of great symbolic value, especially among the youth, and should again be pursued in one form or the other in 2012 as well.

4.2 Prospects: From projects to integration policy all in one

The topic of integration policy attracted much Federal level political attention in 2011, based also on the creation of a State Secretariat for Integration, as demanded for many years. Austria was able to free itself from intense party-political manoeuvring and mutual obstruction, taking steps towards a common political understanding of migration control and integration policy. The Red-White-Red Card was finally also introduced in 2011, without doubt constituting a universally welcomed step towards qualified and controlled immigration.

Austria has, in terms of integration policy, found direction and the signs of the time favour the further development of proactive migration and integration policies. The following three elements are superordinate to such a proactive integration policy, irrespective of the concrete measures under the seven Fields of Action of the NAP.I:

4.2.1 Integration from the beginning

Integration from the beginning is a concept which states that integration promoting learning processes should start as early as possible. In order to maintain focus, the learning processes should also follow an agreed curriculum. The integration measures are not subject to whims or party-political opportunism, but steps following reasoned concepts. The learning processes are relevant to both sides of the immigration society, i.e. the immigrants and the resident population, including also the basic institutional framework of the country. The objective of *Integration from the beginning* is to speed up successful participation in the central spheres of society.

Integration from the beginning starts early. The start is made in the immigrants' country of origin already, not only after their arrival in Austria. Embassies and consulates have a special role to play in this respect, since they are the first players in the *Integration from the beginning* and also the first conveyors of a newly created culture of welcome. Following the embassies should be the communities and also the large, internationally orientated institutions receiving immigrants. Universities, internationally represented companies and international organisations (particularly important to the Vienna location) are players who should be included in the welcoming process. Welcoming comprises information, advice and offering bridging qualifications. These steps should be coordinated. A coordinated concept of *Integration from the beginning*, with minimum standards, should replace duplication of work and repeated invention of the wheel.

4.2.2 From Project to Standard Structure

The integration landscape in Austria is characterised by varied and historically developed projects. One of the reasons is that there was no Federal level institution responsible for integration before the State Secretariat for Integration was created much later. The support of individual projects, on the other hand, is an effective method of launching a variety of projects nationwide and creating customised offers. The effect of such projects is often not sustained beyond first kick-off, however, since it is characterised by short-term objectives and individual action.

The Expert Council therefore suggests that the path leading from support of individual projects to a standard structure be travelled more often. The standard structure has two components in this respect: Retention and observance of the objectives and focal points of the NAP.I and the 20-Point Programme of the Expert Council in the allocation of project support, including increasing the budget and competencies of the State Secretariat for Integration in order to allow the latter to incorporate successful projects into a standard structure, thereby bundling integration-political efforts. To the Expert Council, political enforceability is not a primary issue. A measure such as the above would certainly make sense and would facilitate attainment of goals and effectiveness of deployed resources.

4.2.3 Learning from one another in a multi-level system

Integration from the beginning, all in one and from one source, is not easy to realise in a Federation of states that are powerful in many respects, and states and autonomous communities. Integration policies are practiced by many Ministries and also by the States and communities. In the positive sense, this might represent a special potential for political innovation, since the multitude of communities and States also contributes many “integration-political laboratories”, developing measures and strategies. In the ideal case, this would be a type of competition to find the best solutions and failure of a laboratory experiment would have limited consequences in terms of region and impact. On the negative side, however, this leads to parallel integration-political measures in the States and communities with constant “re-invention of the wheel” costing time and money and leading to frustration when it is recognised that other solutions would have been preferable (see: SVR 2012 Expert Council for German Foundations for Integration and Migration (SVR): Integration in a Federal system: Federation, States and the role of communities. Annual expert opinion 2012 with integration barometer. Berlin 2012).

The Expert Council is of the opinion that the vertical and horizontal cooperation of the individual regional bodies and ministries should be intensified in order to progress from unproductively working in parallel to productively working together. The existing structures may provide the starting point here, provided cooperation between players in the Advisory Committee on Integration and also with the other players (State Secretariat, Expert Council) can be improved. Existing structures in the Federal Ministry of the Interior should in addition be strengthened, enabling these to collect and examine integration-political learning processes in progress on communal level, for instance, in order to disseminate successful models.