



European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

# Intergroup Relations and Intercultural Policies in Zürich, Switzerland

**Draft version, please do not quote.**

**– not yet peer reviewed, not yet accepted by the city –**



Author:

Wolfgang Bosswick

european forum for migration studies (efms)

June 2009

© 2008 European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions  
Wyattville Road, Loughlinstown, Dublin 18, Ireland  
Telephone: + 353 1 2043100, Fax: + 353 1 2826456

## Table of Content

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Foreword.....</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>1. Introduction.....</b>  | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>2. Background information on Switzerland .....</b>  | <b>6</b>  |
| 2.1. History of migration and composition of the migrant populations.....                                    | 7         |
| 2.2. National policy context.....  | 11        |
| <b>3. Background information on Zürich .....</b>   | <b>12</b> |
| 3.1. Brief description of Zürich.....  | 12        |
| 3.2. Zürich’s migrant population and its characteristics .....   | 13        |
| 3.3. Zürich’s Muslim population and its characteristics .....  | 17        |
| <b>4. Local intercultural policies in general.....</b>   | <b>18</b> |
| 4.1. General approach towards ethnic and religious issues in the city .....                                  | 19        |
| 4.2. Issues, demands and interests.....  | 20        |
| 4.3. (Institutionalised) forms of relations and dialogue in the city .....                                   | 21        |
| 4.3.1. Forum der Religionen.....   | 21        |
| 4.3.2. Contacts between the city and migrant organisations .....   | 22        |
| 4.3.3. Municipal funding for NGO integration projects.....   | 23        |
| 4.3.4. Activities and projects for improving intergroup relations .....                                      | 23        |
| 4.4. Relationship between different ethnic groups in Zürich.....   | 24        |
| 4.5. Public communication.....   | 25        |
| 4.6. Summary and lessons learned .....   | 25        |
| <b>5. Local intercultural policies towards Muslim communities .....</b>                                      | <b>26</b> |
| 5.1. Major issues, demands and interests .....   | 26        |
| 5.2. General approaches and policies improving relations with Muslim groups.....                             | 30        |
| 5.3. Good practice examples of concrete activities and measures improving relations with Muslim groups ..... | 30        |
| 5.4. Summary and lessons learned.....  | 31        |
| <b>6. Public communication: strategies of the city administration and local media .....</b>                  | <b>31</b> |
| <b>7. Intergroup relations and radicalisation .....</b>  | <b>32</b> |
| 7.1. Radicalisation within the majority population.....  | 32        |
| 7.2. Radicalisation within the migrant and/or minority population .....                                      | 32        |

7.3. Radicalisation: Summary and lessons learned .....33

**8. Conclusion: Key challenges, lessons and learning for CLIP.....33**

**Bibliography .....35**

**Interviewees .....37**

## Table of Figures

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <a href="#">Figure 1: Proportion of foreigners living in Switzerland (1900 – 2007)</a> .....           | 8  |
| <a href="#">Figure 2: Proportion of foreigners living in Switzerland (April 2009)</a> .....            | 8  |
| <a href="#">Figure 3: Foreigners in Switzerland by nationality (2008)</a> .....                        | 9  |
| <a href="#">Figure 4: Population of Switzerland according to religious affiliation (2000)</a> .....    | 9  |
| <a href="#">Figure 5: Countries/regions of origin of the Muslim population (2000)</a> .....            | 10 |
| <a href="#">Figure 6: total population of the city of Zürich by religious affiliation (2000)</a> ..... | 13 |
| <a href="#">Figure 7: Foreigners in Zürich according to Residence Permission</a> .....                 | 14 |
| <a href="#">Figure 8: Zürich city districts</a> .....  | 14 |
| <a href="#">Figure 8: Foreigners in Zürich by country of origin (December 2008)</a> .....              | 15 |
| <a href="#">Figure 9: Foreigners moving to Zürich in 2008 by Nationality</a> .....                     | 16 |
| <a href="#">Figure 10: Zürich’s Muslim population according to nationality (2000)</a> .....            | 17 |

## Foreword

European cities, in particular major cities with strong economies, attract immigrants from all over the world. As a result, urban populations became increasingly heterogeneous in ethnic, cultural and religious terms. The multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious structures of urban society are, on the one hand, an opportunity for cities. On the other hand, heterogeneity challenges a city's ability to maintain peaceful and productive relations among the different segments of the population.

For this reason, cities have a genuine interest in successful local integration practices. Therefore, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (CoE), the City of Stuttgart and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions ('Eurofound') came together to form the European network of 'Cities for Local Integration Policies' (CLIP) for migrants. This network, launched in 2006, brings together about 30 European cities in a joint learning process: through the structured sharing of experiences, the network aims to enable local authorities as well as national and European policymakers to learn from each other and, thus, pursue more effective integration policies for migrants at a regional, national and European level. The learning process is accompanied by researchers from six academic research centres.<sup>1</sup>

The city of Zürich joined the CLIP network at the start of this third module of CLIP. The researchers at the efms of the University of Bamberg are responsible for this first report on Zürich.<sup>2</sup> Together with the contact person from the municipality of Zürich, Christof Meier, an enormous effort has been undertaken to collect the data for this report. Many officials from the municipality, Muslim communities and local experts in Zürich were interviewed during the city visit in March 2009. They provided reports, statistics and comments for this report and beyond that have maintained continuous communication. Additionally, social partners, representatives of schools and kindergartens, migrant organisations, religious communities, the police and the media provided information and useful comments. I would like to thank all those who have cooperated in providing information and comments, and the city of Zürich for contributing the funds for this case study which could not be covered by EU funds.

Wolfgang Bosswick  
Bamberg, June 30, 2009

---

<sup>1</sup> The European forum for migration studies (efms) in Bamberg, the Institute for Urban and Regional Research (ISR) in Vienna, the Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES) in Amsterdam, the Forum of International and European Research on Immigration (FIERI) in Turin, the Institute of International Studies in Wrocław and the Centre for Migration Policy Research (CMPR) in Swansea.

<sup>2</sup> The author – not the city – is responsible for the content of this report; the copyright remains with Eurofound: © European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2007, Wyattville Road, Loughlinstown, Dublin 18, Ireland.

## 1. Introduction

Cities are very ethnically, culturally and religiously heterogeneous. The multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious structures of urban populations challenge the ability of municipalities to establish or maintain peaceful relations among the different segments of the population. In this third module of the CLIP project, we are interested in the relations between different groups in the city, local policies established to deal with these groups, and the way in which representatives of migrant associations, religious communities and NGOs assess the local activities.

The concept of ‘group’ used in this CLIP module is rather broad, since “the term ‘group’ basically has two different meanings in the social sciences: on the one hand it stands for stable structures of interaction among persons, on the other hand ‘group’ is understood as a social category that does not necessarily imply relations among the persons that are included in the category. National, ethnic or religious ‘groups’ in a city would be cases of such categories” (Heckmann 2008: 3-4). Hence, ‘intergroup relations’ deals with relations between ‘real groups’ such as the city administration, the city council, welfare organisations, migrant organisations, religious communities and the police, but also with social categories such as ‘the Turkish group’ or ‘the group of Christians’ etc.

As decided by the CLIP network, the relations to and dialogue with Muslim communities are a special focus of this module. This focus is due to the fact that Islam is by far the largest ‘new’ religion in European countries of immigration, and that Muslims are perceived as particularly disconnected from ‘European life’. Compared to other migrant groups, there are higher rates of discrimination and more prejudices against and fears of Muslims.

Led by these theoretical and political assumptions, the CLIP research group developed a questionnaire that has been filled out by city officials. The study at hand is based on the information collected by this questionnaire, on existing literature on this field as well as on interviews with local experts conducted by the researcher in spring 2009.

Since the national situation has an important impact on the activities on the local level, the study begins with background information on Switzerland (cf. chapter 2) before delivering background information on the city (cf. chapter 3). The following chapters elucidate the city’s general intercultural policies (cf. chapter 4), as well as specific policies aimed at Muslims (cf. chapter 5). Radicalisation, extremist political and religious positions, which can occur both among natives and migrants, are in the focus of chapter 7. The study concludes with a summary and some lessons learned (cf. chapter 8).

## 2. Background information on Switzerland

The following chapter provides general information about Switzerland. The first section describes the history of migration to Switzerland and the consequent composition of the migrant population. It also includes data about Muslim communities in Switzerland. The second section summarises the national (integration) policy context. Because of the important

role of federalism – and thus of the cantons – in Switzerland, background information is also given on the Canton of Zürich in this chapter.

## 2.1. History of migration and composition of the migrant populations

Immigration processes to Switzerland started in the course of the industrialisation of the country in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Before that time, Switzerland was characterised by emigration. In 1890, immigration exceeded emigration for the first time in the country's history. 25 years later, on the eve of World War I, about 600,000 foreigners were living in Switzerland and made up 15% of the total population. Back then, the majority of the immigrants were labour migrants from the neighbouring countries of Germany, Italy, France and Austria. During the two World Wars, immigration decreased, having its historical low in 1941 with a proportion of foreigners of only 5% (Mahnig/Wimmer 2003: 137/138).

After World War II, a second period of immigration began. Again, labour migrants arrived in Switzerland. They did not have a permanent residence status, but rather limited working permits. Similarly to the case of Germany, labour migrants in Switzerland were called 'guest workers' (*Gastarbeiter*), indicating that they would not settle, but instead leave the country after having worked there for a few years. In 1970, more than one million foreigners were living in Switzerland, fuelling xenophobia and fears of *Überfremdung* (foreign domination). Although the majority of the immigrants still came from the neighbouring countries – particularly Italy – the composition of the foreign population has become more diverse since the 1960s; immigration from Portugal, Yugoslavia and Turkey increased (BFM 2009: 9).

During the international economic crisis in 1973/1974, the number of foreigners in Switzerland decreased again. Their percentage fell from 17.2% in 1970 to 14.8% in 1980. After the crisis, immigration processes were characterised not only by labour immigration, but also by family reunification as well as the arrival of refugees and asylum seekers. The latter group included immigrants from Sri Lanka, former Yugoslavia as well as Turkey and increased the heterogeneity of the foreign population in the country. Furthermore, restrictive laws on naturalisation contribute to the high share of foreigners among the population in Switzerland. This share has seen a steady increase to more than 20% in the 1990s and lies today at about 22%.

*Figure 1: Proportion of foreigners living in Switzerland (1900 – 2007)*

Source: compiled by efms based on data of BFS 2008: 13

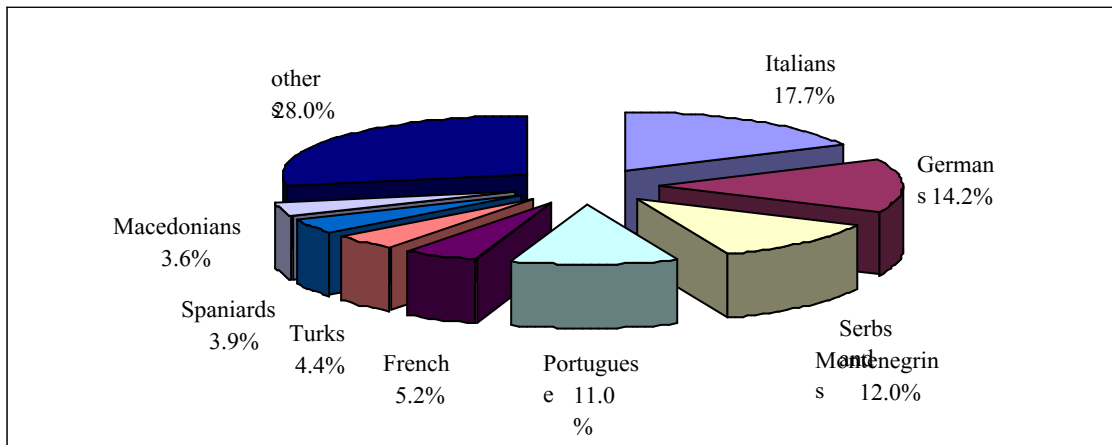
Swiss statistics only provide information on Swiss nationals and foreign nationals living in the country. Thus, the migration background of residents who became naturalised is not visible in statistical data. The category of foreigners still includes the majority of people with a migration background living in Switzerland, for the laws on naturalisation are rather restrictive. Therefore, descendants of immigrants who do not have an own immigration experience are still foreigners and usually referred to as ‘second generation immigrants’. As figure 2 shows, 21.8% of all people living in Switzerland today are foreigners (as of April 2009). This means in total numbers that among the country’s population of about 7,719,100 approximately 1,684,200 people are foreigners (BFS 2009: 11/13).

*Figure 2: Proportion of foreigners living in Switzerland (April 2009)*

Source: compiled by efms based on data of BFS 2009: 11/13

The history of immigration to Switzerland has a large impact on the current composition of the country’s foreign population. Italians, who have made up the largest group since the 1950s, still constitute the largest group today with a share of 17.7% of the total foreign population. They are followed by Germans (14.2%), Serbs and Montenegrins (12%), Portuguese (11%) and French nationals (5.2%). The percentage of Turks among foreigners living in Switzerland lies at 4.4%. Furthermore, 3.9% of the country’s foreign residents are Spanish nationals and 3.6% stem from Macedonia. Figure 3 gives an overview about this composition of the foreign population.

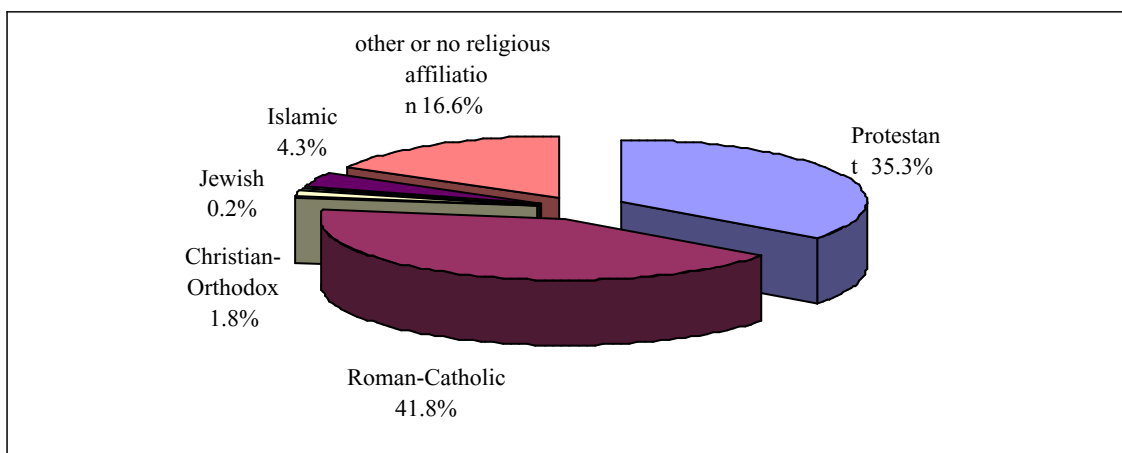
Figure 3: Foreigners in Switzerland by nationality (2008)



Source: compiled by efms based on data of BFM 2009: 48

The growing diversity of Switzerland's residents is also reflected in the increasing heterogeneity of religious groups. The Swiss constitution guarantees religious freedom, but the concrete relationship between church and state is determined by the individual cantons. Thus, some of the Swiss cantons traditionally have a Roman-Catholic majority, others are mainly Protestant. In total, 41.8% of the people living in Switzerland are Roman-Catholic, 35.3% are Protestant. Orthodox Christians make up another 1.8%. Following Christianity, Islam is the second biggest religion. 4.3% of Switzerland's residents are Muslims (BFS 2000). Furthermore, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs and many other religious groups also all live in the country.

Figure 4: Population of Switzerland according to religious affiliation (2000)

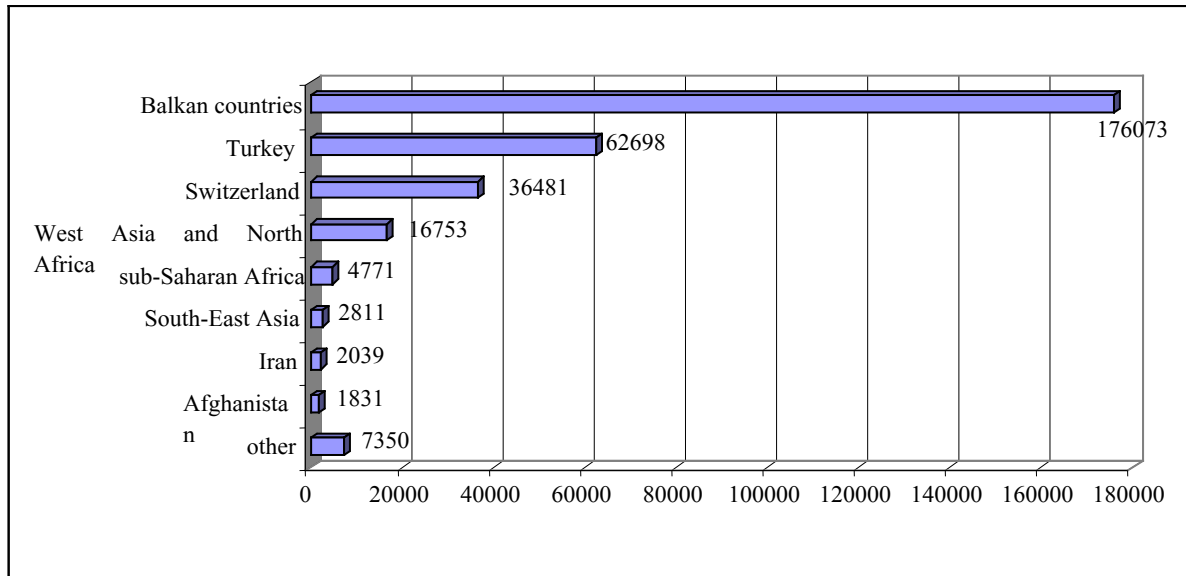


Source: compiled by efms based on data of BFS

Switzerland's Muslim population is mainly the result of immigration to the country after World War II. In the 1960s, labour migrants from Turkey and later from Yugoslavia arrived in Switzerland. Their wives and children followed in the second half of the 1970s in the course of family reunification. Furthermore, many Muslims immigrated to Switzerland as

refugees and asylum seekers, often because of civil wars in (former) Yugoslavia or Africa (EKA 2005:5). Figure 5 provides an overview of the main countries and regions of origin.

Figure 5: Countries/regions of origin of the Muslim population (2000)



Source: compiled by efms based on data from EKA 2005: 14

According to the Swiss population census, conducted in 2000, there are 310,807 Muslims living in Switzerland, the majority of whom being Sunnis of European origin. Almost 80% of the Muslims in Switzerland have the citizenship of one of the Balkan countries or Turkey. About 12% have Swiss citizenship. Naturalisation processes in Switzerland are the main reason for this share which also shows that Muslims settle in Switzerland. More and more children and grandchildren of Muslim immigrants were born and raised in the country. They are referred to as ‘Muslims of the second and third generation’. Almost half of Switzerland’s Muslim population is younger than 25 years (EKA 2005:14).

There are several Muslim organisations in Switzerland that are considered important means of socialisation, and places to exchange thoughts and gather information. They are also believed to support integration. Many of the local associations are not predominantly religious, but are rather culturally or socially oriented and serve as meeting and communication places. Throughout Switzerland, there are about 130 cultural centres and prayer rooms as well as approximately fifty Muslim associations; their members, however, tend to stem from a specific ethnic and religious background and do not reflect the diversity of the local Muslim population. In contrast to the local associations, Muslim organisations in Switzerland are religiously and culturally diverse. Two important national organisations are the ‘League of Muslims in Switzerland’ (*Liga der Muslime der Schweiz*) and ‘Muslims in Switzerland’ (*Muslimen, Musliminnen in der Schweiz*). Their position among the various Muslim communities is weak, and they tend to have little relevance for the specific local associations. Thus, it is difficult to establish a national umbrella organisation for Muslim associations that could also make it easier for the state to communicate with Muslim

communities (EKA 2005: 18). On the local level, however, relevant Muslim umbrella organisations are active such as the VIOZ (Association of Muslim organisations in Zürich).

## 2.2. National policy context

The national policy context concerning the integration of immigrants is largely influenced by the societal definition of the immigration situation – the perception of the ‘nature’ of ongoing migration processes by major active bodies in politics and society. Immigration to Switzerland has always been linked to labour migration, which was meant to have a temporary character. This temporary character could, however, not be maintained – using the words of the Swiss writer Max Frisch: “We called for workers, but people arrived”. Switzerland has had – and still has – one of the highest immigration rates in Europe and about one fifth of its population does not have the Swiss nationality. Still, Switzerland does not consider itself to be an immigration country. It also has no real immigration policy on the federal level. Switzerland is a multicultural and multiethnic country in itself. It is home to four different ethnic groups and has four national languages (German, French, Italian and Rhaeto-Romanic). Thus, the country always has had to have means to ensure its populations’ integration. The Swiss mode of integration of immigrants shares similarities with this general approach (Mahnig/Wimmer 2003: 135).

One of the most important features of Switzerland that has a direct impact on integration of immigrants is its federalism. The country is made up of twenty-three cantons (three of which are again divided into two half-cantons) which have a large autonomy, e.g. in the fields of education, healthcare, culture, religion or security. Switzerland also considers the cantons to be key factors in the area of integration policies. They can take up direct measures for immigrants for they know the needs of the local population. Thus, integration policy is not planned or implemented at the federal level, but lies mainly within the responsibilities of the cantons (BFM 2009: 34).

There are, however, some laws and institutions concerning immigration and integration at the federal level. The ‘Federal Law of Residence and Settlement of Foreigners’ (*Bundesgesetz über Aufenthalt und Niederlassung der Ausländer*) dates back to 1931, a time, when xenophobia was common in Europe. It aimed at the defence of the national territory and was directed against *Überfremdung*, a fear of foreign domination that has been – and still can be – found within the Swiss population. Within the last fifteen years, two commissions focusing on the foreign population were established. The ‘Federal Commission against Racism’ (*Eidgenössische Kommission gegen Rassismus, EKR*) was installed in 1994/1995 in order to fight racial discrimination. In January 2008, the ‘Federal Commission for Migration Issues’ (*Eidgenössische Kommission für Migrationsfragen, EKM*) developed from the Foreigners’ and Refugees’ Commissions (EKA and EKF). It advises the federal government on questions regarding migration. The federal institution that is responsible for the immigration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers as well as naturalisation is the ‘Federal Office for Migration’ (*Bundesamt für Migration, BFM*). The office also coordinates local integration measures in the cantons and municipalities.

### **3. Background information on Zürich**

This chapter provides selected background information on the city of Zürich. The first section gives a brief general description on the city (cf. section 3.1), the second illustrates the composition and the characteristics of the local (migrant) population (cf. section 3.2) and the third examines Zürich's Muslim population (cf. section 3.3).

#### **3.1. Brief description of Zürich**

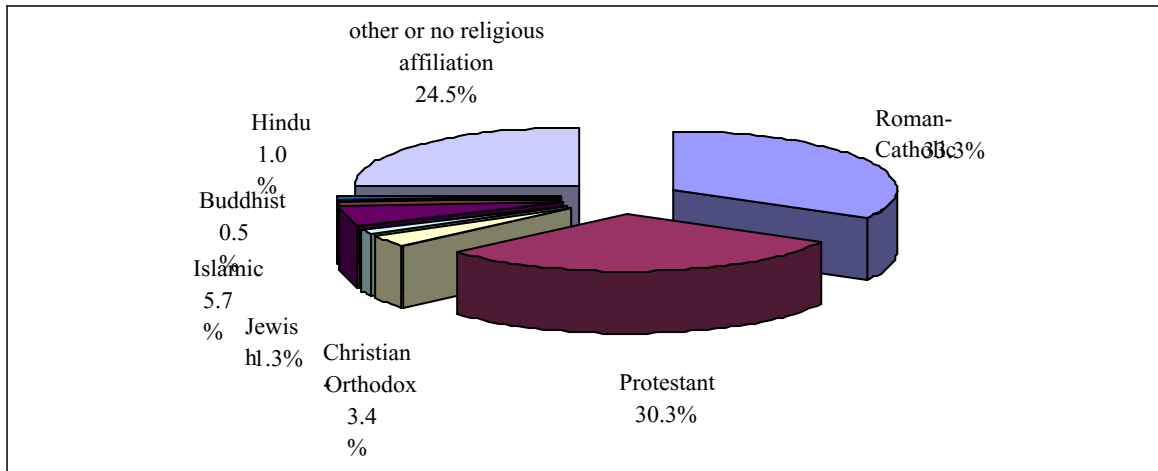
Zürich is the capital city in the Canton of Zürich, in Northern Switzerland. As reported in the fourth quarter of 2008 the city had a population of 380,499 inhabitants (Zürich 2009b). With this population it is the largest city in Switzerland. An additional 131 communities make up the agglomeration of Zürich, which recorded 1,111,909 residents at the end of December 2006 (Zürich 2009b). From 2001 to 2007 the city's population increased by 4.1 percent (Zürich 2008c). From 2007 to 2008 it increased by one percent (Zürich 2009b).

In 2007 Zürich had a gross domestic product of \$300.9 billion (CIA 2009). Every ninth job in Switzerland and eighty-two of the 208 banking institutes in Switzerland are in Zürich. 85.1 percent of the total sum of money in Swiss banks is in a bank in Zürich. (Zürich 2008b) The city is also a popular destination; in 2008, hotel accommodations were taken advantage of approximately 2.5 million times (Zürich 2008b), and twenty million passengers travelled through Zürich's airport (Zürich 2008b).

43,000 students study at Zürich's universities, and 353,700 persons work in the city (Zürich 2009a). 157,009 persons live and work in Zürich (Zürich 2008c), while 215,000 commute to the city (Zürich 2009a). Of all the employees, 67.3 percent are employed fulltime, while 32.7 percent work in part-time jobs. 9.8 percent are employed in the second sector, such as industry or trade; 90.2 percent work in the third sector (service). As of April 2009 7,590 persons were unemployed, representing an increase of 1.9 percent from the previous month (Zürich 2009a).

The population of Zürich features an increasing heterogeneity in its religious composition. Most of the city's residents in 2000 have been Christians, 33.3% Roman-Catholic, 30.3% Protestant and 3.4% members of Christian-Orthodox communities. Muslims make up 5.7% of the population, followed by Jews, Hindus and Buddhist people (Zürich 2009e).

Figure 6: total population of the city of Zürich by religious affiliation (2000)



Source: compiled by efms on data of the city of Zürich

### 3.2. Zürich's migrant population and its characteristics

From 1900 until World War I Zürich's foreigner population, with mostly persons from Germany and Italy, increased steadily and reached almost thirty-five percent. After the war, though, and from then until the fifties, it decreased to under ten percent of the entire population. In the fifties the foreign population began to increase again.

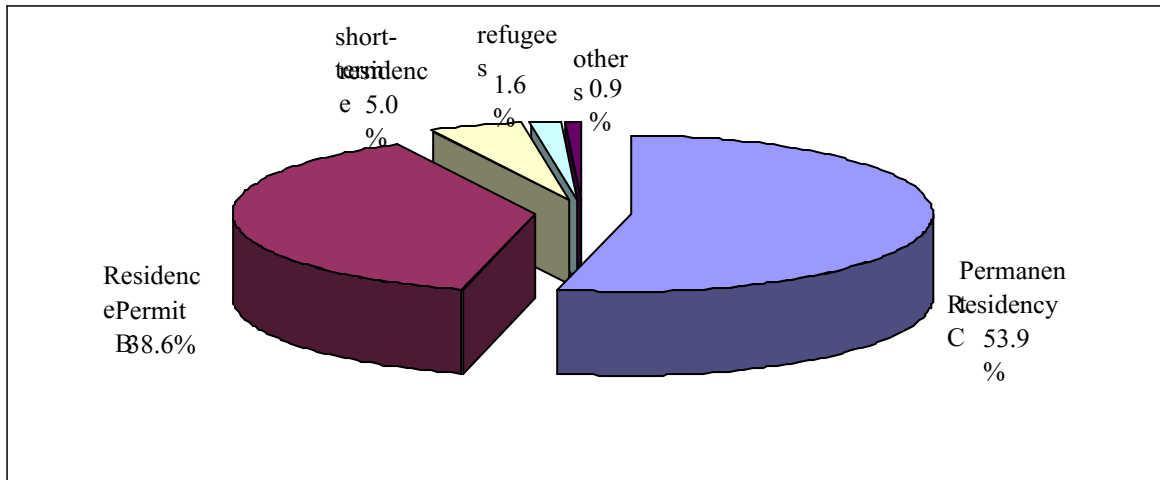
Zürich's immigration history starting in the fifties contains the same patterns found in Switzerland's immigration history as a whole. It's first immigrants were guestworkers from Italy. These guestworkers were followed by workers from Spain, Portugal and Yugoslavia and the guestworkers' families. Then came war refugees and eventually highly skilled workers.

In Zürich there are currently 117,904 foreign residents (54,261 women and 63,643 men) (Zürich 2009d) coming from 166 different countries (Zürich 2008b). In 2008 there was a slight increase in the foreign population (2.2 percent). Currently foreigners make up thirty-one percent of the total population of Zürich. 63,565 foreign residents are permanent residents of Zürich and have Permanent Residency C<sup>3</sup>. 45,535 have Residence Permit B, allowing them to stay in Zürich up to five years. There are also 1,894 refugees, 5,878 foreigners with a short-term residence permit, and an additional 1,032 foreigners, who do not fall under these categories.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> After five years, a residence permit can be turned into Permanent Residency C. Like the Residency Permit B, this allows for unrestricted job market access. Permits are granted by national and Canton authorities without involvement of the municipalities.

<sup>4</sup> Asylum seekers, border crossers who stay only for a week(s), persons associated with foreign embassies; (Zürich 2009d)

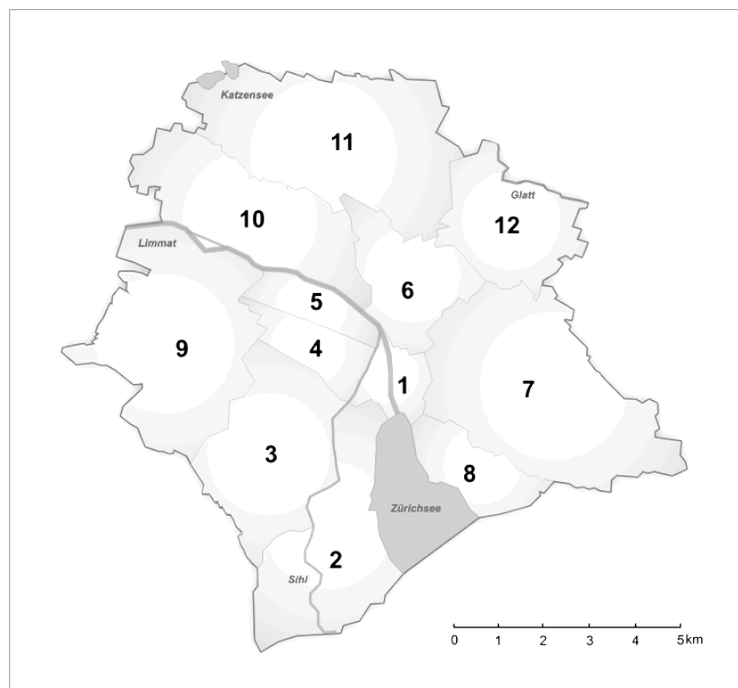
Figure 7: Foreigners in Zürich according to Residence Permission



Source: compiled by efms based on data of Zürich 2009e

In regard to the specific location of residence in Zürich, the proportion of non-Swiss citizens in District 4 is the highest in Zürich with 41.6 percent. The smallest proportions of foreigners live in District 7 (24.3 percent). The majority of foreigners live in the most heavily populated district, District 11. In that district there are 22,053 foreign residents. This number represents 18.7 percent of the entire foreign population of the city (Zürich 2009d).

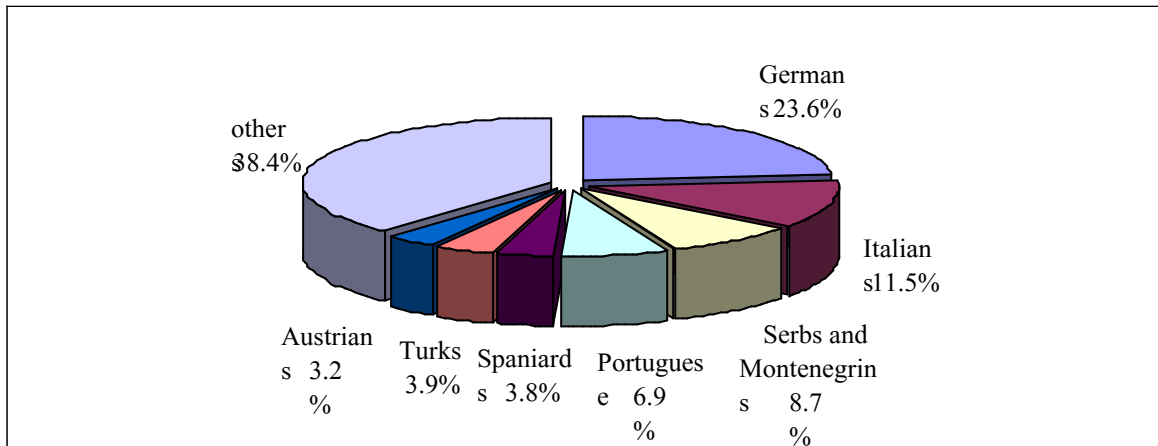
Figure 8: Zürich city districts



The German population in Zürich is the largest of the foreign groups; more than 25,000 Germans live in Zürich. It is therefore almost twice as large as the population of Italians (14,000), which still remains the second largest group, despite its steady decrease over the

last ten years. The population of persons from Serbia and Montenegro (11,000) has also decreased within this period of time (Zürich 2008a).

*Figure 9: Foreigners in Zürich by country of origin (December 2008)*



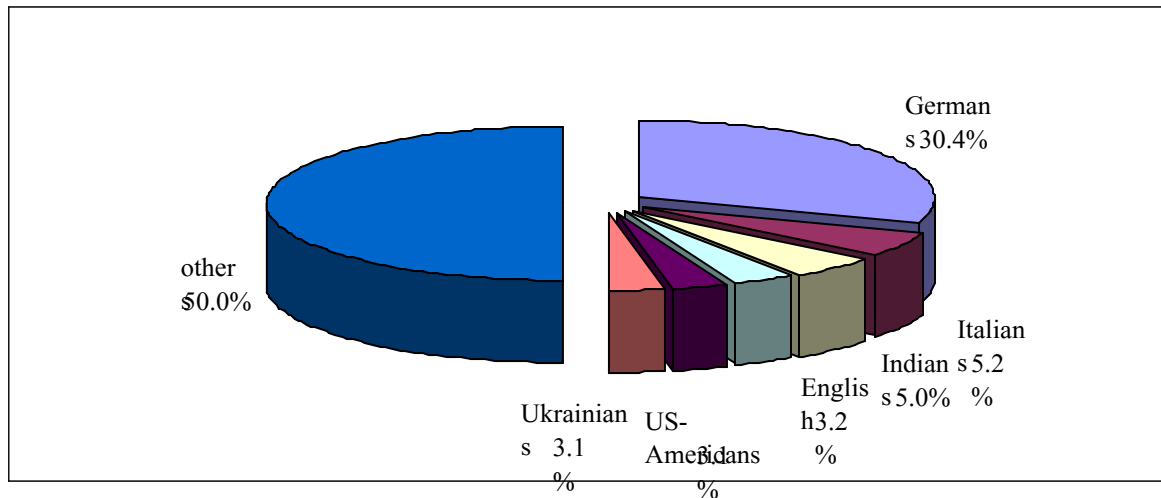
Source: compiled by efms based on data of Stadt Zürich, 2009

Of migrants, who do not remain in Zürich, the Spanish tend to stay the longest (fourteen years). They are followed by Italians, who stay approximately eleven years. Persons from Greece, Macedonia, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro leave, on average, after five years. Germans only stay for two years, and Indians less than one year. This pattern is largely determined by the history of immigration to Zürich. Migrants from countries home to the first guest workers tend to stay the longest. The next wave of guest workers and workers from non-European countries with highly qualified jobs, do usually not stay quite as long. (Zürich 2008a)

There is currently a negative balance for immigrants from Italy, Serbia and Montenegro, Turkey, Spain, Macedonia, Croatia and Sri Lanka, all of which are countries whose waves of immigration occurred more than ten years ago (Zürich 2008a). In same time there has been an increase in the population of Portuguese, Austrian, British, French, US-American and Indian residents of Zürich. This increase is due to the increase of new immigrants. In addition to the increase of immigrants from these specific countries, there has also been an increase in the number of women. (Zürich 2008a)

In 2008 Germans made up the largest group of foreigners moving to Zürich. 30.4 percent of foreigners moving to Zürich were German. Germans were followed by Italians (5.2 percent), Indians (5 percent), English (3.2 percent) and US-Americans and Ukrainians, both with 3.1 percent (Zürich 2009d). Germans were not only the largest group coming to Zürich; they were also, with twenty-nine percent, the largest group of foreigners leaving Zürich in 2008. They were followed by Indians (5.9 percent), Italians (5 percent), Portuguese (4.7 percent) and Americans (3.6 percent) (Zürich 2009d).

Figure 10: Foreigners moving to Zürich in 2008 by Nationality



Source: compiled by efms on data of Stadt Zürich, 2009

Of foreigners coming to Zürich between 2005 and 2007, 44,600 reported occupational activity; 7,200 said they attended a school or university and 4,600 classified themselves as homemakers. 99 persons were retired, and 4,800 did not report their activity. The level of (educational) standards has risen continually since 2002. Currently, the level of those coming to Zürich is higher than the level of those who leave. Of the persons, who reported an occupational activity, around twenty percent have an academic career, sixteen percent are artists, nine percent work in a commercial business and eight percent work in the hotel or restaurant industry. (Zürich 2008a)

Indians are the nationality most likely to attain top positions. In addition, persons from Germany, France, Great Britain, the USA, Netherlands, Sweden, Greece, Canada and Australia also tend to have highly ranked professions; while persons from Ukraine, Belarus, the Dominican Republic, Bulgaria, Thailand, Russia and Brazil work jobs requiring lower training specifications (Zürich 2008a). Although average qualification level is relatively high, a large proportion of the new comers work jobs that require no or little qualifications. For example, although Indians have the highest rates in top positions, thirty-six percent of Indians work jobs that only require a vocational training or less. (Zürich 2008a)

Within the last fifteen years there has been a fifty percent decrease in children moving to Zürich, who are either younger than fifteen years or between the ages of sixteen and twenty. In this time there has been, instead, an increase in persons over twenty. In 2007, three-fourths of new immigrants were between twenty-one and forty. The strongest age pattern is found in the population of Indians: eighty-eight percent of Indians coming to Zürich are between twenty and thirty-five. German residents also mostly represent one specific age group; they are mostly between the ages of thirty-five and sixty. The majority of foreign children are from Serbia and Montenegro and Portugal. (Zürich 2008a)

In 2008 548 persons became naturalised Swiss citizens. Ranked in descending number of naturalisations, these Zürich residents were mostly from Serbia and Montenegro, Sri Lanka, Germany and Italy. (Zürich 2009d)

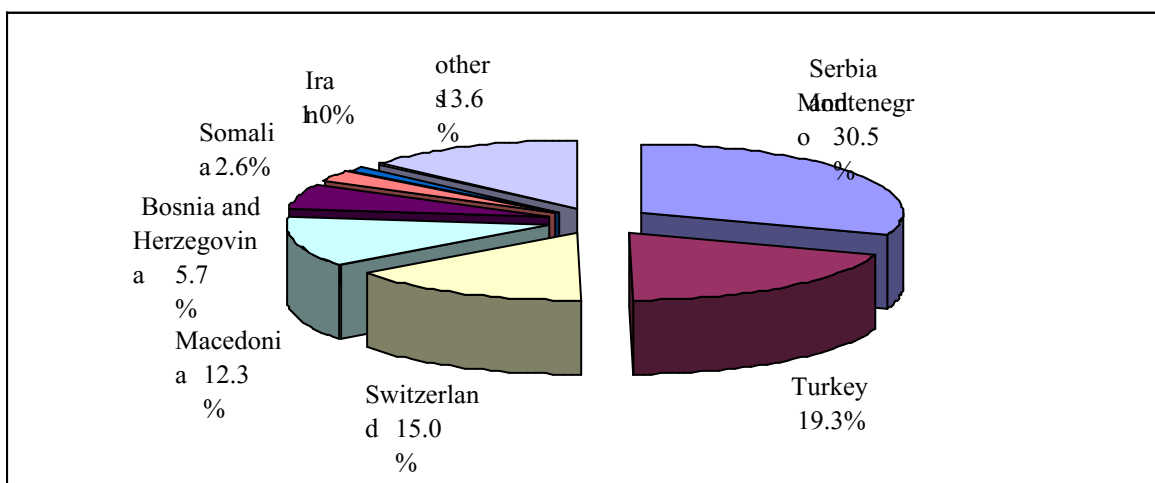
### 3.3. Zürich's Muslim population and its characteristics

Because Islamic religious communities are not legally recognized and data on religious affiliation is considered as being very personal and sensitive, there is little information about Muslims in Zürich or in Switzerland as a whole. According to the census completed in 2000 there were 20,888 Muslims in the city of Zürich. The current number of Muslims (as of Spring 2009) is estimated by local experts as amounting to approx. 25,000. In 2000, there were 66,500 Muslims in the Canton of Zürich, making Muslims 5.3 per cent of the canton's population. This number is slightly larger than that of Muslims in Switzerland (4.3 percent). A large increase in Zürich's Muslim population took place between 1979 and 2000; since 2000, this growth has decreased (Widmer/Strebel 2008).

First Muslim residents came to Zürich in the fifties as university students. Starting in the sixties, Muslim workers and political refugees also began arriving in Zürich (Lendorff-El Rafii 2003). Currently, more than half of the Muslim population in Canton of Zürich comes from the Balkans. Muslims from Turkey are the second largest group. Around 10,000 Muslims, about fourteen percent of the Muslim population, are citizens of Switzerland. Half of these Swiss Muslims were born in Switzerland (Widmer/Strebel 2008). About ten percent of Zürich's Muslim residents are from Arabic speaking countries (Lendorff-El Rafii 2003). The majority of Muslims in Zürich have long-term residency in Switzerland (Permanent Residency C or Residence Permit B). The majority of Zürich's refugees are also Muslims (Widmer/Strebel 2008).

Today people from Serbia and Montenegro form the biggest national group of Muslims (30.5%), followed by Turkish nationals (19.3%). 15% of the Muslim population are Swiss, followed by Macedonians (12.3%), citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina (5.7%), Somalia (2.6%) and Iran (1%). The remaining 13.6% of Zürich's Muslim population have other nationalities (Zürich 2009e).

Figure 11: Zürich's Muslim population according to nationality (2000)



Source: compiled by efms based on data of the city of Zürich

The Turkish Muslim population consists of persons, who are mostly between twenty-five and forty-five years old. The population of Muslims from the Balkans is younger, and many of

whom were born in Switzerland. Of all religious groups in Zürich, the Muslims are the youngest: eighty percent are younger than forty and even if they were not born Switzerland, Switzerland was for the majority where they went to school and were socialised. (Widmer/Strebel 2008)

Around two-thirds of Muslims are of working age. A large percentage of Muslims are unskilled labourers or workers. The percentage of unemployment of Muslims (8.3 percent) is also larger in comparison to other groups. The large proportion of non-allocable workers (21.4 percent) is most likely due to Muslim asylum seekers and others, who described themselves as homemakers. (Widmer/Strebel 2008)

#### **4. Local intercultural policies in general**

As described above, Zürich has a long standing tradition of migrants being resident in the city. With regard to Muslims as a specific religious group, the municipal policy is acting in the framework of the Canton Zürich since the relations to religious groups are a canton issue; the federal constitution provides only for minimal rules requiring that Canton regulations do not treat religious communities in a hostile manner and comply with the rule of equality before the law (Widmer/Strebel 2008: 19). In general, religious affiliation is considered as a private issue and state institutions have traditionally a strong secular orientation. Since a significant share of the regional Muslim population having the city of Zürich as economic (work place) and cultural centre is living in Canton districts outside of the city boundaries, the municipal policy towards Muslim groups is further intertwined with the Canton. Although the 2007 election results for parties with specific agendas on integration in the Canton differ considerably to those of the city parliament elected in 2006<sup>5</sup>, the latter reflecting the liberal and pluricultural tradition of the city, the differing representation of parties in the parliaments seem not to have a major impact on the relations between Canton and the city. One reason for this might be the Swiss political tradition of consensual agreements avoiding polarising conflicts and preferring pragmatic approaches; the SVP being increasingly criticized for their xenophobic campaigns has been effectively excluded from policy making by the other parties as violating these unwritten rules.

In addition to the political tradition of the city of Zürich, the placement of immigrants across the socio-economic spectrum is differing from the national average; a considerable share of Zürich residents with migration background or foreign nationality belongs to middle class and upper middle class, working in white collar jobs. Together with the good economic situation of the city, this setting provides for a quite specific realisation of intercultural policies within the city.

In the following, Zürich's general policy approach for integrating migrants and the responsibilities for this topic within administration and polity are described (cf. section 4.1). The subsequent section gives an overview of the most relevant demands and interests of the local groups (cf. section 4.2). Section 4.3 provide an impression of the formal and informal

---

<sup>5</sup> In the canton parliament, the SVP (Schweizer Volkspartei, 30,5%) is the largest fraction (SP, Sozialdemokratische Partei 19,5%), whilst in the city the SP (38,5% / SVP 18,8 of seats) is predominant.

relations and dialogue between the city and migrant as well as religious organisations, before section 4.4 focuses on relations between different migrant groups.

#### **4.1. General approach towards ethnic and religious issues in the city**

In 1999, the city of Zürich published its first concept for a municipal integration policy (Zürich 1999). As long term goals, it stated that there should be

- perspectives for development for all parts of the resident population,
- relying on and using of existing potentials and skills,
- mediating between various parts of the population, supporting a living together without conflicts as much as possible; for that purpose, also resolute ambitions should be set,
- supporting functioning social networks,
- being committed for mutual respect, diminishing mutual bogeyman images as well as discrimination, and building up commonalities.

For achieving these goals, the concept formulated as recommended measures

- promotion of German language acquisition,
- creation of qualifications by school and education,
- promotion of labour market access and self-employment,
- avoiding segregation and improving housing quality in degraded neighbourhoods,
- increasing participation in public affairs,
- improving safety and security by prevention, neighbourhood presence of police, repressing drug trade and sexual exploitation as well as petty crime.

For coordinating these policies, the creation of a specialist department for intercultural affairs has been proposed in the report. Probably due to the strong secular and non-interference into religious matters tradition of Swiss political institutions, the issue of religious groups among migrants has not been discussed in the concept at this time.

In 2005, an Office for Cross-Cultural Issues (Integrationsförderung, IF) has been created by the Zürich City Council, belonging to the Präsidialdepartment (staff to the president of the city administration). Along with the offices for business development, city & neighbourhood development, external relations and publications, it is affiliated to the departmental section for city development.

In 2007, the city of Zürich published a guideline for focal points of integration policy which defined six fields of activity, one of them Religion and Society (Zürich 2007). In this field, the action plan states that the various religious and cultural groups living in Zürich can – on the basis of legal rights and normative values – develop their traditions and confessions also in the public sphere. It further asks for a frequent and transparent dialogue preventing the development of segregated parallel cultures, and for a respectful and active cooperation of the city with foreign communities and organisations in the city. It supports a “forum of religions” for promoting contacts to the various religious groups living in the city, and asks for analysis on the various needs and requests of religious communities in Zürich, for developing a

strategy for action, meliorating contacts and strengthening networks with representatives of these communities, as well as support for joint projects implemented by associations from migrants' groups together with associations of the autochthonous population.

The responsibility for this field of action has been assigned to the Office for Cross-Cultural Issues (Integrationsförderung, IF). (Zürich 2007: 9)

The general policy of the city of Zürich in relation to migrant and religious groups in the city is non-interference. Migrant organisations, foreigners' associations and religious communities are usually organized as registered associations; thus, they act independently from state or municipal structures in the framework of a liberal constitutional state, and city policy is not hindering them in their respective activities. These associations are not supported in general by the city, but in some cases on specific issues.

The Office for Cross-Cultural Issues is aiming at a systematic cooperation with these associations, while other departments of the city administration deal with representatives of migrant, foreigners' and religious groups punctually in relation to specific issues. The Office for Cross-Cultural Issues is occasionally contacted by other departments in such cases, and it provides necessary services, i.e. translations. Second generation migrants with Swiss nationality, however, criticised an occasionally experienced tendency of other departments to refer them to the Office for Cross-Cultural Issues for regular issues they are themselves responsible for.

Residents with foreign nationality cannot run for offices. In 2004, the city council installed a foreigners' council for a pilot phase which ends 2010; the 20-25 members of the foreigners' council are elected, may raise foreigners' issues to the city council, and may issue public statements. The city council may veto candidates running for the council.

Second and third generation migrants in Zürich are quite active in political networking in local politics, in particular in the local Social Democrat party. In 2008, they founded together with similar groups from other cities a national network called Second@s Plus (Secondo/Seconda is a common term for residents with migration background, both naturalised and of foreign nationality). Several members of the Zürich city council with Swiss citizenship have a migration background, and are quite active in networking among migrant organisations. The president of the City Council for the 2008/09 period, Fiammetta Jahreiss-Montagnani (SP), has been a naturalised first generation migrant from Italy. With her, for the first time, the highest office in Zürich has been assigned to a candidate with migration background.

The City Council and the City President (head of administration) consider good relations to groups of residents with migration background as very relevant and use to visit important events of migrant associations, representing the city. This is in particular the case with festivities of Muslim or Jewish religious communities.

## **4.2. Issues, demands and interests**

A frequent issue raised by migrant organisations is the availability of rooms and space for their activities. In case of specific events, the city usually can support the organisation by providing the use of community centres funded by the city. However, the accessibility of

dedicated rooms for regular activities of the organisations is often raised as a problem. The city cannot meet these demands notwithstanding the often high expectations by migrant organisations; most migrant organisations are incorporated as associations, and city policy does not support associations continuously by funds or provision of resources since they are considered as private activity. According to experts from the Office for Cross-Cultural Issues, this policy of the city based on the rule of equal treatment is usually accepted by migrants' associations, although some groups are in a privileged position due to support from the country of origin. The only exceptions of this no funding policy are sport associations, and for those with a migrant background, training grounds are provided in a similar manner as for traditional sport associations.

Members of migrants' NGOs stated that they consider personal contact to officials from the city administration or politics as quite important. In contrast to written communication with local authorities, an individual dialogue on specific issues between a city officer and the representative of the migrant organisation is experienced as creating trust relationships and as supporting effective solution finding.

This aspect is also related to the problem raised by several NGOs that their representatives or active members are working for their organisation in a honorary function besides their regular employment and family obligations; without a network of trust relationships, it is very difficult to tackle issues of their community. According to several interview partners, the Office for Cross-Cultural Issues is considered as being very helpful in mediating such relations and upcoming affairs.

### **4.3. (Institutionalised) forms of relations and dialogue in the city**

This section reports on regular institutionalised and non-institutionalised forms of relations and dialogue between different groups as well as between the city and different groups. The first section introduces the municipal initiative to establish the Zürich Forum of Religions, the second comments on contacts between the city and migrant organisations, the third describes the municipal funding mechanisms for migrant organisations' projects.

#### **4.3.1. Forum der Religionen**

The Zürich Forum of Religions has been founded 1997 as an association by a strong commitment of the Evangelic-Reformed clergyman Peter Wittwer, who at this time has been director of the Office for Cross-Cultural Issues of the city of Zürich. The forum is contact point for schools and church communities for counselling on inter-religious issues. It organises frequently tours to synagogues or mosques and public events, offers introduction courses into the Islam and provides information resources on the various religions being present in Zürich. From the beginning, it dealt with migration-related religious groups. It organises eight times per year cooperation meetings with delegates from all relevant religious groups in Zürich such as Buddhists (stemming from Cambodia or Tibet), Hindus (Tamils), Muslims represented by the umbrella association of Muslims in Zürich, VIOZ (Arab countries, Balkans, Turks), Orthodox church (Balkans), two Jewish communities and the Christian confessions in Zürich, the Evangelic-Reformed church and the Roman Catholic church. The association is funded by the city of Zürich, the Canton Zürich and both Christian

regional churches. The current director of the Office for Cross-Cultural Issues of the city of Zürich is member of the board of directors.

Activities of the Forum of Religions are primarily confidence-building measures among the religious groups and public relation work targeted at the receiving society; inter-religious dialogue on religious issues is less relevant for its activities. It succeeded in establishing good personal relationships among the representatives of the various religious groups in Zürich, and functions as relevant information provider on religious issues for schools and the interested public.

The Forum of Religions meets lively interest from the side of the receiving society; however, there seems to be less interest from the religious groups of migrants on other religious groups, and a typical problem of its function are the overload of representatives from migrant communities who act in a honorary function, as well as their often limited command of German language, and the tendency towards religious conservatism in the migrant communities.

#### **4.3.2. Contacts between the city and migrant organisations**

The Office for Cross-Cultural Issues maintains frequent contacts to migrant organisations in Zürich and is managing the secretariat of the Zürich foreigners' council. It invites migrant organisations the office learned about, once a year to an information workshop at the office. In addition, the organisations are invited approx. three times per year to specific information meetings and hearings; a recent example has been a workshop supporting an extended situation analysis for the first Zürich report on discrimination and racism.

The Stadtpräsident (president of the city administration) invites annually during Ramadan the Zürich Imams and Muslim organisations for an official reception into the town house ("apero"). This tradition founded by the previous Stadtpräsident Ledergerber is considered by the migrant organisations as an important public expression of the city's welcome to its residents with migration background, and various interview partners from migrant NGO's stated that this event seems to have also a considerable relevance for promoting the city administration's openness to migrants' issues. It reflects the tenor of the city policy taking the immigrated part of the resident population as a regular member of the city society. This attitude is also reflected in action by active involvement of migrants' groups into hearings, migration and integrations conferences as well as in considering them in statements to the media.

Other departments of the city administration do have punctual contacts to migrants' organisations, usually by single staff members on specific affairs. This relates in particular to neighbourhood social work and neighbourhood centres (Social Department), to mediation and conflict prevention in municipal housing (Realities Office in the Financial Department), assistance for pupils with migration background (School and Sports Department), petty crime and drug trade prevention as well as assistance to traumatised crime victims (Police Department).

### 4.3.3. Municipal funding for NGO integration projects

The city does not support migrant organisations financially, but they may apply for municipal funding for specific projects. There is a so-called “Integrationskredit” programme co-financed by the city, the Canton and the Swiss national authorities which provides for project funding in the field of integration. In 2008, the total budget available for such projects in Zürich amounted to 236.440 CHF (155.173 €); out of 56 applications, a total of 39 projects has been funded by the programme with an average sum of 6.063 CHF (3.979€). Out of these, 9 projects proposed by migrant organisations have been funded by 16% of the total funds (average 4.203 CHF / 2.757€ per project). Organisations have to present in their application a project concept, a budget and an additional funding source (other municipal co-funds are not eligible), and have to report to the Office for Cross-Cultural Issues after completion of the project.

### 4.3.4. Activities and projects for improving intergroup relations

An important demand by various Muslim groups in Zürich had been the installation of a Muslim cemetery. Since the Muslim population in Zürich is very heterogenous and is fractioned along lines of national and ethnic backgrounds, the city of Zürich as addressee of these demands by the various Muslim groups required the setting up of a joint dialogue partner among the Muslim groups. Since a cemetery providing for burials according to Muslim requirements had been an issue of high priority for most of the Zürich Muslims since the mid-70ies, they agreed in setting up an Association of Muslim organisations in Zürich (*Vereinigung der islamischen Organisationen in Zürich, VIOZ*) which started 1995 and has been established legally in October 25, 1997. Although this association has been created to meet the requirement of the city for negotiations regarding a Muslim cemetery, and its activities focussed primarily on this issue in the coming years, VIOZ became also a recognised mediator among the various Muslim groups in the city. It contributed also to the cooperation in the Zürcher Forum der Religionen with other religious groups in the city, as well as to the Swiss interreligious working group (*Interreligiöse Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Schweiz, IRAS*) beyond local issues. It issues frequent public statements on current affairs addressed to the general public of Zürich and functions as a voice of the various Muslim communities in the city.

Although the Zürich Forum of Religions is not funded by the city except some specific project funding, the Office for Cross-Cultural Issues maintains close cooperation with its activities for intercultural and inter-religious mediation. The Forum organises open days, presentations and supports local church communities in setting up intercultural and inter-religious events.

In the majority of activities, however, the city is involved only indirectly, often by providing small project subsidies or by mediating contacts. One example is the Langstrassenfest, a street party in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> district with a high percentage of foreign residents involving several migrant organisations, in particular from Latin America. Another activity involving various political migrant organisations is the Committee 1<sup>st</sup> of May which organises jointly with the Zürich federation of trade unions the 1<sup>st</sup> of May demonstrations; in this cooperation, also networking among migrant organisations and local unions takes place.

Events of a specific ethnic group are usually privately organised, very small and take place in a local neighbourhood only; several larger events in the city have an international character. In general, most of the intergroup relations and activities involving migrant organisations take place involving a migrants' group and Swiss autochthonous residents. Contact across various migrant organisations and joint activities among them are comparatively seldom. Thus, the supporting activities by the city of Zürich are focusing on facilitating direct contacts among the migrant organisations.

An interesting case of local cooperation is the good relationship between the Ahmadija-Mosque and the Reformed community in district 8. The church is situated across the street in face of the only Zürich mosque bearing a minaret (built in 1965). The Ahmadija community uses the Reformed community centre for larger events, and the church parking lot for the Friday prayers. Interestingly enough, the Ahmadija community with primarily Pakistani background is not recognised by other Muslim organisations as belonging to the Muslim religions, and is not represented in VIOZ.

#### **4.4. Relationship between different ethnic groups in Zürich**

Due to the large percentage of residents with migration background in the city of Zürich, their presence is considered by the general public as normal. This situation is also reflected in polls which usually show majorities in favour of migrants' issues. However, about 25-30% of the autochthonous electorate is quite sceptical about foreigners and is frequently addressed by SVP campaigns which often have some negative impact on the integration process.

These campaigns and the related public discourse focus on specific groups which used to change over time. Typical targets have been Italians, Tamils or Yugoslavians; foreign groups being currently object of a negative discourse are young males stemming from the Balkans (driving style, spectacular accidents), and Germans (impact of high-skilled immigration on the labour market).

From the side of migrant groups, a typical issue vice versa other groups is that a relevant part of the foreign residents in Zürich is concerned with traditional values and/or not cosmopolitan orientated. This results in a tendency towards prejudices against specific groups such as homosexuals, coloured people and Romas which usually seems to be more prevalent among migrants compared to the autochthonous population.

The relationship among migrant groups seems to be usually quite neutral. Conflicts in the region of origin seemed not to be reproduced among the migrant groups in Zürich (i.e. the war in former Yugoslavia). Public activities of political migrant organisations usually deal with the issues of their specific group only; there seems to be only limited interest in general migrants' issues which affect other groups with migration background.

With regard to religious communities, the VIOZ is occasionally mediating in cases of conflicts among Muslim communities. The current president of VIOZ mentioned one case of a dispute between two Imams escalating to broadsides on Internet pages which has been settled by VIOZ intervention.

#### 4.5. Public communication

The city of Zürich has no specific strategy regarding migrant groups in the city. There are a little contacts to the media on these issues since topics are usually not personalised, and both, city representatives as well members of migrant groups have no major visibility in the media. This seems to reflect also the Swiss style of politics which – with few exceptions – features no personalities nor prominent politicians but focuses on issues.

Established media in Zürich are in general committed to good journalism. However, in current cases involving foreigners or migrants, occasionally the issue and its relation to migrants seem to be prematurely emphasised. In relation to the integration processes, the wording of media relating to residents with migration background (i.e. Swiss nationals of Bosnian origin) is problematic. This amounted to one report from a non-Zürich newspaper about a violent crime in a Swiss canton which emphasised that the delinquent has been “a Swiss national *without* migration background”, a report which has been very critically discussed in a Zürich newspaper (NZZ 2009).

Among Zürich journalists, the current practice to report about the nationality or ethnic background of a suspect is discussed controversially. The current practice is reasoned with the obligation to inform the public about the facts, and avoiding the allegation of suppression of information for political correctness. Publishing names of involved persons is still considered a violating privacy rights, but the NZZ for example changed their reporting practice to mention citizenship or migration background some years ago. Police reports to the media state the nationality and ethnic background of the offenders; there exists a working group of police journalists which criticizes the reference to migration or foreign citizenship in the reports.

Journalists with migration background are staff members in the established print media in Zürich, and are assigned to regular reporting issues by the editors. There are several print media of migrants and a lively scene of second generation migrants involved in media and cultural activities. They are usually organised nationally or regionally and are not limited to Zürich issues. A prominent example of a migrants' media is the Albanian periodical *albsuisse* issued since 2008 by the *albsuisse association* in Zürich. It runs a bilingual monthly journal (Albanian/German) with a print run of 25.000 copies and features articles on relevant issues for migrants and information on the Swiss host society in both languages (albsuisse 2008).

#### 4.6. Summary and lessons learned

The general state of relations between groups with a migratory background and those from the autochthonous population in Zürich seems to be quite pragmatically and friendly. On the one hand, this is likely related to the good economic situation in the city which allows for a broad scope of cultural and civil society activities, as well as adequate resources for and the experience of the Office for Cross-Cultural Issues. On the other hand, the explicit openness of the political leadership towards the residents with migration background, the long-standing experiences with immigration to the city, and the Swiss political style of pragmatic cooperation avoiding public controversies contribute also to this situation.

The numerous activities of municipal institutions, NGO's and migrant organisation in the city do contribute to the integration process, but provide also resources for remaining in the own reference group, thus fostering diversity with sometimes too limited interactions across group boundaries.

A particular problem mentioned by the staff members of the Office for Cross-Cultural Issues is that the interaction between the municipal staff and migrant organisations is asymmetric; migrant organisations' representatives act in honorary capacity and have often little insight into the wider background of the situation. The municipal staff members as professionals represent the host society which tends to project own unsolved issues onto migrants, and have to act in their institutional framework. This situation results in the risk of frustration and disappointment on the side of the migrants.

An important result from the interviews with representatives of migrant organisations has been the significance of individual contact among municipal officers and migrant representatives ('not a letter, but a face'); the informal network of good relations has been considered as being of utmost importance for the good relations between migrant groups and the Zürich public organisations.

## **5. Local intercultural policies towards Muslim communities**

As explained in the introduction, the CLIP network decided to engage a special focus on the relations to, and dialogue with, Muslim communities. This is firstly because Islam is by far the largest 'new' religion in European countries of immigration and, secondly, because Muslims are often perceived as disconnected from 'European life', often facing discrimination and Islamophobia.

Therefore, the following sections present issues, demands and interests of Muslim groups (section 5.1), the general municipal approach concerning contact with Muslims (section 5.2) and examples of concrete activities and measures aimed at improving relations with Muslim groups (section 5.3).

### **5.1. Major issues, demands and interests**

#### **■ *Muslim cemetery***

A particular issue for Muslims in Zürich has been the search for a Muslim cemetery. Initial plans for buying land to install a private cemetery had to be abandoned in the mid-90ies due to the high prices for scarce estates in Zürich and the limited financial resources of the Muslim groups. In case of death in a Muslim family, the family has been under severe pressure to decide whether to bury the deceased in a public cemetery or whether to expedite the deceased to the country of origin and bury the family member there. The latter is a quite costly procedure, involving complicated bureaucratic procedures; due to the Muslim rule to bury a dead as soon as possible, this situation and the related delays – especially if stretched over a weekend – often caused a serious psychical, financial and administrative burden to the family of the deceased, even if the Muslim community often collected funds for the affected family. A burial in Zürich has been unacceptable for most Muslims since the Canton burial

regulations explicitly forbid any differentiation according to religion: In public cemeteries, all deceased had to be buried sequentially in standard graves according to the time and date of their death. This rule formulated in the burial law of the Canton Zürich had the background of the Swiss civil war of 1847 between the conservative Catholic Cantons and the liberal Reformed Cantons (*Sonderbundskrieg*). The burial regulation in the Canton burial law aimed at preventing any differentiation between Catholic and Reformed in the graveyards. Thus, the Canton burial law made the creation of a Muslim section in public cemeteries with graves oriented towards Mecca illegal.

After a conference of the Catholic Pauluskirche Zürich in 1994 on the philosophy of death and the Muslim rules for handling death, the Muslim communities approached the city council of Zürich for the installation of a Muslim graveyard in a public cemetery. The city leadership responded positively to this request, but required the creation of a single organisation of the various Muslim communities with the mandate of representing them for the negotiations. The *Vereinigung der islamischen Organisationen in Zürich*, VIOZ has been established legally in October 25, 1997, representing all Muslim communities in Zürich except the Ahmadija and the Alevits, both not being considered as Muslim religions by relevant member organisations of VIOZ. After a lengthy political process over a decade, VIOZ together with the support of the city of Zürich succeeded 2001 in an amendment to the Canton burial law which made a Muslim graveyard in public cemeteries legal. Compromises had to be negotiated further for the mode of burial both within the Muslim communities as well as with the municipal authorities: For fulfilling the legal coffin requirement a cardboard coffin; for meeting the Muslim peace of the grave requirement a burial in 3 levels and an extended time span of 25 years before excavation. Several statements from renowned Imams had been collected until finally a compromise became accepted by all partners. On June 22, 2004, a Muslim graveyard in the public cemetery Zürich-Witikon has been inaugurated; three further potential locations are earmarked in Zürich cemeteries for the future.

Other burial related issues like the ritual washing of the deceased in a dedicated room had been already pragmatically solved by Zürich hospitals. Thus, for Zürich Muslims the related problems have been solved. However, for Muslims being resident in the agglomeration outside the city boundaries, this problem persists, since the city councils of surrounding communities rejected the installation of Muslim sections in the cemeteries, and burial is only eligible in the public cemetery of the municipality where the deceased has been resident for at least two years. Currently only in Winterthur, another Muslim graveyard is in the process of being set up.

#### ■ **Mosque building**

Most interview partners from Muslim communities stated that a representative Mosque in Zürich shared by the communities would be very much appreciated. However, due to financial constraints and the current negative discourse on Minarets promoted by the political right (*Minarettverbots-Initiative*), a realisation seems to be impossible for the foreseeable future. Several interview partners observed that the fulfilment of the joint goal of a Muslim graveyard left the significance of VIOZ diminished; some Muslim communities do not actively participate in the joint activities anymore. The erection of a joint representative

Mosque Zürich has been mentioned as an endeavour which could again resemble the Muslim community as a whole in the VIOZ which could also contribute to the development of sharing regulations among the various Muslim groups. Interestingly enough, the only existing Mosque with a minaret in Zürich, the Ahmadija Mosque built in 1965, is no issue in the public discourse on Mosque and Minaret building and is widely accepted as an established institution in the city.

▪ ***Religion instructions and sports at school***

Due to limited funds, there are usually no religious instructions at the primary school level. At the secondary school level, Muslim pupils occasionally participate in the Christian religious instructions, or receive a dispensation. According to recent decisions, in 2011 the traditional Christian instructions (*Bibelkunde*) will be abolished, and will be replaced by a new subject on culture and religion instructions. This invention has been seen as problematic by some representatives of Muslim communities since there will be no option for dispensation anymore, and the quality of the instructions on Islam is disputed. In the pedagogic training at the university, for example, a Rabbi is supervising the lectures on Judaism, while this function for the lectures on Islam is met by a scholar of Oriental sciences from the Basel university. The new subject will provide lessons on all major religions and on the related cultures, and pedagogic students are already trained in their curriculum. However, the interest of current school teachers in the optional training course for the new subject is very low and a serious shortage of qualified teachers for the new subject is foreseeable. Experts from the school administration are criticising the hasty implementation of the new regulation.

The participation of young Muslim girls in sports, namely swimming, has not been raised as an issue by the representatives of Muslim organisations in Zürich. According to school experts, the frequent discussion in the media on dispensations is grossly overstated; in Zürich, there is approximately one case per year, less than the rate with some fundamental Christian groups. Usually such cases can be solved by a meeting with the parents and pragmatic solutions such as allowing dresses for the girl in swimming lessons; the personal contact with the teacher often solves the reservations by the parents.

- ***Vocational training and access to jobs***

A pressing issue, namely for the migrant community from the Balkans which is to a considerable share of Muslim background, is the difficulty to find vocational training and regular jobs for their youth ('with an "ic" at the end of the name, no chance'). This problem has been aggravated by the current economic crisis; even enterprises which followed an explicit policy of hiring from disadvantaged groups like the Pestalozzi Group in Dietikon near Zürich (metal construction and engineering) cannot hire in the current situation.

The issue of headscarfs at the working place is usually solved pragmatically and has not been mentioned as an issue by the representatives of Muslim communities. Most companies employ Muslim women in workplaces where no contact with customers is required and accept Muslim dress codes without further problems; in 2004, the case of a Muslim saleswoman at a Zürich MIGROS store has made headlines because of the director of the store refused customers' claims to interdict wearing a scarf when serving the customers in the shop and supported the saleswoman wearing a scarf publicly. In a reaction to the public debate, the MIGROS directorate stated that the company religiously considers dress codes legitimate issue covered by the right to religious freedom that the specific situation of the employee and her job has to be considered, but that no disadvantages for staff members insisting on their religious dress code may result.

- ***Gender issues***

Muslim women often have a difficult position in case of conflicts with their spouse. In Zürich, a converted Muslim woman founded an association of Muslim women ([www.fatima-az-zahra.ch](http://www.fatima-az-zahra.ch)). The association offers monthly lectures for Muslim women, counselling on issues related to school, Koran/Arab language and German language training. Most Mosques do not offer provisions for Muslim women, so the association founded in 2000 a joint programme for women from all Muslim communities in the city. It succeeded in establishing good relations to the various Imams who occasionally send women with family problems to the association for counselling. The activities of the association are focussed on daily life problems of the women in a pragmatic manner and supports women in troubles by mediating services, housing and legal counselling for a civil divorce. The association is based in a small apartment provided by the city and assembles a small number of staff members in a honorary capacity.

One issue mentioned by the Arabic/Somali mosque has been the problems of young women from the community who are separated due to serious family problems from their parents and hosted in public youth asylums (custody taken from the parents); according to the representative, the specific needs of these young women often cannot be met in the youth asylums, and in several cases, they experienced a downward career of drug use and being neglected. He asked for a stronger involvement of the Muslim community in supporting these young women in cooperation with the responsible authorities.

#### ■ *Other issues*

Further issues mentioned by interview partners from the Muslim communities have been the situation of young Muslims in the military (food, religious holidays and separated showers), agreements within the various Muslim groups about the harmonisation of the calendar used (moon calendar, varying dates for holidays according to the geographical reference), and occasional problems of parking for the Friday prayer and related neighbourhood conflicts.

In general, it seems that most issues raised by Muslim groups towards the municipality and the state could be met. A pending problem seems to be the provision of additional rooms for important religious holiday celebrations.

### **5.2. General approaches and policies improving relations with Muslim groups**

The general approach of the city is to support the right of its residents to realize their religious needs publicly and visible. In principle, the task of the city is considered as being in charge of protecting existing liberal rights, and in equal treatment of all groups and citizens.

In practice, this includes moral support for Muslim groups in public disputes as well as explicit support of Muslims as a normal part of the city live by the political leadership.

### **5.3. Good practice examples of concrete activities and measures improving relations with Muslim groups**

As a concrete activity, an annual invitation of all Zürich Imams at the end of Ramadan by the city president takes place in order to set a public statement of respect and recognition. This practice has been considered by all interview partners from the Muslim community as being very positive and effective.

A relevant example is the practice of officers from the administration to seek personal contact to the representatives of Muslim communities in case of problems. For example, when complaints about the parking situation near a Mosque during the Friday prayer have been raised increasingly by neighbours to the police, the deputy police president visited the Imam of the Mosque to discuss possible solutions and to prevent further escalations. This approach has been taken very positively by the community.

City representatives use to accept invitations from Muslim communities (i.e. for the Iftar meal), if possible. The city supports Muslim communities in their search for premises, for example by issuing a formal letter of reference to the landlord. It organises inter-religious programmes and supports them financially.

The fund of the *Integrationskredit* are distributed by the city partly also for project of Muslim groups for improving their relation to the general public or for inter-religious programmes.

The experiences of the municipality with the cooperation from the side of Muslim organisations are very positive; the VIOZ and some Mosques are actively engaged in improving the relations to the autochthonous Swiss population.

An interesting measure from the side of a Muslim community are the German language courses for Turkish Imams in Switzerland organised and funded by the Turkish-Islamic Foundation for Switzerland (supported by the Turkish state). Since 2008, the Turkish Imams receive a five hours training per week in German language aiming the B1 level. Additional measures are trainings in organising tours to the Mosques and optional acquisition of qualifications as Mosque administrator and international Islam sciences at the Marmara and Ankara universities.

#### **5.4. Summary and lessons learned**

The policy of the municipality of supporting networking, making informal personal contacts and recognizing the Muslim communities publicly succeeded in building up trust relationship among the various actors which are resilient enough to stand challenges and to sustain a good cooperation on current affairs.

The explicit support by the political leadership and its public recognition of the present Muslim communities seems to be an important factor for the general situation in the cities. By various interview partners, it has been stated that this legitimization by the political leadership plays a crucial role for the practice of municipal authorities in dealing with Muslim clients.

Another important factor seems to be – beyond the provision of sufficient resources for integration activities – the coordinated approach of inclusion and the long term practice of building good personal contacts and establishing trust relationships.

Since the official policy of the city is that of non-interference and there are no big visible projects present, an outside observer tends to underestimate the scope, intensity and effectiveness of the continuous practice in various fields. However, it seems that just this approach is contributing strongly to the present quite relaxed state of affairs in the city.

### **6. Public communication: strategies of the city administration and local media**

Intergroup relations on the local level are greatly influenced by public communication. Public communication, in turn, is highly influenced by the city administration, (local) politicians, and (local) media: the city and the media affect or even decide what is reported, how to report, and also on what not to report. They influence how the native and migrant populations form opinions and are major actors in setting the agenda of public discourse on intergroup relations.

The city of Zürich does not have an officially formulated strategy for public communication concerning ethnic and religious groups living in the city, and such an explicit strategy would also be considered as being an inappropriate dealing with the independent media.

However, the city aims at creating opportunities and events for a public recognition of the Muslim groups in the city. One example is the annual invitation of the Zürich Imams to the

Ramadan reception (*Apero*). Other activities are the support in organising and funding of groups from the civil society in setting up intercultural or inter-religious activities which become also reported in the media.

The general discourse on foreigners and particularly on Muslims on the regional and national level is often quite negative, and became very controversial in recent years by the public campaigns of the political right, in particular the SVP. The municipal policy of not interfering in these disputes, but to supporting a lively civil society and an inclusion policy at the grassroots level seems to be a successful municipal approach in this setting.

## **7. Intergroup relations and radicalisation**

Radicalisation and extremist political and religious movements can occur both among natives and migrants. As the following sections will show, these phenomena do not play a significant role in Zürich. The first section deals with radicalisation within the majority population, the second with radicalisation within the minority population; the third section describes municipal provisions that focus on preventing or guarding against radicalisation.

### **7.1. Radicalisation within the majority population**

Xenophobia and the fear of foreigners were topics mentioned in interviews. Several interviewed persons referred to problems with (negative) generalisations of certain groups and especially of ‘the Muslims’, as well as antipathy and a lack of understanding or respect towards migrants. Fears, prejudices and (latent) discrimination exist as well. The interviewed experts agreed, however, that an organised radicalisation process against minority groups has not occurred in Zürich. Even the negative discourse by the political right of foreigners and Muslims seems to have no major impact on the local election results and the public mood in the city.

A relevant factor for this situation might be also the intense preventive work by the city police which is active in community policing and has an officer assigned for 2-3 streets in the neighbourhoods. The police founded a taskforce for intercultural conflicts and cooperates with an external mediator from Zürich Competence Centre for Intercultural Conflicts (TIKK). The latter is also involved in the training at the Canton police academy which includes a course on intercultural competence.

The police is also employing a complaints management with pre-screening of complaints before action is taken; a specific unit is working on analysis in prevention of football related youth conflicts (*Kripseinheit*); this unit had implemented officer’s exchange at an international level in policing large events and football matches, i.e. at the world championship in Munich. It maintains also contact with secondos (youngsters with migration background and with local Imams in order to prevent conflicts in the sports environment.

### **7.2. Radicalisation within the migrant and/or minority population**

There seem to be some reservations among Muslim groups towards the Somali/Saudi Mosque, suspecting a fundamentalist orientation. It may well be that in Zürich are some

small backyard mosques active which take more radical positions. However, there are no indicators of any radicalisation within the migrant or Muslim population in the city.

Critical, however, is the considerable exclusion of young males from the Balkans from the labour market and vocational training; although the city tries by activities in community centres, school social work and various programmes to implement preventive programmes, this may not solve the underlying socioeconomic problems of this group.

An interesting effect of the negative public discourse on Muslims is the rising number of autochthonous Swiss people converting to the Islam, as well as a certain de-secularisation and re-identification process of Muslims as a reaction to perceived discrimination. These processes, however, cannot be seen as a radicalisation.

Existing radical groups in the city focus on affairs in the countries of origin (i.e. the Kurdish PKK, Tamil Tigers and others) and seem to play a marginal role in Zürich.

### **7.3. Radicalisation: Summary and lessons learned**

The rising interest in formerly secularised Muslims – mostly from the Balkans – in the Islam and re-identification as being a Muslim in a reaction to the negative public discourse on Muslims is an indicator of the damaging effects on integration processes by the exclusion tendencies in parts of the host society. The publicly and visible stated inclusion of migrants and Muslims by the political leadership of the city seems to be an important counterweight to these developments.

There had been no signs formulated by the various interview partners that these conflicts could result in radicalisation tendencies in Zürich; the degree of inclusion at the local level seems to be sufficiently high for preventing serious developments in this respect.

## **8. Conclusion: Key challenges, lessons and learning for CLIP**

As in many cases, a key challenge for the city are socio-economic developments which are to a considerable extent beyond the city's control: The vocational training and labour market situation for some parts of the second generation migrant youth, and the housing situation with a considerable share of the regional Muslim population being resident in the agglomeration outside the city boundaries and commuting to the city.

Another key challenge in the Zürich case is the quite negative political discourse on migrants and Muslims at the national level. The very complex implementation of federalism and subsidiarity at the local level, however, seems to provide relevant opportunities for a municipal policy to promote a successful and positive convivencia at the local level, and to maintain trust relations among the various groups living in the city.

Together with the Swiss tradition of pragmatism and avoiding political polarisations in the public discourse, this policy of explicit inclusion and framing of migrants as a normality by the top political level of the city seems to be a very important factor for the good state of affairs in the city.

One important lesson from the city of Zürich for CLIP could be that effective and successful integration work requires a long term commitment and cannot be achieved by punctual and limited interventions. It requires the persistent building up of an inclusion culture, staffed by reliable and continuous resources. There are no quick solutions to the challenge of inclusion and social cohesion.

Another lesson could be the importance of a broad but unspectacular approach for implementing integration measures. The presentation of prominent “lighthouse” projects cannot replace continuous work in all relevant field of municipal responsibility on the ground; in contrary, it may risk in mobilizing resentments in the host society by framing the migrants as either being dependent clients or as receivers of privileges.

Another relevant experience from the Zürich case is the importance of personal contacts between officers of the city administration and polity to representatives of migrant and religious groups. These contacts – even if being only punctually and occasionally – are an important factor for building up a network of trust relationships. Such relationships play an important role in managing imminent conflicts, in serving as an early warning system and in contributing to a long-term integration process.

Last but not least provides the city of Zürich an interesting case how by consistent requirement from the city in face of an issue relevant for all Muslim groups a joint organisation representing the various Muslim communities may be created. The foundation of VIOZ is one of the few successful cases of such developments. It has been based on the openness of other autochthonous groups as the Christian churches and local Jewish communities for an inter-religious dialogue on practical affairs, and by a strong positive attitude of the city leadership towards the issues raised by the Muslim groups. The recognition and appreciation of the Muslim groups in public and visible acts by the political leadership of the city supported this process. It succeeded in establishing a relevant actor for intergroup relationships which could extend its relevance beyond the initial issues – a Muslim cemetery – into a mediation and conflict prevention body stemming from the Muslim communities.

## Bibliography

albsuisse (2008). Albanian/German periodical, see online at: [www.albsuisse.ch/aboutus.asp](http://www.albsuisse.ch/aboutus.asp) [01/07/2009], 2009

Bundesamt für Migration (BFM) (2009): *Migrationsbericht 2008*, Bern 2009.

Bundesamt für Statistik (BFS) (2008): *Statistik der Schweiz. Ausländerinnen und Ausländer in der Schweiz. Bericht 2008*, Neuchâtel 2008.

Bundesamt für Statistik (BFS) (2009): *BFS Aktuell, Statistik der natürlichen Bevölkerungsbewegung, Monatsbilanz und internationale Wanderungen der ständigen Wohnbevölkerung*, Neuchâtel 2009.

Eidgenössische Ausländerkommission (EKA) (2005): *Materialien zur Integrationspolitik, Muslime in der Schweiz – Identitätsprofile, Erwartungen und Einstellungen. Eine Studie der Forschungsgruppe „Islam in der Schweiz“ (GRIS)*, Genf 2005.

Bundesamt für Statistik (BFS) (2009): *Statistisches Lexikon der Schweiz*, see online at: <http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/de/index/infothek/lexikon.html> [01/07/2009], 2009.

CIA (2009): *The World Factbook* see online at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/SZ.html> [26/07/2009], 2009.

Eisner, Manuel / Ribeaud, Denis / Topçuoğlu, Tuba (2008): *Indikatoren zur wirtschaftlichen, sozialen und kulturellen Lage von immigrierten Minderheiten in der Stadt Zürich*. Zürich 2008.

Gianni, Matteo et al. (2005): *Muslime in der Schweiz. Identitätsprofile, Erwartungen und Einstellungen. Eine Studie der Forschungsgruppe «Islam in der Schweiz»*. Eidgenössische Ausländerkommission Bern 2005.

Lendorff-El Rafii, Marise (2003): *Wer sind sie, die Muslime in Zürich ? Wie leben sie?*. Pressemappe zur Ausstellung im Stadthaus, Zürich 2003.

Mahnig, H./Wimmer, A. (2003): *Integration without Immigrant Policy: The Case of Switzerland*, in: Heckmann, F./Schnapper, D., *The Integration of Immigrants in European Societies. National Differences and Trends of Convergence*, Stuttgart 2003.

Neue Züricher Zeitung (NZZ) (2009): *«Schweizer ohne Migrationshintergrund»*. *Wie Informationen zur Farce werden*. Report in 20.03.2009, see online at: [www.nzz.ch/nachrichten/medien/schweizer\\_ohne\\_migrationshintergrund\\_1.2228235.html](http://www.nzz.ch/nachrichten/medien/schweizer_ohne_migrationshintergrund_1.2228235.html) [01/07/2009], 2009.

Ömür, Orhun (2007): *Report to the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE on the country visit to SWITZERLAND on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims*. Vienna 2007.

Religionswissenschaftliches Seminar der Universität Luzern (2009): *Religionen in der Schweiz*, see online at: <http://www.religionenschweiz.ch/> [01/07/2009], 2009.

Widmer, T. / Strebel, F. (2008): *Studie zur Stellung der muslimischen Bevölkerung im Kanton Zürich*. Zürich 2008.

Zürich (2009a), *Website of the city of Zürich*, see online at <http://www.stadt-zuerich.ch> [01/07/2009], 2009.

Zürich (2009b), *Züricher Zahlenspiegel*, see online at: [http://www.stadt-zuerich.ch/content/prd/de/index/statistik/zuercher\\_zahlenspiegel.html](http://www.stadt-zuerich.ch/content/prd/de/index/statistik/zuercher_zahlenspiegel.html) [01/07/2009], 2009.

Zürich (2009c): *Rassismusbericht der Stadt Zürich 2008. Erster Bericht der interdepartementalen Arbeitsgruppe*. Zürich 2009.

Zürich (2009d): *Bevölkerung Stadt Zürich 4/2008*, Zürich 2009.

Zürich (2009e): Calculation of the Muslim population, internal analysis of the census 2000 data by IF, Zürich 2009.

Zürich (2008a): *Die neue Zuwanderung*, Zürich 2008.

Zürich (2008b): *Zürich in Zahlen*, Zürich 2008.

Zürich (2008c): *Statistisches Portrait*, Ausgabe 2/2008, Zürich 2008.

Zürich (2007): *Integrationspolitische Schwerpunkte der Stadt Zürich 2006-2010*. Zürich 2007.

Zürich (1999): *Integrationspolitik der Stadt Zürich. Massnahmen für ein gutes Zusammenleben in unserer Stadt*. Zürich 1999.

## Interviewees

The field visits took place from March 17th to 20th, 2009. The interviewed experts were the following:

*Braschler, Peter*, Stage Director of the Theatre Maralam

*Cetin, Nilüfer*, Staff member of the Turkish-Islam Foundation for Switzerland

*Dürst, Margreth*, Community Relations Officer Altstetten

*Halilovic, Sakib*, Imam of the Bosnian Mosque Schlieren

*Hatipoglu, Taner*, President of the VIOZ (Federation of Muslims in Zürich)

*Graf, Hans*, Head of the Housing Department, Realty Administration of the City of Zürich

*Gyr, Marcel*, journalist of the NZZ, local police and court affairs

*Kabbout, Lidija*, President of the Fathima az-Zahra association (Muslim women)

*Kurdoglu, Fatih*, Senior Staff of the Dialogue Institute Zürich

*Meier, Christof*, Head of the Department City Development – Promotion of Integration

*Mesmeh, Assef*, actor of the theatre play “Explodierer”

*Müller, Rolf*, Deputy Director of the Police District Industrie, City Police Zürich

*Ristemi, Dashmir*, actor of the theatre play “Explodierer”

*Rüegg, Andreas*, President of the Zürich School District Uto

*Sadaqat, Ahmed*, Imam of the Mahmud Mosque

*Sharifinejad, Reza*, actor of the theatre play “Explodierer”

*Sobaan, Saad*, Mosque administrator, member of Zürich foreigners’ council

*Team of the Department City Development – Promotion of Integration*

*Terlemez, Cebrail*, Managing Director of the Dialogue Institute Zürich

*Ulusal, Şemsettin*, President of the Turkish-Islam Foundation for Switzerland

*Vögeli, Dorothee*, editor of the NZZ, Zürich affairs

*Vogel, Christine*, President of the Zürich Forum of Religions

*Weibel, Monika*, Public relations Officer of the MGB company, Migros Zürich

*Werle, Christian*, journalist of the NZZ

*Yoker, Ümit*, journalist of the NZZ

*Youssef, H. Abo*, Vice President of the VIOZ (Federation of Muslims in Zürich)