

Intercultural policies and intergroup relations

Case study: Vienna, Austria

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About CLIP

In 2006, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, the city of Stuttgart and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) established a 'European network of cities for local integration policies for migrants', henceforth known as CLIP.¹ The network comprises a steering committee, a group of expert European research centres and a number of European cities. In the following two years, the cities of Vienna and Amsterdam joined the CLIP Steering Committee. The network is also supported by the Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), and has formed a partnership with the European Network Against Racism (ENAR).

Through the medium of separate city reports (case studies) and workshops, the network enables local authorities to learn from each other and to deliver a more effective integration policy. The unique character of the CLIP network is that it organises a shared learning process between the participating cities, between the cities and a group of expert European research centres, as well as between policymakers at local and European level.

The CLIP network currently brings together more than 30 large and medium-sized cities from all regions of Europe: Amsterdam (NL), Antwerp (BE), Arnsberg (DE), Athens (EL), Barcelona (ES), Bologna (IT), Breda (NL), Budapest (HU), Copenhagen (DK), Dublin (IE), Frankfurt (DE), Helsinki (FI), Istanbul (TR), İzmir (TR), Kirklees (UK), Liège (BE), Lisbon (PT), Luxembourg (LU), L'Hospitalet (ES), Malmö (SE), Mataró (ES), Newport (UK), Prague (CZ), Strasbourg (FR), Stuttgart (DE), Sundsvall (SE), Tallinn (EE), Terrassa (ES), Turin (IT), Turku (FI), Valencia (ES), Vienna (AT), Wolverhampton (UK), Wrocław (PL), Zagreb (HR), Zeytinburnu (TR) and Zürich (CH).

The cities in the network are supported in their shared learning by a group of expert European research centres in:

- Bamberg, Germany (European forum for migration studies, efms);
- Vienna (Institute for Urban and Regional Research, ISR);
- Amsterdam (Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies, IMES);
- Turin (International and European Forum on Migration Research, FIERI);
- Wrocław (Institute of International Studies);
- Swansea, Wales (Centre for Migration Policy Research, CMPR).

There are four research modules in total. The first module was on housing – segregation, access to, quality and affordability for migrants – which has been identified as a major issue impacting on migrants' integration into their host society. The second module examined equality and diversity policies in relation to employment within city administrations and in the provision of services. The focus of the third module is intercultural policies and intergroup relations. The final module (2009–2010) will look at ethnic entrepreneurship.

The case studies on intercultural policies were carried out in 2009.

¹ See also <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/populationandsociety/clip.htm>.

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The researchers at the Institute for Urban and Regional Research (ISR) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna are responsible for this report on Vienna.

A lot of information that formed the basis of this case study was forwarded by 'MA 17' (Municipal Department for Integration and Diversity Affairs), the department of the city administration of Vienna. This department is responsible for initiating measures and projects to improve equality and provide equal opportunities for migrants. At the same time it supports the city administration in developing its intercultural competence and quality of services to make them accessible to all residents, regardless of ethnic or language background. Together with the main contact person of the municipality of Vienna, Dr Ursula Struppe, head of MA 17, an enormous effort has been undertaken to find all the necessary data for this report. The authors of this report would like to thank all those who have cooperated in giving valuable information and comments, including the coordinating officers for this case study, Dr Karin König and Dr Theodora Manolacos, in cooperation with Dr Almir Ibric and Prof Borko Ivankovic (all MA 17), and in particular Dr Ursula Struppe for the extensive information she provided and her valuable suggestions.

In addition to the expert interviews, the ISR organised a round table meeting on intercultural policies and intergroup relations with local politicians, representatives of religious groups, city officials, heads of NGOs, a police officer and others, which was held on 30 March 2009. We further thank MA 17 for their support in contacting Muslim organisations to arrange their participation at this round table meeting in the Academy of Sciences.

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Introduction

The topic of this report for the third module of CLIP has to do with phenomena of urban life that are related to the multi-national, multi-ethnic and multi-religious structures of urban populations which challenge the ability of municipalities to establish or keep peaceful relations among the different segments of the population. In present day political discourse, relations between different ethnic and religious groups, immigrants and indigenous populations are predominantly discussed in terms of ‘intercultural dialogue’ and/or ‘interreligious dialogue’.

In this module of the CLIP project, two dimensions of intergroup relations are of particular interest: conflict between different ethnic groups, and those policies developed to avoid or solve conflict between groups, or, the conditions of social cohesion in a city. Relevant stakeholders include the city administration, the city council, political parties, churches, labour unions, welfare organisations, local media and anti-immigrant movements. On the part of the minorities it includes religious groups and national minorities. Among religious groups, particular attention is placed on Muslim communities. Where Muslims are not the most relevant group, focus is placed on other faith-based communities of interest. It is noteworthy that most of the religious groups are organised on an ethnic basis (see Heckmann, 2008).

The central topics of this report are intercultural dialogue in general, the dialogue with Islamic communities and the problem of political and religious radicalisation. Intercultural dialogue is a normative frame that spells out certain principles for establishing peaceful relations between different cultural and religious groups. In relation to intergroup relations, this research is also motivated by interests in peaceful relations between groups and individuals. Many religious groups were established rather recently in Europe, as a result of immigration processes. Some of the CLIP cities, such as Zagreb, Prague and Budapest, do not yet have much immigration, but have national minorities within their population that originate from the multi-ethnic structure of their country’s population. This means that ‘old’ ethnic minorities are included in this third CLIP module.

Brief history of migration to Austria

Since the Austro–Hungarian monarchy, Austria has been a country of migration. After the end of the Second World War, some 1.4 million foreigners (for example, foreign workers, war refugees, and German refugees from eastern Europe) stayed on Austrian territory. Between 1945 and 1989 Austria was one of the main transit countries for refugees fleeing communist regimes in eastern and central Europe. About two million people found temporary shelter in Austria during this period. The economic boom of the 1960s led to a growing demand for a labour force. Austria started to recruit so-called ‘guest-workers’. In 1973, there were 227,000 guest workers in Austria, of whom 178,000 came from Yugoslavia and 27,000 from Turkey.

The oil crises of 1973 and 1981 and the subsequent economic recessions radically reduced the demand for a labour force. In the early 1990s, profound political and economic changes were transforming Europe and new integration measures were introduced. The fall of the Iron Curtain and Austria’s accession to the European Union (EU) led to more open borders between countries. This resulted in an increase in temporary migration as well as transnational mobility. The Balkan Wars produced massive inflows of refugees from those areas to Austria’s southeast. In addition, Austria had to deal with a rapidly rising number of asylum seekers.

Austria’s population has become even more diverse in recent years. In 1990, regularisation of the employment status of hitherto illegally employed foreigners took place. As a result of the rising numbers of Yugoslavs and eastern Europeans that entered the country following Austria’s accession to the EU, the number of non-nationals in Austria doubled, rising from 344,000 in 1988 to 690,000 in 1993, while the proportion of foreign workers among all employed people rose from 5.4% to 9.1%.

According to the 2001 census of Austria, among a total population of approximately eight million people, more than 730,000 (or 9.1%) were foreign residents. At 12.5% of the total population, the proportion of foreign-born residents in 2001 in Austria was even higher than that of the United States. A total of 62.8% of them came from the two traditional recruitment regions of former Yugoslavia and Turkey. The 330,000 foreigners who were employed in Austria in 2001 comprised 10.5% of the total labour force. Half of them came from former Yugoslavia, 20% came from Turkey and 11% were EU nationals, most of whom were Germans. The number of people seeking asylum in Austria rose sharply after 2000. In 2001, 30,100 people sought asylum, rising to 39,400 in 2002 and 32,400 in 2003. However, it decreased during recent years; in 2006, only 13,350 people sought asylum there. The main sending states were Afghanistan, Moldavia, Russia, Serbia and Turkey.

Since 1 January 2003, non-EU foreigners with residence permits have been required to speak basic German or pay half of the cost of German language courses. There is an annual quota on the number of non-EU immigrants permitted in the country – in 2004 this was 8,050. Newcomers are categorised as key personnel or family reunification, and are then assigned to Austria’s nine provinces. People who want to immigrate because they intend to work in Austria have to be fall under the category of key personnel. All forms of first applications for a settlement permit are restricted by a quota (except for third country nationals who are family members of EU, EEA and Austrian citizens). Third country nationals (except EU and EEA citizens) who want to live in Austria permanently require a settlement permit. There is considerable variation in estimations about the number of unauthorised foreigners in Austria.

Table 1: Population of Austria by citizenship, 2007 and 2008

Citizenship	1 January 2007	1 January 2008	Change	
			Number	%
Total	8,298,923	8,334,325	35,402	0.4
Austrians	7,472,910	7,478,617	5,707	0.1
Foreign nationals	826,013	855,708	29,695	3.6
EU-countries (26)	275,884	302,104	26,220	9.5
'Old' EU (14)	161,803	175,064	13,261	8.2
Germany	113,668	124,270	10,602	9.3
EU accession countries 2004 (10)	84,123	90,185	6,062	7.2
EU accession countries 2007 (2)	29,958	36,855	6,897	23.0
Non-EU countries	550,129	553,604	3,475	0.6
Europe (non EU)	442,010	440,073	-1,937	-0.4
Former Yugoslavia	297,141	292,546	-4,396	-1.5
Turkey	108,808	109,764	956	0.9
Africa	20,897	21,471	574	2.7
America	16,898	17,790	892	5.3
Asia and Oceania	56,165	59,771	3,606	6.4
Unknown	14,159	14,499	340	2.4

Source: Statistik Austria; http://www.statistik.at/web_de/dynamic/statistiken/bevoelkerung/029982d.

Table 1 shows the population of Austria by citizenship in 2007 and 2008. Over 2007, the proportion of foreign nationals living legally in Austria rose by 3.6%. In this period, there was a particularly sharp increase in the number of EU nationals living in the country. In total, more than 26,000 immigrants from EU countries moved to Austria, of whom Germans are by far the biggest group. While there is still a substantial number of citizens from former guest worker countries, there was only a moderate increase in the number of Turkish and former Yugoslav citizens who arrived in 2007. The most remarkable level of increase was found among immigrants from the new EU accession countries of 2007 (Romania, Bulgaria); they rose by 23%. Migration flows from Africa remain low. Indeed, all non-EU immigration increased by only 0.6% between 2007 and 2008.

Religion is an important issue in this report. Findings from the 2001 census of Austria shows that among the Austrian residential population, Roman Catholics (members of the Roman Catholic Church) constituted the biggest religious group, with 762,089 persons, or 49.2% of the population. The Protestant community comprised 72,492 persons (4.7%) and the Islamic community made up 7.8% of the population. A total of 8% belonged to other religions. This category includes other Christian churches, Orthodox churches, the Jewish religious community and other non-Christian communities. A total of 65,705 persons (4.2%) indicated no religion. Finally, there is an important and steadily rising group of people in Austria with no religious affiliation: 397,596 people, or 25.7%.²

² Source: Census 2001 (see <http://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/daten/religion.html>).

National policy context

Immigration and integration have become very controversial topics of debate in Austria. Austria's immigration policy is characterised by a degree of ambivalence, manifested in measures that both welcome and restrict immigration. The official line continues to be that Austria is not a traditional country of immigration. Recent immigration policies reflect that ambivalence. On the one hand, the growing discontent among large parts of the population regarding the high levels of immigration during the first part of the 1990s was met with policy proposals of 'zero immigration'. Consequently, traditional labour migration and family reunification programmes were severely curtailed. At the same time, new measures were introduced to ensure the improved integration of immigrants. The introduction of the principle of consolidation of residence by the same law reduced migrants' status insecurity and enhanced their integration in Austrian society. The government also facilitated the recruitment and employment of seasonal labour. Since then, further integration measures have been introduced, the country has acceded to the EU, with its regime of more open borders, and thousands of temporary seasonal workers have been admitted. One positive step taken by the government was the reduction of the waiting period for migrants' family members to gain access to the labour market.

The government initiated a series of legislative reforms. These covered all areas related to immigration. In 1990, a quota for the employment of foreigners was introduced, defined as a maximum share of foreign workers in the total workforce. In 1992, a new Aliens Act tightened up regulations on the entry and residence of foreigners. In 1993, the Residence Act established contingents for different categories of migrants. The Aliens Act of 1997 merged the 1992 Aliens Act and the 1993 Residence Act into a single law. The aim of the reform was to promote the integration of aliens already present in Austria, rather than allow further immigration into the country. This concept was called 'integration before immigration', and the law became known as the 'integration package'. The most important factor introduced by the law was the principle of 'successive' consolidation of residence, in increments of five, eight, and 10 years. Only convictions for major criminal offences would allow the state to take away the residency right of such a migrant.

In 1998, a new Naturalisation Act was passed. This stipulated that the immigrant has to provide evidence that they are sufficiently integrated into Austrian society. The migrant has to prove that they are economically self-sufficient and not in need of social assistance, and that they are sufficiently proficient in German. On doing so, a migrant may acquire citizenship following a period of 15 years, on grounds of good integration.

In 2002, a population register system was implemented that allows a more detailed description of migration processes and a differentiation of population by citizenship and country of birth.

There is no legislation in Austria that relates specifically to intercultural dialogue. However, there is a rich body of legislation on religious matters. Austria provides religious freedom for all religions. Although Roman Catholicism predominates among its population, the state is secular. Currently, Austria has one of the most tolerant legal regulations concerning the expression of religious beliefs and practices in the public realm in Europe (Schima, 2005, p. 117; McGoldrick, 2006). Although publicly displayed religious signs indicate the privileged position of the Christian faith and the importance of the Catholic Church in the public realm, the concept of 'pluralistic inclusion' does not only refer to Christian religions. In Austria, the historically established framework of church-state relations consists of institutionalised cooperation between state authorities and religious associations.

The Austrian state currently recognises 13 religious bodies as religious communities: the Roman Catholic Church, the Protestant Church, the Islamic Community, the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Syrian Orthodox Church, the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Coptic Orthodox Church, the Jewish Community, the Old Catholic Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), the New Apostolic Church, the Methodist Church of Austria, and the Buddhist Community. Besides these officially recognised religious communities, the state also recognises 10 religious groups as

‘confessional communities’ (*Bekennnisgemeinschaften*) (Permoser et al, 2008). Confessional communities also possess several special rights, privileges, and responsibilities under Austrian law. These are, however, not as extensive as those of the religious communities.

The legal status of Muslims in Austria is unique in Europe. This relates to the country’s past role in the former Austro–Hungarian Empire, which has meant that Austria’s relations with the religion of Islam have been relatively unproblematic compared to other European countries. A law of 1867 guaranteed respect for all religions throughout the empire, giving Muslims the right to establish mosques and practice their religion. Religious organisations were established by the 1874 so-called Law on Recognition of Churches (*Anerkennungsgesetz*/RGBI 68/1874) and the Law on the Status of Religious Confessional Communities. All religious communities recognised by this law are formally granted the same treatment and entitlements by the Austrian state. Thus, the ‘Recognition Law’ implements a very specific form of freedom of religious expression as a group right (Kalb et al, 2003, p. 6 ff.). The law of 1874 gave Muslims various rights and privileges, including the right to organise and manage their community affairs independently through municipal councils and to establish Islamic endowment funds. Muslims also occupied good positions within the Austrian civil service, and the first mosque was built in Vienna as early as 1887 through government support given to Muslims who were enlisted in the Austro–Hungarian army (*Kaiserlich und Königlich*, k.u.k.).

With the annexation of Bosnia–Herzegovina in 1908, a considerable Muslim population became part of the invading Austro–Hungarian Empire. Owing to the lack of an organisational constitution of Muslims, Islam was recognised as an official religion by a special law, the so-called Islam Law. This law entitled people practicing Islam to certain rights, such as, for instance, advantages concerning taxation, school and work laws, and military service (Heine and Kroissenbrunner, 2001, p. 22). In 1919, the rights and privileges of Islam were enhanced by the signing of the Saint Germain treaty.

It was not until the 1960s that an active group of Muslims in Austria began to demand the establishment of an Islamic organisation. In the 1970s, allusions to the historical context outlined above finally led to the approval of the appeal made by a small Muslim organisation, the ‘Muslim Social Service’, to obtain the status of a recognised religious community, through a ‘formal’ administrative act.

In 1979, the Islam Law of 1912 was the basis for the recognition of Islam as a religious community and a corporation under public law. In this Law of Recognition (*Anerkennungsgesetz*), a Constitution of the Islamic Religious Body was proclaimed and the first Viennese Islamic religious community was established. This law implies that all recognised religions are treated the same way. Despite some difficulties of a legal nature, the Islamic Religious Community in Austria (*Islamische Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich*, IGGiÖ) managed to acquire legal status as a corporation in public law, thus representing all Muslims living in Austria. In May 1979, the IGGiÖ was recognised by the Federal Ministry of Education and Culture and established as the official representative of all Muslims residing in Austria (Balic, 1995, p. 42). During recent years, there has been increasing doubt among members of the diverse Muslim communities living in Vienna as to the extent this organisation is in fact representing all Muslims. More liberal Muslims in general³ and Turkish Muslims (including Sunnites and Alevites) in particular feel they are not well represented by the IGGiÖ.

³ See Initiative liberaler Muslime Österreich (ILMÖ) (initiativeliberalermuslimeoest@gmail.com) and Radio Afrika (13 February 2009).

In 1998, a change to the federal law on Islam was passed, clarifying which religious schools in Islam were to be accepted and covered by the Law on Islam. According to the Law on the Status of Religious Confessional Communities, organisations were categorized as religious societies, religious confessional communities, and associations were given distinct legal status. Until then, only the Bosnian *Hanafi* School of jurisprudence had been accepted. The Austrian government amended the Law of Islam to recognise all the Islamic theological schools, as well as the *Hanafi* School (Abdel-Fattah, 2004). Being classified as a religious society allows these schools to participate in the state-run contribution system. It also enables the provision of religious instruction in public schools and financing for private schools.

Austria has tolerant regulations concerning the expression of religious beliefs and practices in the public realm. The status of a legally recognised religious community and other constitutionally guaranteed rights provide several privileges for adherents of the Islamic faith (Gresch et al, 2008). In contrast to international developments, these liberal legal regulations have even been strengthened over recent years, through the law on regulations of disguise during public gatherings of 2002 and the re-issuing of a governmental decree prohibiting any restrictions on pupils wearing headscarves in public schools in 2004 (Keplinger, 2002; Gresch and Hadj-Abdou, 2007). In addition, Muslim soldiers in the federal army of Austria gained the right to paid leave for the Islamic holidays of *Eid Al-Fitr*, which marks the end of the fasting month of Ramadan, and *Eid Al-Adha*.⁴

Austria has a long tradition of active involvement through dialogue with Muslim communities. In June 2003 the First Conference of European Imams and of Leaders of Islamic Centres took place in Graz, the capital of the region of Styria. In April 2006 the second Conference of European Imams also took place in Austria. In May 2006 a conference of the Ministry of the Interior entitled 'The Dialogue of Cultures and Religions' was organised. Since July 2007 the Austrian Foreign Ministry (*Bmeia*) installed a task force called 'Dialogue of Cultures (*Dialog der Kulturen*)' for the continuation and intensification of intercultural dialogue activities.⁵ Austria was involved in many intercultural activities during the Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008, in cooperation with bodies such as the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures, within the Framework of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), and the Conference 'Europe and the Arab World - Connecting Partners in Dialogue' (2008). Also, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ursula Plassnik, gave a speech on the importance of intercultural dialogue and the issue of dealing with diversity at the conference, 'Islam in Europe' (Plassnik, 2007).

⁴ See <http://www.euro-islam.info/country-profiles/austria/>.

⁵ See <http://www.bmeia.gv.at/aussenministerium/aussenpolitik/auslandskultur/dialog-der-kulturen.html>.

Profile of Vienna

Brief description of the city

Vienna is one of the nine federal states of Austria. On 1 January 2008, it had a population of 1,678,435 people (more than 2.2 million within the greater metropolitan area). Vienna is the capital of Austria and by far its largest city, as well as its cultural, economic and political centre. It is also the seat of many international organisations, such as the official UN seat and the OECD headquarters. Vienna is both a city and a federal province. The city is composed of 23 districts. The Social Democratic Party has been dominating Viennese local government since the 1920s. The city councillors, of whom there are currently 14, are part of the city's senate and are politically responsible for specific areas. Vienna has a consensus oriented political culture. It is rooted in the concept of 'social partnership'. This is a specific Austrian form of corporatism and involves a network consisting of the state and employees (unions, the chamber of work), as well as employers' association (the chamber of commerce, Federation of Austrian Industry).

Vienna is an economically important metropolis. It accounts for 27% of total added value generated in Austria, some 23% of all workplaces and some 25% of all employees. This makes Vienna the economic and job centre of Austria. In 2005, 138,559 (18.3%) of its employees could be found in public administration.

The city's economic structure is highly dependent on the tertiary sector. In 2004, the purchasing power index in Vienna was 112.5, whereas the country's average figure was 100. The region of lower Austria held the second position, with 102.1. The economic development of the city has not only involved a marked expansion of sectors with low qualification requirements and a very high share of female employees in sectors such as retail trade and tourism, but also a rise in knowledge-based aspects of technology and business-related (consulting) services. These developments reflect a structural evolution of the labour market towards Vienna as a service-oriented job centre of supra-regional importance. Approximately 200,000 commuters come from the surrounding regions to Vienna to work.

City's migrant population

Vienna is a city of immigration. It can look back to a long-standing tradition of cultural and linguistic diversity, since Vienna attracted many people when it was the capital of the Habsburg Empire.

Vienna boasts a variety of nationalities among its immigrants. A total of 40% of foreign nationals living in this city do not come from Austria's traditional sending countries, namely former Yugoslavia or Turkey. Nowadays, regardless of their citizenship status, approximately one third of the entire Viennese population has a migration background, in that either they or their parents were born abroad.

Table 2: The residential population of Vienna 1980–2007

	Total population		Austrians		Foreign citizens		Proportion of foreigners
		1980=100	Number	1980=100	Number	1980=100	%
1980	1,535,145	100.0	1,424,405	100.0	110,740	100.0	7.2
1981	1,528,631	99.6	1,412,376	99.2	116,255	105.0	7.6
1982	1,510,634	98.4	1,399,450	98.2	111,184	100.4	7.4
1983	1,499,866	97.7	1,389,870	97.6	109,996	99.3	7.3
1984	1,494,874	97.4	1,381,875	97.0	112,999	102.0	7.6
1985	1,490,956	97.1	1,373,686	96.4	117,270	105.9	7.9
1986	1,485,484	96.8	1,366,157	95.9	119,327	107.8	8.0
1987	1,484,258	96.7	1,359,760	95.5	124,498	112.4	8.4
1988	1,485,777	96.8	1,350,020	94.8	135,757	122.6	9.1
1989	1,492,636	97.2	1,339,701	94.1	152,935	138.1	10.2
1990	1,502,772	97.9	1,330,837	93.4	171,935	155.3	11.4
1991	1,522,449	99.2	1,325,120	93.0	197,329	178.2	13.0
1992	1,537,523	100.2	1,320,648	92.7	216,875	195.8	14.1
1993	1,549,436	100.9	1,319,152	92.6	230,284	208.0	14.9
1994	1,542,667	100.5	1,311,953	92.1	230,714	208.3	15.0
1995	1,539,002	100.3	1,305,009	91.6	233,993	211.3	15.2
1996	1,542,191	100.5	1,305,758	91.7	236,433	213.5	15.3
1997	1,540,875	100.4	1,304,955	91.6	235,920	213.0	15.3
1998	1,542,252	100.5	1,303,518	91.5	238,734	215.6	15.5
1999	1,548,537	100.9	1,305,870	91.7	242,667	219.1	15.7
2000	1,553,956	101.2	1,306,287	91.7	247,669	223.6	15.9
2001	1,562,737	101.8	1,308,044	91.8	254,693	230.0	16.3
2002	1,583,814	103.2	1,314,932	92.3	268,882	242.8	17.0
2003	1,598,626	104.1	1,321,662	92.8	276,964	250.1	17.3
2004	1,626,440	105.9	1,333,084	93.6	293,356	264.9	18.0
2005	1,651,438	207.6	1,342,254	94.2	309,184	279.2	18.7
2006	1,657,559	108.0	1,345,196	94.4	312,363	282.1	18.8
2007	1,670,749	108.8	1,345,798	94.5	324,951	293.4	19.4

Sources: Statistics Austria – residential population according to population prognosis (*Bevölkerungsfortschreibung*); own calculations.

Table 2 shows the changes in the number and proportion of foreigners in the Viennese population that occurred between 1980 and 2007. By the end of 2007, 1,670,749 people lived in Vienna, including 324,951 foreign nationals. This comprised 19.4% of the entire population living in Vienna. A consistent increase in the proportion of foreigners can be observed. The percentage rose from about 7% or 8% during the 1980s to figures ranging between 10% and 15% during the 1990s, reaching its peak in 2007. The number of foreigners in Vienna in 2005 was three times higher than it was in 1980.

In 2007, the index rose to 293.4. During the 1980s the population of Vienna was relatively stable, decreasing slightly. Since the 1990s, the inflow of immigrants has been the primary cause of an increase in Vienna's population. This positive demographic trend is ongoing: Vienna is one of the very few Austrian federal provinces with rising birth rates and increasing numbers of children in schools and kindergartens.

Table 3: *Foreign residential population in Vienna 1981–2005*

Nationality	1981	1991	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	% of total
Guest worker	78,297	131,234	153,428	157,214	155,540	157,090	159,557	51.6
Former Yugoslavia	58,587	87,358	114,811	117,395	115,348	117,362	119,656	38.7
Turkey	19,710	43,876	38,617	39,819	40,192	39,728	39,901	12.9
East-west-migration	5,528	21,907	31,256	34,754	38,694	46,266	52,491	17.0
Poland	2,653	11,056	13,646	14,031	14,504	18,258	21,610	7.0
Hungary	1,117	3,539	4,149	4,428	4,621	4,941	5,271	1.7
Czech Republic *	753	2,619	1,839	2,012	2,114	2,224	2,362	0.8
Slovakia	-	-	3,300	3,927	4,448	5,427	6,360	2.1
Romania	350	2,532	3,809	4,882	6,109	6,961	7,796	2.5
GUS **	417	1,357	2,096	2,495	3,331	4,366	4,741	1.5
Bulgaria	238	804	2,417	2,979	3,567	4,089	4,351	1.4
EU15	-	-	26,243	28,531	30,947	34,178	37,776	12.2
Germany	6,374	9,017	13,398	14,759	16,014	18,094	20,417	6.6
other EU countries	-	-	12,845	13,772	14,933	16,084	17,359	5.6
Middle East and Northern Africa	3,909	7,179	8,313	8,698	8,789	8,629	8,542	2.8
Egypt	1,003	2,736	3,067	3,152	3,142	3,121	3,240	1.0
Iran	2,096	3,088	4,055	4,295	4,330	4,210	4,026	1.3
Israel	810	1,355	1,191	1,251	1,317	1,298	1,276	0.4
Asian countries	2,770	6,694	10,129	11,778	12,914	13,623	14,463	4.7
India	624	2,008	3,778	4,219	4,347	4,425	4,615	1.5
Philippines	981	1,842	2,157	2,310	2,468	2,646	2,870	0.9
Japan	655	1,074	1,169	1,275	1,326	1,364	1,421	0.5
Peoples Republic of China	510	1,770	3,025	3,974	4,773	5,188	5,557	1.8
USA and Canada	2,218	2,600	3,096	3,235	3,378	3,562	3,827	1.2
Others	14,321	18,021	22,228	24,672	26,702	30,008	32,528	10.5
Foreign nationals total	113,417	196,652	254,693	268,882	276,964	293,356	309,184	100.0

* 1981 and 1991 Czechoslovakia;

** 1981 and 1991 Soviet Union.

Source: 1981 and 1991: *Census data, Statistics Austria*; since 2001: *Population Register*.

Table 3 shows the changes that occurred in the structure of the migrant population between 1981 and 2005. In 2005 more than 80% of all foreign nationals came from European countries, including Turkey. Former guest workers comprise the biggest group, making up 51.6% of the total foreign population in that year. About 120,000 persons (38.7%) came from the former Yugoslavia, approximately 40,000 (12.9%) of whom were Turkish citizens. Immigrants from countries east of Austria made up another significant group of immigrants; 52,000 (17%) fall into this category, most of whom were

Polish. Immigrants from the higher socioeconomic brackets are mainly from Germany and North America and are often only temporary migrants, for the purposes of business or study, for example.

In 2005, 12.2% of immigrants in Vienna were EU15 citizens, with the Germans making up the biggest sub-group. The number of German nationals in Vienna grew considerably between 2001 and 2005, as did the number of citizens from Romania, the new member of the EU. Migrants from Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Middle East still constitute smaller groups but their numbers grew significantly between 2001 and 2005. Nigerian nationals are the largest African group in Vienna, followed by the Egyptians. The most common Asian countries of origin are China, India, Iran and the Philippines. The number of immigrants from India rose from 624 in 1981 to 4,615 in 2005. In 2005 there were ten times more Chinese people living in Vienna than there was in 1981 and about three times more Filipinos.

City's Muslim population

Islam has a long history in Austria. Muslim immigration to Austria, especially from Turkey and eastern European countries, increased after the 1878 Berlin conference, which assimilated Islamic populations into the Austrian–Hungarian Empire. After 1964, ‘guest workers’ came mainly from Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, and, to a lesser extent, from Arab countries such as Egypt. A considerable wave of Muslim immigrants arrived in the early 1990s, in particular from Bosnia.

Due to migration patterns, the composition of the Muslim community has changed over recent decades. In 1971 only 0.3% of the Austrian population was officially registered as Muslims. In 1991, 158,776 people in Austria (2% of the total population) declared themselves to be of Muslim faith. Between 1991 and 2001, the number of Muslims in Austria almost doubled. Muslims are now the largest religious minority in Austria, comprising 4.22% of the population in the 2001 census (IGGiÖ, 2002; Strobl, 2006). According to the 2001 census, there were 338,988 Muslims living officially in Austria out of a total resident population of 8,032,926. The number of Muslims with Austrian citizenship was 96,052. The biggest group is of Turkish descent (134,210), followed by Bosnians (96,210). New forms of migration, mainly family reunion, changed the composition of the Muslim community, and also led to new life goals among first and second generation Muslim migrants. During recent decades, the number of Arabs, Iranians and Pakistanis also grew to substantial numbers among the Muslim population in Austria.

According to a 2001 survey, the western federal province of Vorarlberg, with its former industrial towns, has the highest proportion of Muslims in Austria (8.36%, 29,334 persons) (IGGiÖ, 2005). Vorarlberg is followed by Vienna, where Muslims make up 7.82% of the population (121,149 persons). This is followed by the provinces of Salzburg (4.5%, 23,137 persons), upper Austria (4.0%, 55,581 persons), Tyrol (4.0%, 27,117 persons) and lower Austria (3.2%, 48,730 persons). Smaller numbers of Muslims live in the southern and eastern regions of the state such as Styria (1.6%, 19,007 persons), Carinthia (2.0%, 10,940 persons) and Burgenland (1.4%; 3,993 persons).⁶

In the last census in 2001, 7.8%, or 121,149 persons, of the Viennese population declared themselves as Muslims. Among them, 43,612 were born in Turkey, 36,919 indicated Austria as their country of birth and 11,550 were born in Bosnia-Herzegovina.⁷ The main problem with these data is that information on Muslim people's country of birth and citizenship does not allow conclusions to be drawn regarding their specific denomination. Statistics compiled by the

⁶ See <http://www.euro-islam.info/country-profiles/austria/>.

⁷ Source: <http://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/daten/rtf/religion-mitglieder.rtf>.

municipal department MA 5, which are based on information from the IGGiÖ, estimated a Muslim population of 103,000 for 1999, which increased to 150,000 in 2006. For 2007, the IGGiÖ estimated that there was 150,000 Muslims living in Vienna.⁸ Among the Muslim population there are denominational differences such as Alevites, Shiites and Sunnites, as well as ethnic ones. Some Muslim groups are more secular than others while some are more traditional. There are even some with very nationalistic views.

There are no specific data in Vienna on age, gender, generation, household and family structures in the context of religious affiliation. The existing data refer to citizenship which is no valid basis for calculations because of the multi-ethnic and multi-religious structure of the population of many countries of origin (for example, India, Nigeria, Egypt). With respect to gender, one can say that the Muslim community in Austria is still dominated by men: in 2001, 45% of the Muslims were women (Statistics Austria, 2006, p. 54 f.). It is probable that the gender structure in Vienna is very similar to this.

Neither are there any data on the socioeconomic status of the Muslim population in Vienna. Generally it can be said that many Turks still constitute a socially and economically marginalised part of the total population. Many Iranians have high educational qualifications. These immigrants arrived in Vienna in several waves. Some families came as early as after 1900, others during the 1950s and 1960s. They were usually financially very well off as they could transfer all their possessions to Austria. Many of them migrated to Austria in 1979, when the Iranian emperor, Shah Reza Pahlevi, was overthrown by the Iranian revolution (Czarnowski, 2008). Regarding Egyptians in Vienna, a very high proportion of them was once self-employed as newspaper sellers and flower sellers, but this has decreased over the last decade. Now, many Egyptians are successful shopkeepers. The Bosnians are a heterogeneous group with a high proportion of working-class people who migrated during the 'guest worker' era of the 1970s and a higher proportion of highly qualified people who left the country during the Balkan wars of the 1990s (see Kroissenbrunner, 2005, Majdoub, 2004, Oring, 2006).

The OECD collects data on education from various statistical agencies within the country, the majority of which comes from census data from the year 2001 and refers to Austria and not to Vienna specifically. It is likely that the socio-economic structure of Muslims in Vienna is very similar to that of the total Muslim population in Austria, so a short overview of these data shall be given there.⁹ This source does not include data on religion, but does have country of origin as reported by the respondent. It is thus possible to construct an approximate picture of the educational status of those from predominately Muslim countries.

Some countries have large Muslim populations but the immigrant population cannot be readily classified as Muslim or non-Muslim. As such, the educational data is presented separately for those countries with a predominately Muslim population and those with a predominately non-Muslim population. It also presents a category for those for whom classification would not seem justified. Proportions are for all reported data, so individuals with no reported ancestry or education are excluded. Among the Muslim population 6% are highly educated, 30% can be classified as having a medium level of education and 64% have a low level of education. Thus, compared with the non-Muslim segment of the population, among whom 11% have a higher level 55% have a medium level and 34% have a low level of education, Muslims emerge as having a lower level of education. In the religiously indeterminate group, the education structure is

⁸ See <http://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/daten/rtf/religion-mitglieder.rtf>.

⁹ The OECD classifies educational achievement using the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED): ISCED 0/1/2: Less than upper secondary; ISCED 3/4: Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary; ISCED 5A: Academic tertiary; ISCED 5B: Vocational tertiary; ISCED 6: Advanced research programs. 0–2 is considered low, 3–4 as medium level, and 5 and above are considered high.

as follows: 8% have a high level, 32% have a medium level and 60% have a low level of education. Of course, the number of highly educated Muslims is increasing. This is partly due to the fact that the level of confidence among Muslims in Vienna has changed in recent years. Among its younger generation, the proportion of persons with graduate level education rose, and an educated elite came into being.¹⁰

Although, there are no readily available statistics on the level of unemployment among the Muslim population in Vienna (such data is also only available on the basis of nationality), the IGGiÖ (2003) estimated that the unemployment rate among Muslims is approximately more than 1.5 times higher than found among non-Muslims. Women in particular, dressed according to Islamic dress codes, face problems in participating in the labour market. Often, employers announce that they are unable to employ women in Islamic dresses, due to a lack of tolerance on the side of their customers and business partners.

In 1979, the IGGiÖ was recognised as the official representative for the Islamic community, in dialogue with the Austrian state. The institutional implementation of the IGGiÖ avoided an informal development of several Islamic associations and the formation of exclusive religious associations. This institutionalisation also enables public control and influence. In this context, cooperation between Islamic associations and the IGGiÖ is seen as important for the integration policy (Potz, 2007, p. 339). The IGGiÖ has its main seat in Vienna. Its current president is Anas Schakfeh. Regional committees select the organisation's leaders. They also have the right and task to organise and place teachers on education courses on Islam and Islamic issues, which take place at public schools. Those teachers are paid by the Austrian state.

The IGGiÖ, according to its founding charter, claims to represent all Muslims in Austria, yet in practice, the executive offices of the important Shura Council are exclusively staffed by Sunni Muslims. A point of conflict can be found in the fact that over eight years there were no formal elections within the IGGiÖ and for a long time it lacked a formally approved constitution. During February 2009, many public discussions took place about the findings of a dissertation which showed, among other things, the attitudes of Islamic teachers towards democratic rights and freedoms.¹¹ Following this, an Islamic teacher even lost their job after they had criticized the IGGiÖ.¹²

It is not clear the extent to which the Islamic Religious Community represents all Muslims in Austria. There are internal debates about the exclusive role of the IGGiÖ regarding the question as to who and how many Muslims the community really represents – estimates range from 1% of the Muslim community, or 80 persons, to several hundred (Radio Afrika, 13 February 2009). There are some religious groups among the Muslims, such as the Alevites and Shiites, who doubt the claim of sole legitimation. Muslims argue that a uniform Islam does not exist and that therefore, a sole legitimate representation is not possible (for example, ILMÖ 2009).

Islamic education institutions include the Islamic Academy in Vienna, founded in 1998, and the Al-Azhar Institution in Vienna, founded two years later. Vienna has 15 Islamic schools of different national orientations, which is a quite considerable number. After the first Conference of European Imams in June 2003, the IGGiÖ organised the first Conference of Austrian Imams in April 2005 in Vienna, which contained standpoints and resolutions concerning 'Islam in Austria'.

¹⁰ See <http://www.euro-islam.info/country-profiles/austria/>.

¹¹ For details compare <http://www.derislam.at/> and Khorchide (2009).

¹² See *DiePresse*, 25 February 2009.

Local intercultural policies in general

General approach and responsibility for relations with ethnic and religious organisations

There is a long tradition of associations in the history of Austria. They are often the only way for non-Austrian citizens to participate in socio-political issues. Moreover, being an association is a fundamental precondition for funding and legal issues, such the legal approval of being a religious community. In Vienna there is a wide range of migrants associations and organisations. Their focuses can be cultural, political, religious or sportive. Three main forms of organisation can be identified in Vienna: (a) organisations based on common national background, (b) those based on common religious affiliation and (c) those based on common ethnic background (Waldrauch and Sohler, 2004). This survey was conducted between 2001 and 2003 and covers 728 migrant organisations, of which 279 were analysed on the basis of their political and legal frameworks, their history of founding, their members and their aims. Many immigrant groups have developed as so-called 'self-organisations' as an attempt to empower themselves, through identifying their own needs and articulating them. The first migrant organisations of Yugoslavian and Turkish guest workers were founded during the 1960s.

In its policies and practices, the City of Vienna makes little distinction between migrants' ethnic, national and religious organisations. Ethnic and religious organisations are considered to be a valuable and essential expression of Vienna's increasingly diverse population and civil society's activities. They are all considered to be equally important partners for dialogue and in the implementation of measures and actions to promote integration. They are also used as target groups for the city's measures and actions taken in the field of integration and diversity (see Wiener Integrationsfonds and Sarig, 2001). Moreover they strengthen the participation of migrants in all spheres of political, social and economic life in Vienna, hence in the general integration process in Vienna. Religious groups and associations are regarded in an equal or similar way as those groups that are organised along national and/or ethnic lines. There is a basic difference in terms of organisation and support by the federal state if these religious groups are officially recognised by the state, which is the case for 14 groups overall.¹³

Vienna's Social Democratic Party has a long tradition in maintaining and supporting a dialogue between religious groups in the city. It is an important goal of the city not to drive religious associations into denominational ghettos. It is also important that religious instruction in schools is a government affair and is not provided via private classes. There is a fruitful dialogue between many migrant associations and also between Muslim and Jewish communities, which is sometimes disturbed by developments in the international sphere.

The official representatives of the city government and council regularly cooperate with and take part in events arranged by migrant organisations. The primary responsibility for relations of the city towards ethnic and religious organisations lies with the municipal department MA 17, in the context of the diversity policy of the city and its inherent principle of 'intersectionality' (*Querschnittsmaterie*) regarding integration and diversity. Several other departments are also responsible for relations with ethnic associations in the municipality, for example, MA 7, the Department for Cultural and Intercultural Affairs. As the migrant organisations do a lot to support the local ethnic minority communities there was already a lot of support provided to migrant organisations by the Vienna Integration Fund, which was continued by the MA 17 (Holler, 2002).

¹³ For more information, see the website of the Austrian Ministry for Education, Arts and Science <http://www.bmukk.gv.at/ministerium/kultusamt/index.xml>.

The city of Vienna considers the following types of local ethnic minority organisations as being important:

- those that represent the large and the smaller immigration groups, for example immigrants with a Turkish background, or those from Albania, Arab countries, China, former Yugoslavia and other Asian and African countries;
- those that enable the city to get into contact with these communities and make its activities, services and interests known to them and which furthers mutual understanding, knowledge of issues, strengths and problems and the interests of these residents;
- those that focus on activities furthering integration and respectful co-existence in the city of Vienna, on participating and engaging in the life of the city and its institutions, and on engaging in civil society life in Vienna;
- those that have an interest in cooperating with the city and its institutions.

There are elected representatives in the city council stemming from local ethnic minority communities, though there are only a few of them. Nonetheless, they take an active role in integration policies. On the local level of districts there are more active representatives and many of them act as ‘integration speakers’ for the political party to which they belong.

Issues, demands and interests

Major issues in relation to migrant organisations’ activities relate to social needs, and can be found in the contexts of housing, employment and health, education matters, including host country language learning, and in a broad variety of sport activities. Other activities relate to culture and folklore, such as art, film, theatre, dance, literature and minority languages. These take place in all kind of festivals, in the context of the practice of religion and in activities in the area of integration. In Vienna, the provision of development aid via twinning Vienna to a city of origin does not take place.

There are many support activities that provide members of an ethnic minority a place to meet, have leisure and festive activities, get information on many issues of daily life, make contacts, and to feel at ease. According to our informants, the following aims and demands are very important:

- the improvement of the socioeconomic situation of migrants especially in the areas of education, labour market status, income, social security and housing;
- the improvement of their legal status;
- to further develop efficient anti-discrimination laws and bodies;
- the setting of positive measures such as equality targets in the area of employment;
- a strong political representation and political voting rights for third country citizens;
- more representation in the media (mainstreaming issues);
- the improvement of the climate of public and political debates on issues such as migration and integration.

Some of the activities that take place in cooperation with the city are funded or otherwise supported by the municipality, in particular through the support of MA 17. Some important initiatives are listed here as examples:

- migrant women's associations initiatives to deal with the issues that are of special concern to them (for example, dealing with gender roles and their changes, self-empowerment, strengthening their voices in the public arena and their participation in all spheres of life, accessing support to be able to further and achieve their aims). A network of women's associations was initiated and is supported by the MA 17;
- diverse sport and other leisure activities for children and young people with a special focus on girls and young women;
- activities to present migrants to the indigenous populations, such as open days of mosques and other associations, participation in district, regional or social forums and integration platforms – communication bridges in the cases of conflicts and mediation work;
- a special initiative by the municipality, involving the cooperation of MA 17, MA 42 and MA 49, called 'Barbecue Masters in the Mother Tongue' (*Muttersprachliche Grillplatzmeister*). This project was started in 2005 and aims to mediate in conflicts between migrants using common barbecue places and involving indigenous Austrians who often feel disturbed by such conflicts, particularly on Sundays and holidays;
- participation in the MA 17 'Start Coaching' project (<http://www.StartWien.at>) and many other activities through which the city aims at furthering and improving the participation of migrants in the work of the municipality. These activities include programmes to learn the German language, programmes to specifically reach out to women with children, the support of young people's participation in education and professional training, economic activities, and the furthering of migrant enterprises;
- a special emphasis is placed on Roma associations, with the aim to improve children's and young people's access to (higher) education and professional training and to support parents in this process as well.

One important demand of all migrant associations is to tackle discrimination. For that purpose, the 'Klagsverband' (Litigation Association of NGOs against Discrimination) was founded. This is a litigation association that offers support for victims of discrimination and links to advice centres. This association also intervenes in cases of discrimination of Muslim women wearing the *hijab*, the head covering traditionally worn by Muslim women (Klagsverband, 2006). A problem has been that up to now migrant organisations did not join this association.

Besides more general demands, there are also demands of specific groups, particularly of organisations of migrant women, representing African, Muslim, Sikh and Chinese women, among other groups.¹⁴ For example, LEFÖ is a counselling and education centre for migrant women from Latin America, which also works with other migrant women (LEFÖ, 1998). It offers health prevention support for migrant sex workers (Project TAMPEP), has an education centre for women from Latin America, as well as an intervention centre for female victims of trafficking. This organisation does a lot of public relations work to raise awareness on the mechanisms that enable the exploitation of female migrants within society and to counter the clichés and prejudices associated with female migration and trafficking that prevail in the media. Its aims and demands are to enhance the integration of female migrants, to improve the living and working conditions for migrants in Austria and to empower female migrants to get out of relations characterised by violence, addiction or exploitation. In special programmes it tries to improve working conditions for migrant sex workers, which currently often violate human and women's rights. In many successful cases it provided protection for female migrants from violence, exploitation and human rights violations, through various measures.

¹⁴ For information on the Chinese, see Kreissl (1999).

The association, 'Miteinander Lernen – Birlikte Öğrenelim' (see Stangl-Mähner 1995), which was founded 1984 and is financially supported by the city, is a good example of an organisation working for the interests of specific groups, in this case, Turkish women and children. It is an advice, education and psychotherapy centre for women, children and families. Here, specialists offer problem-solving strategies oriented towards the special socio-cultural background of Turkish immigrant women. They are developed on the basis of an integrated concept aligned with the specific needs of that group. The organisation offers promotion and education measures for women and, very importantly, childcare facilities - (see Weikert, 1995).

The number of self-organisations or self-organised initiatives of people of African descent or background has increased over recent years in Vienna. This development marks an attempt to combat discrimination in all its forms, to press for political will in this area and to move away from victimisation and towards active citizenship.¹⁵ The second generation of people of African descent (or the 'African diaspora' as PAMOJA, one initiative of young people, calls itself) have started analysing the structural foundations of discrimination, taking into account not only recent developments, but also historical processes of racial discrimination in Austria.¹⁶ Because of recent incidents (see derStandard, 10 March 2009) Africans are especially interested in establishing a dialogue with police representatives to prevent police assaults in the future. To promote better communication and cooperation with immigrants in general, and Africans in particular, Vienna's Land Office of Criminal Investigation together with African migrant organisations founded an association called 'Project fair and sensible'. An important function of this project is to develop education workshops in the police academy. It also established an advice centre. This association organises multicultural events and information campaigns among police officers and immigrants. The chapters in this report on Muslims in Vienna provide detail on the interests of their religious organisations.

In general, the aims of ethnic and religious organisations are part of the city's integration and diversity policies and are therefore welcomed by the municipality. The right of third country citizens to vote at district level is a traditional political request made of the city. The city is highly interested in establishing and maintaining good and continuous contacts and dialogue forums with the numerous ethnic and other migrant organisations. A special focus of the work of MA 17 is dedicated to this aim (district and neighbourhood work). The city aims to learn the interests and aims of these organisations via integration platforms and its numerous contacts with ethnic and other migrant organisations for the purposes of funding of projects and initiatives. The platforms and talks serve as a forum to channel these interests and for the city to respond to them by developing new projects, initiatives and information channels. Many aspects of the work of MA 17 have been established that way. In a way, the whole diversity policy of the city is an expression of that approach. The migrant organisations are considered to be important stakeholder groups and their aims and interests are part of the political debate in Vienna; they influence that debate and the policies which are partly shaped by it.

For the past 15 years there has been fruitful co-operation between the Austrian federal chamber of commerce, the Viennese chamber of commerce, and a steadily increasing number of migrant associations, in particular the Advice Centre for Migrants, the Umbrella Organisation of Serb Associations, the Viennese Integration Conference (ATIB), the Union of European Turkish Democrats in Austria (ATIS), the Umbrella Organisation of Latin American Associations, the Chinese Association, the Association of the Chinese Gastronomy, among others. This liaison addresses economic interests of both the chamber and the migrant associations. So-called 'ethnic advisors' and 'integration ambassadors' further the contacts and interactions with the migrant organisations, in organising events for special economic branches,

¹⁵ Compare AFRA – International Center for Black Women's Perspectives (<http://www.blackwomencenter.org>) – and Pan-African Forum (*Panafrikanisches Forum*, <http://www.panafa.net>) as only two examples.

¹⁶ For further information, see the work of the Research Group of Black Austrian History and Presence, a working group of Pamoja, Movement of the Young African Diaspora in Austria, <http://remappingmozart.mur.at/joomla/content/view/23/40/lang,en/>.

pilot projects, network meetings and workshops related to economic and entrepreneurship affairs. The integration ambassadors play an important role in promoting and organising co-operation seminars to address the special interests of the different immigrant groups.

In the chamber of commerce, a special diversity department was installed, which is embedded into a broader programme called ‘Vienna’s economy lives diversity’. Among the Muslim organisations, the Turkish association ATIB is very active in cooperating with the chamber of commerce, for the benefit of the Turkish community. In Vienna and upper Austria, the programme ‘Mentoring for Migrants’ is an outstanding example of successful labour market oriented fostering. Starting in spring 2008, this programme helped more than 400 immigrants to gain an adequate foothold on the Austrian labour market and to prevent de-qualification. Because of its outstanding success, this programme will be extended to the other federal states of Austria.¹⁷ In addition to this wide range of activities, the chamber of commerce cooperates with migrant organisations through a ‘Founder’s Service’ and through experts acting as apprenticeship advisors. The chamber distributes information materials about the importance of hiring apprentices in the main immigrant languages and tries to motivate ethnic entrepreneurs to invest in the apprenticeship training of young people. This offers more young people with a migration background the chance to complete an apprenticeship in certain professions.¹⁸

Forms of relations and dialogue

Vienna regards all forms of relations and dialogue initiatives as vehicles to empower migrant communities and enable them to participate in the political process and elections in particular. An explicit policy aimed at improving intercultural relations forms part of the city’s integration and diversity policy. This started in 1992 with the founding of the Vienna Integration Fund and evolved and strengthened in 2004 within the framework of the city’s new integration and diversity policies.

The objective of improving intercultural relations, networking, cooperation with and the support of the large and also smaller communities is an essential part of MA 17’s daily work in the districts. At seven different locations 25 staff members of MA 17 work on site, many of whom have a migration background themselves and know many languages. They create networks between migrant and district associations, carry out integration projects in cooperation with them and serve as contact points for inquiries, ideas, suggestions and problems in the daily lives of all district residents. Recently a regional department for integration (*Integrations-Regionalstelle*) was started in the magistrate of the fifth district, which has a high proportion of immigrant population (see Scheuch, 2009).

MA 17 staff members create networks between migrant and district associations, carry out cooperative integration projects and serve as contact points for inquiries and problems. Considerable amounts of money and ample funding are provided each year by the city of Vienna to support many activities, initiatives and integration projects of migrant organisations with the following goals.

- Encouraging intercultural sensitivity and competence through
 - promoting the peaceful coexistence of people from different backgrounds, and supporting cooperation between different groups, and
 - raising awareness in the field of migration/integration/diversity;

¹⁷ See http://portal.wko.at/wk/startseite_dst.wk?dstid=8769.

¹⁸ Information was given by the chamber of commerce representatives Margit Kreuzhuber and Edwin Schäffer.

- Assisting migrants with integration and taking up residence, for example through
 - language acquisition measures,
 - education and orientation, in particular improving basic and key competencies (literacy) and measures to facilitate access to the Austrian labour market, and
 - advice in specific legal matters regarding the status of new migrants (residence, employment, citizenship);
- Participation, for example through
 - measures to increase the willingness and ability of migrants to participate in social, economic and political life and
 - supporting associations and initiatives along the lines of ‘helping people help themselves’.

In Vienna no formal consultation bodies involving the city and ethnic and religious organisations exist. However, a lot of dialogue and cooperation takes place within regular informal platforms. Ethnic minority or religious groups cooperate in the context of association platforms and the Vienna Integration Conference. They also work together on a district level (*Vereinsplattformen*), on certain topics. For example in health care there is a multiethnic working group working together on an information programme regarding medicine. In relation to the media, initiatives include M-media (a migrants’ organisation with a focus on media and media cooperation) and cultural events. Some important examples of the means of maintaining strong, regular contacts with ethnic minority and religious organisations are summarised below.

‘Association platforms’ act as forums for integration and bring together migrant associations and district institutions at a local level. The meetings enable migrant associations to create networks and initiate or maintain contacts with the district councils and institutions. MA 17 wants to use these platforms to strengthen migrant participation in the daily life in the districts. For example, in the fifth, fifteenth and sixteenth districts, migrant associations participate in festival weeks (*Bezirksfestwochen*). A further example is the ‘Youth platform’ in the second district. Here, representatives of migrant associations carrying out youth work in the district participate for the first time and enable communication and dialogue between the city administration and Islamic associations.

MA 17 staff also coordinate regional or district platforms, where different communities, NGOs and local politicians address the development of their district. The district chairpersons and other politicians therefore have direct cooperation with the ethnic minority communities and migrants get a chance to participate in social and political life as equal partners. Vienna regards such models as a vehicle to empower migrant communities and for them to participate in the political process and elections in particular.

The Vienna Integration Conference – Networking Office is a migrant association umbrella body which has embraced more than 250 migrant organisations. This body represents the interests of those associations which were declared in a detailed charter on integration and at public events. Its main mandate is to lobby for issues concerning immigrants and to promote networking between its members. A lot of liaison with migrant organisations took place, which the city supported and subsidised, from 2004 to 2008.¹⁹ In 2008, for example, the ‘Education Fair 2008’ took place, under the slogan ‘Multilingualism and education potential’. Through it, the ‘Migrants’ Academy’ organised 13 modules with a strong focus on information and further education. Module 13 was oriented towards migrant organisations as enterprises and event management. These activities were oriented towards improving the socioeconomic situation of migrants in the areas of education and labour market status.

¹⁹ See <http://www.wik-vernetzungsbuero.at/>.

Many migrant organisations liaise with the city administration. A few examples are provided below.

The Consultation Centre for Migrants (*Beratungszentrum für MigrantInnen*) was founded in 1983 and places a strong focus on the labour market integration of immigrants. More than 13,000 intensive individual consultations take place there each year. This centre provides legal advice in particular, on issues such as the right of establishment, the employment of foreigners in Austria, legal access to the labour market, among others. It is strongly connected with the Labour Market Service (AMS), the Vocational Training Institute (BFI), the Business Promotion Institute (WIFI) and many other relevant institutions which offer qualification and education opportunities in general or specifically for immigrants. There is also the ‘Competence Centre for New Immigrants’ which provides advice to women and asylum seekers. This centre supports education measures and labour market integration programmes for migrants.²⁰

The Association for Advice to Foreign Women (*Verein zur Beratung ausländischer Frauen, Peregrina*) was founded in 1984 and places a strong focus on migrant women and their specific problems. It is active in psychological, legal and social advice, it organises education and qualification programmes (for example lectures on using a PC in German), language acquisition courses. It also offers therapy options for women in need, organises anti-racism workshops and is active in the fields of information about migration and against xenophobia.

The Initiative for Minorities (*Initiative für Minderheiten*) represents the voice of all minority groups, not only migrants. It organises many events and participates in projects – examples include ‘New perspectives. Migration in central and south-eastern Europe’, ‘Intercultural search for tracks. Pupils do research in migration histories’. Since 1991, it has published the periodical, *Voice of and for Minorities (STIMME von und für Minderheiten)*. Twice a month, it broadcasts on a transmission called ‘Radio Stimme’.

M-Media is an organisation oriented towards the promotion of communication between the Austrian mainstream media and the migrant communities. It is based on self-organisation of the migrants who want to cooperate with the media, to write articles for it, to influence the images of migrants that are presented in the public, and to learn how to organise and to participate in further education opportunities in the media sector. This association organised a mass media fair in Vienna, on 10–11 September 2009 (see M-Media, 2007).

The European Network Against Racism Austria (ENARA) is an anti-racism platform for individuals and organisations. It is not an umbrella organisation but a network between the European and associations at national or regional levels. Among its main aims are to achieve equal rights for all, to promote the integration of local anti-racism activities in the broader European context and to establish countermeasures against exclusive policies.

‘Coloured democracy for all’ (*Bunte Demokratie für Alle*, BDFA (Vienna)) is an organisation founded in 2000 to represent the general and special interests of migrants in the chamber of work. It fights for the interests of immigrants in the labour market and against all kind of discrimination. For the year 2009, this organisation planned to advocate for the free admission to the labour market of migrants with a residence permit, in the context of the right of continued abode in Austria. A further application to the city concerns the provision of afternoon childcare for children and the naturalisation of older migrants who did not work in the Austrian labour market.

²⁰ Information from Norbert Bichl, Head of the Consultation Centre for Migrants.

The Intercultural Section (*Interkultureller Bereich*, WUK) is one of the seven biggest self-governing socio-cultural centres of Europe for cultural events and arts. The following organisations participate in the Intercultural Section: African Cultural Union, Afrooriental, Asylum in Need, Umbrella Organisation for Intercultural Initiatives in Vienna, Iranian Cultural House – House of the Book, KOHAK, Centre for Social Activities, Tadschikian Association for Democracy, and the Association of Ethiopians.

The city has a very positive attitude towards all these organisations. MA 17 provides annual financial support for some of these institutions, as well as for a considerable number of other associations in this field. Most of the activities and initiatives of MA 17 are aimed at preventing social exclusion, as are many of the measures of the city of Vienna as a whole in social, welfare, education and economic policies. The Social Democratic Party as well as the Green Party and other liberal political parties, along with Muslim organisations, try to enhance understanding and to fight discrimination against Muslims. They confront a negative image of Muslims in political discourse by organising a number of intercultural dialogues. Vienna's Green Party regularly initiates 'City Experts Talks' (*StadtxpertIn-nengespräch*) in the city hall. On one of these occasions, the director of the Vienna public transport service encouraged Muslim women to wear a headscarf, together with their uniform, when working on public transport in Vienna. In fact, one female tram driver in Vienna regularly wears her *hijab* without problems (see IGGiÖ 2003).

There are institutionalised interreligious forums in districts two, five, six, eleven and sixteen. These forums consist of members of religious associations and churches, such as Bosnian and Turkish mosques, Catholic and Protestant parishes, and Serbian and other Orthodox churches. One central point of discussion is the issue of intercultural and interreligious exchange (for example, the exchange of information on customs and traditions). Other important participants in this dialogue are representatives of African 'free churches', the Iranian community, and Jewish organisations. Muslim communities began organising 'Open Mosque Days'. On 8 April 2000, a very successful Open Mosque Day was launched at the Islam Centre (*Islamisches Zentrum*) in Vienna and attracted more than 1,000 visitors. Meanwhile, many smaller Islamic communities have begun to organise similar events.

An event of particular significance in the context of interreligious dialogue is the *iftar*, the dinner at the end of Ramadan. Since 2002 this event became more and more symbolic of good interreligious relations and of a well-functioning dialogue between Austrian politicians and the Muslim community of Vienna. As an effort to promote integration and understanding, Vienna's Communist Party held an *iftar* feast in Ramadan 2002, at which the party leader highlighted the importance of Muslims' participation in elections and noted their tangible role in Austrian life in general. The Austrian People's Party held a total of three *iftar* banquets during Ramadan 2003 for the Turkish Muslim community. In 2003, Vienna's mayor, Michael Häupl, facilitated the first official *iftar* dinner to be held in the town hall. This initiative was continued by the mayor, and since 2004, by the Austrian President Heinz Fischer as well, who initiated an inter religious dialogue in the Vienna Hofburg where representatives of Jews, Muslims and the Christian confessions met. Fischer extended invitations to 60 members of the Muslim community²¹ to attend a collective *iftar* banquet on Ramadan 26. The *Id-ul-Fitr* reception and the banquet were also attended by senior government officials, a step seen as a sign of Muslims' integration in the Austrian society and respect for the rights of minorities. Since that time it became very common among different institutions and organisations to organise *iftar* dinners for the purpose of intercultural meetings and dialogue with representatives of different religious denominations and various ethnic minority groups. Since 2006, *iftar* receptions were also held by Andreas Khol, the president of the National Council and the chamber of work.

²¹ It must not be overlooked that there was also some criticism about the list of guests which included persons affiliated to PVÖ, the Palestinian Association in Austria (Sicherheit-heute 2007).

The first Conference of Imams, held on 24 April 2005, represented a further important sign of interreligious dialogue. In total, 160 imams, among whom were about 25 women, met in Vienna. Attendees of this conference formulated a detailed statement about Islam in Austria. In this, the participants of the conference emphasised that they adhered to the constitutional principles in the Republic of Austria. In particular, they stressed the equality of all citizens before the law, pluralism, democratic parliaments and the rule of law. Secondly, they acknowledged the status of Islam in Austria and the practical advantages associated with this, namely the right to free and public worship, the internal autonomy of the Islam as a religion, religious education in schools, and the consideration of religion in the federal army (see IGGiÖ homepage).

In 2005, the office of the Vienna Integration Conference introduced and established 25 October, the day before an Austrian national holiday, as a day for the acknowledgement/appreciation of the contributions of migrants to society in Vienna. This day is called the ‘Immigrants’ Day’ (*ImmigrantInnentag*). It is important to also note the participation of migrant organisations in the district festival weeks (*Bezirksfestwochen*) of the city of Vienna in May and June of each year in order to present themselves, their organisation and aspects of their community that they feel is important for the indigenous population to know. This can include, among other things, traditional, cultural and religious matters. The city provides a lot of financial support for these activities. The responsible departments are MA 7²² and the districts’ cultural commissions.²³ The main responsibility in giving active support to these activities lies with the MA 17 district offices which all year long cooperate with these associations on a wide range of issues and serve as a contact and information point for the city’s institutions and events.

The city also pursues a policy directed towards the majority population for improving relations with ethnic minorities. The coordination of the regional or district platforms is an important strategy of the city in improving relations with ethnic minority groups (see above). In this context, local political decision-makers, immigrant communities and relevant NGOs are involved in the development of their district. On the one hand, these platforms give the migrants the chance to participate in social and political life as equal partners. The politicians stand in a direct cooperation with the different ethnic minority communities, who are empowered and participation in the political process. It is also important to note the Association Platforms, which are forums for integration, bringing together migrant associations and district institutions at a local level, and the Vienna Integration Conference – Networking Office.

In Vienna diverse measures are set to prevent social exclusion. Therefore, there are many models of good practices; only a selection of these are presented here.

In 2005 the MA 17, together with the Federal Police Department of Vienna, organised the project ‘Advice and Help’ (*Rat und Hilfe*). This initiative was continued as *Rat und Hilfe neu* and is based on the community policing strategy. It includes joint visits by MA 17 staff, local police officers and prevention officers to migrant associations and religious communities. It also organises information events and debates on selected topics such as safety and security in the neighbourhood. With the help of regional workers of the MA 17, police officers meet on a regular basis to discuss neighbourhood issues and matters of security. These meetings also take place in mosques. The strategy of ‘community policing’ is based on standards from the US which are oriented towards the philosophy of community empowerment and power-sharing.

²² See <http://www.wien.gv.at/amtshelfer/kultur/kulturabteilung/foerderungen/interkulturell.html>.

²³ See <http://www.wien.gv.at/amtshelfer/kultur/kulturabteilung/foerderungen/bezirk.html>.

'Advice and Help' aims to increase mutual understanding and provides intercultural training through personal involvement and face-to-face meetings. For example, in 2004, the following migrant institutions were visited in the third district: the Haci Bayram mosque, the Polish Church, the Roma Centre (*Romano Centro*) and the Serbian-orthodox Church. In the sixteenth and seventeenth districts, meetings took place with the following organisations: the Association of Albanian Muslims, the African Association, 'The Light of God Ministries', the Hicret Camii mosque, the Hindu temple, '*Snatana Dharma/Mandir Sihd Jog Baba Balak Nath Ji*', the Mescidi Ebu Bekir mosque, the Osmanli mosque, the Serbian Orthodox Church, and the Sultan Ahmet Camii mosque, among others. The initiative was very successful, as evaluated by the migrant organisations and city officials such as the district councillors (see Bouzek, 2005, p. 17 ff.).

In the framework of its language initiative, the city of Vienna has supported German courses for migrants for many years. The courses are voluntary, target-group oriented, and low-threshold. There is a strong level of cooperation with migrants associations, to reach the target group but also to support on-site lectures.

In 2010, the district's festival weeks (*Bezirksfestwochen*) take place for approximately four weeks. In close cooperation with the 23 districts of Vienna and cultural associations, about 2,000 events are organised. Every year a new programme is presented consisting of events such as 'street theatre in the park', classical music or dance, an art exhibition in the hospital, 'children in the schoolyard', 'jazz in the café', 'cabaret in the ballroom' and so on.

The European soccer championship in Vienna (EURO) event was held for the first time in June 2008. As 'host city', Vienna invited opinion leaders and important cooperation partners (districts chairpersons, taxi drivers' organisations etc) to presentations to spread information in preparation of the event, on topics such as traffic, a fan zone and security. MA 17 organised this presentation, which was also held for the Serbian and Turkish communities in the city hall. The events were held on two different dates for each group in the German language. Identical presentations were provided by the same presenters for the other groups. The basic idea behind these events was to promote the acceptance of and respect for different communities by including them in normal city life. For the successful implementation of this event Vienna needed the support of 50 people with a Serbian background and 90 people with a Turkish background. The migrants very much appreciated this inclusive approach, which meant that they were not only involved in matters regarding integration, but that they took part in a soccer championship; in this way, they felt they were addressed as Viennese people.

All of our informants felt these initiatives were very successful, but they were not the only successful initiatives. The Vienna Integration Conference and its 'networking office' were already cited. This umbrella organisation which was funded by the city worked effectively for several years and initiated a lot of useful activities. However, the city's funding was curtailed because of strong inner tensions between different organisations and cases of rivalry.

Relationship between different ethnic groups in the city

One has to concede that some tension exists within the indigenous population due to increasing levels of immigration during the 1990s. Some legitimate interests are being voiced. However, there are also openly hostile attitudes which have often been vocalised by conservative political parties. A great deal of effort, communication and social and political work will eventually be required to improve the climate as a whole and to support the social issues of those parts of the population who are or feel to be in a weak social position and have most fears of population changes. On the other hand, it is necessary to support and strengthen those individuals and groups who are at risk of being victims of racist and discriminating attitudes, speech and actions.

Examples of racially motivated direct and severe violent assaults are rare in Vienna (or are rarely documented). In addition to direct forms, some immigrants and minorities can suffer on a daily basis from ‘lower-level’ forms of racism that often go unnoticed. Immigrants have reported several such attacks on the public transport system (ENARA, 2006, p. 16 f.). Civic courage is lacking in such situations. Some victims are even afraid to take legal action. In 2007, the ZARA Counselling Centre dealt with and documented 831 racist incidents in Austria (no separate data for Vienna available). This is a decrease on previous years; 1,504 incidents were reported in 2006. The majority (58%) took place in a public space (among the 476 cases recorded in this category, 251 were racist graffiti) and very often in public transport facilities. A further 12% referred to incidents in the field of housing or in regard to the access to bars and restaurants, shops and service providers. Another 11% took place at work, 8% were offenses against anti-racism work, 6% referred to the police and 5% to other public authorities (ZARA, 2007, p. 11 ff.; see also ZARA 2002–2006).

Frictions also occur between ethnic groups from historical conflict lines that exist in their countries of origin (for example, Kurds vs. Turks, Serbs vs. Albanians, Serbs vs. Croats). With regard to the substantial number of migrants from former Yugoslavia, there are fewer contacts between the different ethnic groups and, therefore, fewer conflicts (see Vrglevski et al, 2008). As far as the city administration is concerned, there is no major problem in communicating with them and bringing them together on common issues, regardless of ethnic, religious or other factors which may separate them. Traditionally, many conflicts in the countries of origin had less impact on Vienna than they had in other European countries (for example in the case of Kurds and Turks).

Most of the conflicts arise in everyday actions and thus are difficult to influence by official political measures of the city. The nature of open conflicts largely depends on the political and ideological views of the individuals concerned. Critical phases did occur in Turkish–Kurdish relations in Vienna which were influenced by political developments in Turkey (PKK) and Iraq. Open manifestations of the Turkish/Kurdish conflict arose in the context of political demonstrations because of the occupation of northern Iraq. Thus, in 2006 for example, some violent assaults of individuals were carried out. Since then, there has been an observable development towards pacifying this conflict.²⁴

Of course there are organisations which are clearly bound to a certain ethnic or religious affiliation. However, many organisations try to include Turkish as well as Kurdish members. Those organisations make a valuable contribution towards improving understanding between both ethnic groups. Beside exclusive mosque associations there are also ethnically mixed mosque associations of both groups in Vienna. A good example of peaceful cooperation is the Association of Turkish entrepreneurs (*Verband der türkischen Wirtschaftstreibenden*), which is a network of successful businessmen of both Turkish and Kurdish origin.²⁵

The Alevite religious community also plays an important role in integration in Vienna. About one third of migrants from Turkey living in Vienna belong to this group. Exact numbers are not available, but it is estimated to comprise of about 60,000 persons (Beig, 2009, p. 3). The Cem-House (*Cemevi*) and Cultural Centre of the Alevite Cultural Association (*Alevitischer Kulturverein*), in Schererstrasse, the twenty-first district, also includes members of both ethnic groups. More politically liberal Kurdish or Alevite organisations are generally more open to dialogue and even to the membership of ethnic Turks than the more conservative Turkish groups are; they are usually exclusive. A fundamental change has occurred among the Alevites over the past 20 years, as many liberal Kurdish organisations lost their important role in the migration situation. Many Kurdish organisations that used to have a political focus are now organised in an Alevite movement with a greater religious focus and a reduced political one.²⁶

²⁴ See <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/0,1518,515323,00.html>.

²⁵ Interview with Maria Six-Hohenbalken.

²⁶ See Reiser 1997, 2000 and interview with Maria Six-Hohenbalken.

Public communication

The city of Vienna is very active in public communication. It follows an ambitious public communication strategy which is called, 'Vienna speaks many languages'. This communication strategy is an important cornerstone within its general diversity policies. The overall message that shall be conveyed is that Vienna is and regards itself as an international and multi-lingual city and welcomes and appreciates the diversity of its population. This attitude is also reflected in a whole range of activities and services the city provides for its foreign born population.

Only a few examples of Vienna's language initiatives can be provided here. The municipality offers information on its website (<http://www.wien.at>) in English, Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian and Turkish. As customers of the administration are using the internet more and more frequently, this new online service aims to provide new immigrants with important information as soon as possible. This includes contact information on relevant services and organisations, addresses, phone numbers and links, thus helping migrants to make a new beginning in Vienna. The webpages in Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian and Turkish languages provide legal information on migration matters and where to find German language classes, as well as general information on women's issues, children, further training, health care, emergencies, everyday life, and leisure.

The city also provides a large number of brochures and services in some of the major migrant languages. Such communication measures aim to optimise accessibility of services so that they can be used by everyone who lives in Vienna, no matter where those people were born. There is also a good level of cooperation between ethnic minority communities and local media (newspapers, radio and TV) as well as regular cooperation and information between the city and its departments and media that are published in the mother tongue of migrants in Vienna.

The 'Multilingual Glossary of the City of Vienna' is a very important initiative.²⁷ This glossary comprises almost 500 terms, listed alphabetically, regarding the city administration, in Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, Turkish, English and German languages. In compiling the glossary, the city aimed to find translations in the various languages for typical city administration terminology. The glossary should be a help for anyone who works in the field of translation. It is a reference for translators, counsellors and anyone who is interested in this field. The glossary aims to set a standard in the translation of official language terms.

In addition, the municipality publishes the *World and City (Welt & Stadt)* magazine four times a year. This free magazine provides important legal information and a variety of tips on how to get by in Vienna. The magazine is written in German and features summaries in Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, Turkish and English.

The 'Intercultural Calendar 2008'²⁸ gives an overview of the important holidays of the largest religious and ethnic groups living in Vienna. It is a communication and activation project designed to promote peaceful neighbourhoods where people show respect to one another.

²⁷ For further information see: <http://www.wien.gv.at/english/social/integration/glossary.html>.

²⁸ See <http://www.wien.gv.at/english/social/integration/calendar/index.html>.

The ‘Feeling at home’ projects of ‘Feeling at home at Leberberg’ (*Daham am Leberberg*) projects and ‘Feeling at home in Stadlau’ (*Daham in Stadlau*) are two other very successful initiatives. These two projects began in May 2007 in Vienna’s eleventh and twenty-second districts. What is special about these projects is that the migrants as well as non-migrant people who live in the neighbourhoods support the projects with their ideas, initiatives and commitment. MA 17 supports the implementation of individual small projects and initiatives. The people who live in these neighbourhoods as well as local companies, institutions, and schools are motivated to carry out tasks they think will improve the quality of life in the area and the relationships between the people who live there. The ‘Feeling at home’ projects motivate people to identify with the neighbourhood they live in and to be proud of their homes.

Many efforts are made by the city authorities to promote the city’s diversity in a number of periodicals. Thus, the general attitude towards migrant and religious organisations is good and the media practice is usually positive. There are journal articles about migrants’ careers or biographies and there are series of articles in different papers and magazines such as *Bezirksjournal* and *Wiener Bezirksblatt*. Local editions are also available for each of the 23 Viennese districts, that provide information and stories about members of migrant or minority groups and their organisations and activities.

Figure 1: Title page of the weekly magazine ‘profil’: ‘The image of the wicked Muslim’



Source: *ESI*

The ZARA Reports on Racism provide a more detailed analysis of media practices (2006, p. 25 f.; 2007, p. 29).

National broadsheet newspapers such as *Die Presse*, *Der Standard*, *Kurier*, *profil* and *Wiener Zeitung*, as well as the ORF²⁹ not only have members of minority groups among their staff of journalists but are always trying to avoid discrimination of any kind in their media practice. This is especially obvious in the context of debates about the building of mosques, the status of Muslim women, cases of forced marriage but also in the discussions about Islam in general. In these debates, Muslim women are stereotypically seen as victims, while Muslim men are often considered to be fundamentalists and terrorists (see Figure 1).

²⁹ See for example: ORF Religion, *Anteil der Muslime seit 1991 verdoppelt*
http://religion.orf.at/projekt02/news/0507/ne050715_alrawi-statistik.htm.

These newspapers also cooperate with M-Media³⁰ an organisation that works to promote communication between the Austrian mainstream media and migrant communities. It is based on the self-organisation of migrants who want to cooperate with the media, to write articles in newspapers, to influence which pictures of migrants are presented in the public, and how to organise and to participate in further education opportunities in the media sector. This association organised a mass media fair in Vienna in 2009 (see M-Media, 2007).

Although discrimination has been avoided in the work of the media, recently criticisms were made in articles about the education and attitudes of Islam teachers (oe1, 2009; Beig, 2006, *Kurier*, 29 January, 2009 and many others) and about Islamic ‘parallel societies’ (Beig, 17 March 2009). Of course in the tabloid press, which is represented by papers such as the *Kronen Zeitung*, *Österreich*, *News* and others, reporting practices are sometimes not always as objective and anti-discrimination oriented as found in the high quality media.

One can state that the media dispute on Islam in Vienna is moderate. The Muslim headscarf has received increasing media attention during the 2000s. Media usually present this as being an unproblematic issue. While the two biggest national broadsheet newspapers, *Die Presse* and *Der Standard* published only three articles on this subject in 2000, the number rose to 22 in 2003 (Gresch et al, 2008). Controversies in Germany and France on the issue and the subsequent prohibitive decisions were central catalysts for Austrian media debates.

The Documentation Archive of Islamophobia (DAI) documented acts of Islamophobic discrimination in Austria and protests against them in written commentaries. In the summer of 2006, the DAI systematically analysed daily newspapers during the period in which an ‘integration survey’ (see Rohe, 2006) was being carried out at the request of the former Minister of the Interior, Liese Prokop. The survey was released in daily newspapers on 13 May 2006. It came to the conclusion that 45% of Muslims in Austria were ‘not willing to integrate’. His conclusions led to intense public discussions.

Ethnic minority staff are employed by all major local media, but no quantitative data is available on their exact numbers. In Vienna, a lot of cooperation takes places between M-media and the Austrian daily newspaper *Die Presse*. Every week, authors with a migrant background write an article or a report for this newspaper about issues that concern migration, integration and diversity issues.³¹ Another very useful initiative in the media is Radio Orange Broadcast Dialogues – Voices of Diversity (*Radio Orange Radiodialoge – Stimmen der Vielfalt*).³² Austrian television has a special editorial department for minorities (*Minderheitenredaktion*, ORF) which specialises in minority, migrant and integration matters. Its broadcasts refer to traditional Austrian minority groups such as Croats, the Roma community and Slovenes, as well as to topics in the context of more recent immigration.³³ Every Sunday a programme called ‘*Heimat, fremde Heimat*’ presents a broad variety of topics in the context of immigration, and ethnic and religious diversity, focusing on Vienna. Another important initiative is OKTO TV.³⁴ This is a community television channel offering opportunities to different non-commercial interest groups and the civil society to make their own programmes. Different groups with migration background are among the groups involved. The programme is at least partly done in the migrants’ own languages.

³⁰ For details see <http://www.m-media.or.at/>.

³¹ For details see <http://www.m-media.or.at/>.

³² See <http://www.radiodialoge.at/rda/index.php>.

³³ See <http://volksgruppen.orf.at/uebersicht/> and <http://tv.orf.at/tschuschenpower/>.

³⁴ See <http://okto.tv/>.

Most ethnic minority media outlets are based in Vienna, where there is considerable variety among such outlets. Detailed surveys of immigrant media in Vienna were made by Böse et al (2002) and Bratic and Inou (2008).³⁵ The level of media representation is equal for groups with a long tradition of migration to Vienna as it is for migrants who more recently moved to Vienna (for example, Africans who are very active in this field) and who constitute smaller communities. A list of examples of media and new media run by migrants follows. In the field of print media examples include *Vesti*, *Novi Glasnik*, *Polonika*, *Hürriyet – Turklook Medien*, *ZAMAN*, *Yeni Vatan Gazetesi* and many other Turkish papers which are partly printed by international media houses, and partly by Austrian ones. *Das BIBER* is an important newspaper of the second and third generation of young migrants, as is the paper of the association *Verein ECHO*. Other examples include *Öneri*, *Die Bunte Zeitung*, the *Stimme von und für Minderheiten der Initiative Minderheiten* (Voice of and for Minorities of the Initiative for Minorities) and the Roma newspaper, *Zeitschrift Romano Centro*. In the broadcasting sector, Africans comprise a very active group with their station *Radio Afrika (Tribüne Afrikas)*. Other important stations are *Radio Stimme* (Radio Orange) with its various programmes for different ethnic groups, and OKTO TV.

Clearly, the internet has gained importance as a source of information during recent years. Some examples of different immigrant groups' websites are as follows: <http://www.m-media.or.at/>; <http://www.afrikanet.info> and <http://www.blackaustria.at>, both for African people; <http://www.blackwomencenter.org> and <http://www.schwarzefrauen.net>, both for African women; <http://www.russianvienna.com>, for immigrants from the former Soviet Union; and finally, <http://www.vereinsafran.at/> of the 'Association of the Young Generation – Iran Austria'. The latter was founded in 2006 as a platform for second generation migrants from Iran. It focuses on networking activities between young migrants with an Iranian background and Austrians who are interested in intercultural dialogue. This organisation furthers its members' career networking, promotes leisure activities, and holds exhibitions by young artists and photographers (see Czarnowski, 2008).

Summary and lessons learnt

In Vienna there is a wide range and considerable number of migrant associations. The municipality makes little distinction between ethnic, national and religious migrant organisations. Religious groups and associations are regarded equally, as are groups that organised in terms of nationality. They are all considered equally important partners for dialogue and in the implementation of measures and actions to promote integration. They are also target groups for the city's measures and actions taken in the fields of integration and diversity.

Among the wide variety of migrant association demands, city officials consider these to be the most important: the improvement of the socioeconomic situation of migrants, especially in the fields of education, labour market status, income, social security and housing; the improvement of their legal status, through the development of efficient anti-discrimination laws and bodies; more representation in the media (mainstreaming issues) and the improvement of media reporting and public debates on issues such as migration.

³⁵ A detailed list of migrant media in Vienna is provided: http://www.m-media.or.at/files/Migranten_Medien_Reader.pdf.

The city's integration and diversity policy, which commenced in 1992 with the founding of the Vienna Integration Fund, is an explicit policy aimed at improving intercultural relations. This continued, evolved and strengthened in 2004 through the framework of the city's new integration and diversity policies. The objective of improving intercultural relations forms an especially important and essential part of the activities and objectives of MA 17. Local politicians directly cooperate with the ethnic minority communities and the migrants get a chance to participate in social and political life as equal partners. There is a lot of dialogue within regular informal platforms, such as the association platforms, the district platforms and the Vienna Integration Conference (up until 2008); all of which can be recommended as models of good practice.

The city has developed a good model of intercultural dialogue. Due to the numerous and intensive efforts to establish and strengthen good relations between the city and ethnic minority and religious groups, as well as between different minority groups, the overall state of affairs is clearly good. In Vienna, ethnic minority and religious organisations play an important role in the integration process. Organisations serve as 'multipliers' within their wider communities. They are also important stakeholders and their aims and interests are part of the political debate in Vienna and influence that debate and the policies which are partly shaped by it.

A positive picture also emerges regarding public communication and the local media. The municipality is very active in this field, which follow successful public communication strategies. The overall message is that Vienna appreciates the diversity of its population. The city offers information on its website and provides a large number of services in the major migrant languages. There is also a strong level of cooperation between the media outlets of ethnic minorities and local media, as well as regular initiatives between the city and its departments and the media that are published in the mother tongue of migrants in Vienna. All the major local media employ ethnic minority staff and there is a considerable number and variety of local ethnic minority media outlets.

Despite all these positive findings, tensions do exist in the indigenous population. Legitimate interests are supported by the municipality, but there are also openly hostile attitudes that have often been exploited by conservative political parties. Interethnic conflicts between certain groups such as Turkish and Kurdish residents have occurred but are still a rare phenomenon.

Local intercultural policies towards Muslim communities

Major issues, demands and interests

As the population of Muslim people in Austria grows, and with it, their role in political life increases, this group becomes more important for the big political parties, who make greater efforts to win their political support and votes (Abdel-Fattah, 2004). Thus the demands of the immigrant groups with Muslim background are being respected more and more. The list of demands of the Muslim organisations is closely related to the major issues of other immigrants' associations. Muslims are far from being a monolithic group and thus there is no uniformity of the interests of Muslim organisations, as is often wrongly anticipated by non-Muslims.³⁶

For a long time no Muslims had been elected to the national or European legislatures. Very few Muslims were active in regional parliaments throughout the main three parties, the Social Democrats, the Conservatives, and the Green Party. Up until the 1980s, it was even not unusual for imams to reflect in their Friday prayers on the question of whether or not Muslims should participate in Austrian elections. This mood has changed fundamentally. In fact, many imams now call their communities to use their right to vote as Austrian citizens. The Islamic community thus made efforts to play a role in the country's political life, and several Muslims qualified themselves to assume distinguished positions within political parties and governmental bodies. A major turning point was the election of the Vienna municipal parliament in 2001 (see IGGiÖ, 2003).

Omar Al-Rawi is a famous Muslim politician in Vienna. He is a Muslim member of parliament for the Social Democrat Party of Austria (SPÖ). Al-Rawi entered the municipal parliament in 2002. In the following national parliamentary elections, he received a considerable number of votes. In more recent elections, however, other parties had also recognised the potential of Muslim voters and tried to campaign in mosques and Muslim centres. Currently, Nurten Yilmaz of the SPÖ party has a Turkish background and is municipal councillor. The Austrian People's Party of Vienna (ÖVP) also has a Turkish representative (Sirvan Ekici). She fought for the right of Muslims not to work on Islamic holidays, such as *Eid Al-Fitr* or *Eid Al-Adha* (IGGiÖ, 2003). Up to 2008, the Green Party was represented by Alev Korun, who has a Turkish background and who, following the last elections moved to the National Council.

Muslims differ not only in their country of origin and denomination, but also by strength of their religiosity. This fact is also mirrored in the structure of existing Muslim organisations. From a legal point of view organisations are categorised as religious societies, religious confessional communities, and associations with distinct legal status. Classification as a religious society allows participation in the state-run contribution system, the provision of religious instruction in public schools and financing for private schools. All or most of the Islamic organisations have ethnic and/or national affiliations or backgrounds. The largest associations in Vienna were founded by Arabic, Bosnian and Turkish Muslims. The first Islamic centre in Austria was built in 1968. Its trustee council was formed under the chairmanship of Hassan Al-Tuhamiy, Egypt's Ambassador in Austria at the time, who later became secretary-general of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC). The centre was inaugurated in November 1977 and played an important role in the field of religious teaching of Muslims in Austria (Abdel-Fattah, 2004).

Waldrauch and Sohler (2004) provide a detailed descriptive overview of not only the structure but also the interests of Muslim organisations. Reiser focused his informative doctoral thesis on the interests of Turkish migrant organisations in Vienna (2000). They found that after the national acknowledgment of Islam as a corporation under public law, various associations were created. Some Islamic associations are sponsored by different Muslim countries as such as Turkey,

³⁶ Statement of Ursula Struppe, round table meeting, 30 March 2009.

Saudi-Arabia etc. The activities of non-state unions are confined to religious and educational activities, and their institutional structures do not include any mechanisms for political action. These organisations range from local private clubs to supra-regional organisations. Sometimes the same group operates several mosques, which can be accommodated in several places, and may be registered as separate ‘associations’. The websites of Muslim organisations provide information about Muslim interests and demands. Examples include IGGiÖ, ATIB (Turkish Islamic Union for Cultural and Social Cooperation in Austria), the Islamic Federation in Vienna (*Islamische Föderation in Wien*), the Umbrella Body of Bosnians in Austria (*Dachverband der Bosniaken in Österreich*), Islamic Liga of Culture, Initiative of Muslim Austrians (*Initiative muslimischer ÖsterreicherInnen*), and the Muslim Youth of Austria (*Muslimische Jugend Österreich*).³⁷

At the end of the 1990s, the Islamic youth organisation, ‘Muslim Youth Austria’³⁸ was launched throughout Austria. It works closely with the IGGiÖ, defines itself as Islamic, independent, multi-ethnic, constitutional and German-speaking, and work ‘by and for young people’ forms the centre of its activity. Some groups or individuals act independently of the official umbrella organisation, the Islamic Religious Body. These include Muhammad Abu Bakr Müller, an Austrian who converted to Islam and who represents a radical interpretation of Islam,³⁹ and also the Islamic Documentation and Information Centre (IIDZ) of Günther Rusznak, also an Austrian convertite who cooperates with the Alevites.

There is a high number of regional and local oriented organisations among Turkish immigrants. Their members often migrated from the same region or even the same small town or village and are often strongly socially interrelated. Some Turkish–Muslim groups can be considered as branches of the pan-European organisation European National View Organisation (*Milli Görüş*). The Austrian group is not a registered association, but an alliance of mosques. The umbrella organisation of this alliance is the 1988-created Austrian Islamic Federation (*Österreichische Islamische Föderation, AIF*). It is the biggest and most important association of Turkish Muslims in Vienna and it cooperates with the IGGiÖ. It has a coordination function. Its ideology is relatively strict but in its practical work it concentrates mainly on the social integration of Muslims.

The Turkish Islamic Union (*Türkisch-Islamische Union für kulturelle und soziale Zusammenarbeit in Österreich, ATIB*) was founded in 1990 by 31 member associations. This is the most important Turkish organisation and has a considerable number of members. It is affiliated to and financed by the Turkish state and controlled by the official Turkish Directorate of Religious Affairs. Thus, it is well equipped with financial resources, though the number of ATIB mosques in Vienna is modest compared to the number found in Tirol, upper Austria and Vorarlberg. It considers itself to be in charge of all Turkish Muslims residing in Austria regarding their social, cultural, religious, sports and educational affairs⁴⁰. ATIB is successfully cooperating with important Austrian institutions as the chamber of commerce and the chamber of work.

The Union of Islamic Centres (*Union Islamischer Kulturzentren in Austria*) also has a Turkish background but is not supported by or affiliated to the Turkish state.

³⁷ See <http://www.derislam.at>, <http://www.atib.at>, <http://www.ifwien.at>, <http://www.ligakultur.net>, <http://www.islaminitiative.at>, <http://www.mjoe.at>.

³⁸ This organisation is highly controversial because of a terrorist threat by a young Muslim couple against the Austrian state (see *DiePresse* 18 September 2008, Pentz 2008, <http://www.mjoe.at>).

³⁹ See <http://www.islam.at>.

⁴⁰ See <http://www.atib.at/index.php?id=13>.

The Islamic Centre and Mosque in the twenty-first district of Am Hubertusdamm was the first architecturally visible mosque⁴¹ in Vienna and was founded and financed by Saudi Arabia, under King Faisal bin Abdul Aziz, and other Islamic countries in 1979. It has a minaret of 30 metres and was constructed without any protests from the local population (Lippitsch, 2008). This is a place where Muslims of various nationalities meet, as the Friday prayers are delivered in several languages.⁴²

There are six Bosnian mosque associations in Vienna and an umbrella organisation of Bosnian mosques in Austria (*Islamska Zajednica Bosnjaka u Austriji*).

The Alevites comprise a major subgroup of Turkish citizens from Kurdistan; according to estimates, they comprise about one third of all Turkish migrants in Vienna, with others coming from Iraq and Syria. In general, they do not take part in the activities of the IGGIÖ. The Kurds founded the Association of Kurdish Organisations in Austria (FEYKOM) in 1992. Its members are not explicitly religious; they are more politically and culturally oriented (Feykom, 1998; Waldrauch and Sohler, 2004, p. 269). In April 2009 Alevites applied for the approval of the 'Islamic-Alevite Faith Association in Austria'.⁴³

Through interviews, it emerged that many organisations are gendered in the sense that they have special branches for male and female members. In Alevite and Kurdish associations women often occupy high positions in the organisation's hierarchies and have many official functions. Politically successful and highly educated Kurdish women are very active and women of the second generation particularly want to be represented. There are also ethnically mixed women's associations and their number is rising.

Unlike the Turkish organisations, most of the Iranian organisations are not declared as 'Muslim' associations. They are explicitly non-political and non-religious. This distinction is explicitly raised by many Iranian migrants and the associations' representatives. The single purely religious organisation of the Iranian Shiites is the *Imam Ali(as)* mosque (*Islamisches Zentrum Imam Ali(as)*) which is officially supported by the Iranian government and represents the official religious line of the Iranian regime. There are special branches for men and women as well as mixed associations with a different clientele.

Immigrants who grew up in the Islamic Republic tend to be less interested in participating in Muslim organisations than those who left Iran during the 1960s and 1970s. All the organisations in Czarnowki's survey (2008) have good and regular contacts with the city administration. MA 17 gives a lot of financial support to many of their events, such as concerts, intercultural exchange meetings, and the big 'Newrooz' concert and meeting in Vienna's Austria Centre.

According to the Austrian Trade Union (ÖGB), some mosque associations, such as ATIB organise initiatives to address the information needs and welfare of their members regarding the Austrian labour market.⁴⁴ There are associations who develop projects centred on the improvement of labour market integration, run information campaigns about labour legislation and social law and organise cultural events such as book exhibitions and concerts. Those initiatives are

⁴¹ According to Dr. Almir Ibric (MA 17) the very first Mosque in Vienna was founded by the 'Islamische Sozialdienst' (about 1968).

⁴² Dr. Ibric (MA 17) pointed to the fact that the Arabic organisations which have not founded an umbrella organisation yet are really much more important than the Mosque Hubertusdamm with an estimated 2,000 members.

⁴³ See Gemeinsame Pressekonferenz 7 April 2009, *DiePresse*, 2 April 2009 and Sterkl 3 April 2009.

⁴⁴ Interview with Azem Olcay (Austrian Trade Union).

financially and organisationally supported by the ÖGB. The ÖGB is also involved in training employee representatives, which is provided in the Turkish language, providing general employment advice and support and in the recruitment of new ÖGB members. Those activities are initiated by the Muslim organisations themselves and then executed in cooperation with the ÖGB. Aside from this support from the ÖGB, no special support measures are provided for Muslims. Many Turkish employee representatives are more or less secular oriented and not very religious. The ÖGB also intervenes in specific Muslim problems, for example when problems arise regarding Muslim women wearing the headscarf or if Muslim people wish to hold their prescribed prayers five times each day in their workplace. In such cases of conflict between Muslims and their non-Muslim colleagues or employers, trade unions representatives act as mediators and try to solve the problem by mutual consent. In most cases an acceptable solution is found.

The main issues for Muslim associations are:

- organisations want to establish good relations and links with the city's institutions. They are interested in participation and in gaining relevant information;
- they expect non-discrimination regarding religion, dress codes, traditions and exercise of their religion;
- they want to access employment in the public service;
- they feel that their visible presence should be accepted and expect support for the free exercise of religion, regarding the building of mosques, the extension of buildings, and cemeteries;
- they aspire towards good relations with their non-Muslim neighbours and they are oriented towards a climate of a good dialogue with the other religious groups and the municipality.

From the city's perspective the major issues in the city's life in relation to Muslim organisations or resulting from reactions of local populations are:

- the building of new mosques or the extension of existing buildings⁴⁵, which also raises the question of the visibility of Islam in public spaces (for example, the height of minarets);
- traditional dress codes and discrimination on the labour market because of such dress codes (for example, the question of the *hijab*);
- the question of traditional versus modern gender roles;
- cemetery and burial rules;
- religious slaughtering and *halal* food;
- problems or conflicts with neighbours which sometimes arise in the housing sphere.

Controversies surrounding mosques usually requires interventions from city authorities. Most mosques are simply prayer rooms. These spaces of religious practice have a significant social role as well. Often, prayer rooms are based in 'backyards' and are therefore not visible to the public. In recent years however, Muslims have begun to move out of their

⁴⁵ There is a terminological discussion around whether the prayer rooms can be really classified as mosques.

often hidden places. An example is the construction of a mosque and cultural centre in the fifteenth district of Pelzgasse in Vienna, by the Turkish Union. There, the inner courtyard of a founder's period building was roofed over and decorated in a style very similar to the Sultan Ahmed mosque in Istanbul. The exact number of members of these organisations is difficult to find as sympathisers usually express their affiliation, not by membership fees, but by the Islamic alms-tax (*Zakat*). In the past, the questions of mosque construction and the height of minarets repeatedly led to discussions. In Vienna there were some cases of concern with regard to the enlargement of mosques. In autumn 2007, for example, a conflict over the expansion of a mosque in the twentieth district of Dammstraße that was run by the Turkish organisation ATIB triggered a national debate on the difference between Austrian and Islamic values.

In the course of this debate, the Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ) took, for the first time, a prominent standpoint on headscarves and demanded a prohibition of Muslim veiling practices. In the case of the Dammstraße mosque, there was also some political mobilisation by the FPÖ. On 14 May 2009 there was a demonstration of those for and against this mosque which resulted in physical violence between proponents and opponents; there were six casualties.⁴⁶ There were also conflicts concerning the mosque (Islamic Centre) at Hubertusdamm in the twenty-first district (see Figure 2), where the local population have been complaining for a long time about disturbance due to noise, namely exclamations of the *muezzin*, and heavy traffic at the time of the Friday prayers.

Figure 2: *The Mosque at Hubertusdamm (built 1979), twenty-first district*



Source: *ISR*

But these problems are not specific to mosques. Similar protests arose when the Sikh community decided to build a temple in the twenty-second district.⁴⁷ In the case of the Dammstraße mosque, MA17 is regularly engaged in mediating conflicts with neighbours, bringing the involved parties together to establish agreements on certain behaviour, in order to minimise conflicts between both sides. Thus, MA 17 follows an informal strategy of de-escalation. The department also provided advice and intervention when two Muslims bought a terrace house in a residential area of the tenth district, intending to reconstruct it as a mosque.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ See Islamischer Verein will nicht Spielball sein, *Wiener Zeitung*, 16 May 2009, p. 14.

⁴⁷ Statement of Ursula Struppe, round table meeting 30 March 2009.

⁴⁸ Information from of Ursula Struppe, round table meeting, 30 March 2009.

It is remarkable that since 2007, the first internationally recognised official Alevite prayer house (Cem-House or *Cemevi*) and the centre of the Cultural Association of Alevites (*Alevitischer Kulturverein*) is located in the twenty-first district. There is a high number of other *Cemevi* all over the world but none of them is officially recognised as a house of god and worship. The others are only declared as simple meeting rooms (derStandard.at, 20 October 2007). There are no serious conflicts reported about it because the Alevite community tried to find a consensus with its neighbours.

Concerning the *hijab*, the Austrian legislation does not have any restrictions on wearing it, if it is clearly related to religious reasons – the wearing of the *hijab* is not against the law (Potz and Schinkele, 2005). Compared to other European countries there has not been significant controversy over it. Women are permitted to wear the *hijab* at work and in public ceremonies, in educational institutions and public offices as well as for photographs for public documents, if the face is clearly identifiable (Bundesminister für Inneres, 2002; Kubelka and Schian, 2004; Skjeie, 2007). The Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) has taken a particularly strong stance in the evolving debate, claiming that wearing the *hijab* is not disputable due to the legal tradition of the church-state relationship in Austria. Irrespective of the clear legal regulation there have been some reported conflicts about the *hijab*. These concerned pupils wearing the headscarf in public schools and in labour market contexts like in public hospitals. In 2004 and 2005 there was a temporary debate about the wearing the *hijab* at school (John and Klenk, 2005; orf, 2005). Women wearing the *hijab* face difficulties in everyday life in Austria (Gresch and Hadj-Abdou, 2007; Heine, 2005, p. 105).

The situation is different regarding the private labour market. The Austrian Labour Market Service (AMS) Vienna and the Austrian Trade Union (ÖGB) both admit that women wearing the *hijab* are often unlikely to be hired⁴⁹ (dieStandard, 2006; KMU, 2007). Veiled women rarely appear in visible job positions and they sometimes face problems when in employment (Hofstätter, 2004, 18; Kalb et al, 2000, p. 632).⁵⁰ One case that gained some public attention was a conflict in the semi-private agency, AMS. This body suspended the salary for women participating in a work programme with private employers after they refused the request of their employer to remove their *hijab*. This decision was withdrawn after it became public (dieStandard, 2006).

The public health service in Vienna is an area where the right to wear the headscarf has been explicitly approved due to the classification of the Muslim headscarf as a form of religious expression. This was the outcome of a request of a Muslim hospital employee in 2004 to be allowed wearing the headscarf at work: following disputes, she was finally able to do so (Kubelka and Schian, 2004, p. 61). In addition, the Viennese Association of Hospitals (*Wiener Krankenanstaltenverbund*) advocated for a non-prohibitive attitude to the *hijab* in an internal binding decree in 2006 (GED-104/2006/BGD – see Gresch, 2008). In February 2009 a medical doctor received a payment of 4,500 euro by judgement of the Equal Opportunities Commission (*Gleichbehandlungskommission*) because she did not get a job in the health resort of Bad Tatzmannsdorf in Burgenland because she wore a *hijab*. She is now occupied in Vienna's General Hospital (AKH) and encounters no problems there (*Die Presse*, 27 February, 2009).

The question of headgear arose regarding employees of Vienna's public transport system, not with regard to Muslim women but to Sikh men. Although at first Sikh men were not permitted to wear a turban, the transport authorities finally allowed the wearing the turban during work (Kubelka and Schian, 2004, p. 62).

⁴⁹ See <http://www.euro-islam.info>, Country profiles Austria, December 2006.

⁵⁰ Statement of Azem Olcay 31 March 2009.

There is often much misunderstanding regarding Islamic gender roles, which are frequently presented in the media. The city subsidises and supports all those organisations who work for the benefit of girls and women, such as women advice centres and shelters for women (see Miteinander Lernen/Birlikte Ögrenelim, 1995).⁵¹ The city also supports education measures and labour market integration programmes for women. Thus the city is very active in promoting the welfare of women insofar as it can. More conservative Muslim families still follow traditional gender roles and sometimes the media reports cases of forced marriage of Muslim girls and of their limited opportunities for receiving higher education (Hofbauer, 2009; Sawerthal 4 July 2009). Those traditional orientations can be found among all ethnic groups of Muslim origin but are mostly reported among those of Turkish origin; this is because of the high number of them in Vienna (Bukovec and Hacker, 2009).

Some animals' rights activists protested against *halal* slaughter, but other than that, this issue did not cause much excitement in Vienna, compared to other European cities, because of the legal status of the Muslim community. *Halal* slaughtering is legal if certain rules of animal protection law are strictly observed. Those rules have also to be observed in the Jewish method of animal slaughter (Kalb et al, 2003; Potz et al, 2001).⁵²

Certain groups have special interests. With respect to the organisations of the Iranian community in Vienna, their representatives in general emphasise their good relations with the city authorities and their good level of cooperation with all the other migrant organisations, both secular and religious. Some representatives would like to get more financial support for their activities (Czarnowski, 2008).

The city of Vienna supports Muslim organisations through a wide range of measures:⁵³

- it initiates information campaigns on various issues, including legal ones, which also take place in different mosques;
- it provides supervision and support for the construction of mosques;
- there is a lot of political mediation between the city and the organisations;
- MA 17 coordinates platforms for dialogue;
- mediation in conflicts is an important activity, mainly concerning the conflict about the Islamic district centre in the twentieth district and with regard to the Islamic Centre (Am Hubertusdamm, twenty-second district) which is the oldest in Vienna;
- during Ramadan, a Ramadan information bulletin is provided by MA 17 for the population and city institutions. It provides information on the duration of Ramadan, the expected increase in traffic volume and shortage of parking places. The mosque organisations distribute these information bulletins to their neighbours. During the last Ramadan, 30 mosques made use of this information initiative for neighbours;
- once per year during the holy month of Ramadan, an *iftar* (evening meal) is organised with Muslim and city officials, the mayor of the city and important politicians;
- regarding the important matter of the cemetery, a big step was taken in 2008 when the city provided the premises for the establishment of a new Islamic cemetery in the twenty-third district. This first Islamic cemetery in Austria was officially opened on 8 October 2008 and was much welcomed by the Muslim communities (Figure 3). The project was financed by OPEC-Founds and the State of Qatar, as well as through a considerable number of small, individual donations (*Die Presse*, 4 August 2008).

⁵¹ <http://hilfe.wien.gv.at/content/de/10/Institutions.do?senseid=83>.

⁵² <http://www.derislam.at/haber.php?sid=3&mode=flat&order=1>.

⁵³ See also: <http://www.wien.gv.at/english/social/integration/funding/index.html>.

Figure 3: Front view of the new Islamic cemetery building in Vienna



Source: Fassmann, ISR.

Many indigenous Austrian people hold hostile attitudes towards the demands of Muslim immigrants (see above). Indigenous Austrians are often heard to say that those who live in Austria must incorporate the customs and values of the Austrian people into their lives, and thus assimilate. Examples occur in disputes and conflicts over the changing of opening hours of a public swimming pool in order to address the special needs of Muslim women. There are fears about Islam and negative emotions among some members of the majority population. Islam is often considered as ‘foreign’, and potentially a threat to democracy (see SWS, 2006). The tolerant legal regulations are contrasted with conservative parties that systematically foster sentiments against Muslim immigrants (see above). Some of our interview partners expressed the opinion that attitudes towards Muslims in Vienna have been influenced by international events such as the September 11 Attacks and the media discourse on terrorism and fundamentalism. It is therefore important to not only consider official intercultural dialogue between organisations, but also the level of everyday interactions between Muslim and non-Muslim residents of Vienna.

Islam has become much more visible in Vienna over the last five to 10 years. The number of women wearing the *hijab* is increasing and, often leading to negative attitudes and bewilderment. Thus, schools, as regular meeting places of different cultures, are playing the most important role in the context of intercultural dialogue. Intercultural dialogue has to start at school, at a very early age, because it is much more difficult to involve adults. Some politicians and media outlets make a negative contribution to intercultural dialogue, stirring up prejudice and using it for certain purposes instead of reducing it.⁵⁴

In a survey conducted in 2006 (SWS, 2006), respondents were asked whom among the immigrants would remain always strangers. In response, 30% identified Turkish people and 22% said Muslims in general. In light of this, religion seems to play a less important role than the country of origin. The factor of ‘visibility’ emerged as less important than religion. Only 17% classified ‘Black’ African people as a group who will remain strangers, 6% thought this about former Yugoslavs and only 2% identified Asian people in this regard.

⁵⁴ Statement of Alev Korun, round table meeting, 30 March 2009.

Another study (Zulehner and Denz, 2001) asked Austrian people the question, ‘Who do you not want to have as a neighbour?’ In response, 24.7% answered ‘Muslims’; only the Roma community (referred to as ‘gypsies’ in the survey) were less popular, with 38.5% citing them. Three years earlier and before the September 11 Attacks, the proportion who verbalised having problems with Muslim neighbours was 9.3% lower (IGGIÖ, 2003). In a survey carried out by the Kurdish Institute for Migration Research (KIM) in 2003, more than 50% of the Viennese respondents classified Turks and Kurds as less agreeable neighbours. Neighbours of Arabic origin were even less appreciated. In this survey the ethnic origin seemed to be more important than religion.

In recent years, the number of anti-Muslim campaigns increased. It can be argued that the attitudes of the majority population are fragile due to the re-framing strategy that describes Muslims in Austria as cultural or ethnic groups, rather than religious ‘others’ (Gresch et al, 2008). The 1999 national elections marked a turning point, when the FPÖ began a populist ‘foreigner campaign’ (*Ausländerwahlkampf*). The party subtly exploited popular fears of Islam and promoted slogans like ‘Stop Foreign Infiltration’ (*Stop der Überfremdung*). In April 2000, Vienna’s Muslims, in collaboration with various political parties and authorities, organised a campaign to counter the attacks launched against them by the FPÖ. Leading up to the national elections held in Austria on 1 October 2006, the slogans of the FPÖ against immigrants (which they referred to as ‘foreigners’) and the counter slogans of Muslims were very prominent during the election campaign. Prior to the national elections, the same kind of campaign was run in 2005 during the regional elections in Vienna. This led to the founding of the Documentation Archive for Islamophobia (*Dokumentationsarchiv für Islamophobie*, DAI) in 2006 (ENARA, 2006, p. 17).

Such campaigns were not restricted to conservative parties. In 2005, the Minister of the Interior, Liese Prokop, initiated a controversial public debate on integration, especially emphasising perceived problems concerning the integration of Muslims. She argued for a ban on teachers wearing the *hijab* (John and Klenk, 2005).

The reports about racism in Austria, conducted by the ZARA organisation (see ZARA 1999–2007), contain much information about the attitudes of Austrians towards Muslims but only about cases which are officially reported. ENAR (2002) reported that threatening and offensive comments against Muslims have become more common, particularly since the September 11 Attacks. Muslims face different forms of discrimination in their everyday life. For example, women with headscarves have difficulties finding jobs, and social acceptance of the headscarf has decreased in recent years according to data of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (2005). This has occurred to the degree that employment offices have sometimes considered the headscarf as a kind of ‘disability’ in job search. However, an EU report on changes in the attitude of Austria’s majority population towards Muslims after the September 11 Attacks made one positive conclusion. Altogether, the report says, very few violent attacks against foreigners occurred in recent years and there is a fundamentally positive attitude towards intercultural dialogue (IGGIÖ, 2003). Recent information about Muslim discrimination is provided in the EU-MIDIS European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (FRA, 2009).

A lot of research has been conducted on Islamic communities, Muslim organisations and the attitudes of the local population. Some of these studies focus on Vienna. In addition, national studies always have a strong focus on Vienna because of the high number of Muslim people living there. Some of these studies are outlined briefly here. For more detailed information on this, see the studies cited in the bibliography of this report.

Balić (1995) presented a general history of Muslim immigration to Austria. From a socio-geographical perspective Schuster (1994) analysed Muslim communities in Vienna and formulated proposals for a development concept. In their detailed study of migrant associations, Waldrauch and Sohler (2004) analysed a high number of Muslim organisations, their structures and aims. Abid (2006a) presented a more general overview of Muslims in Austria from a historical and a contemporary point of view. The same author (2006b) is also interested in the topics of integration and participation of the Muslim minority in Austrian society. Feistritzer (2001) analysed the attitudes of the Viennese population towards

immigrants in general and Muslim immigrants in particular. Similar surveys were made by SWS (2006; see above) and Zulehner and Denz (2001). An interesting study about the attitudes of the local Austrian population towards Kurds was made in 2003 by the Kurdish Institute for Migration Research (KIM). Graf and Antes (1998) analysed the structures of interreligious dialogue with Muslims. Heine (2001), together with other authors, conducted a research study of Turkish imams, their living conditions and attitudes towards Austrian society and intercultural dialogue. In 2005, Heine published an interesting article about Islam in Austria in the field of integration policies and persisting prejudices. Gresch and her co-authors (Gresch and Hadj-Abdou, 2007; Gresch et al, 2008) focused on the *hijab* debate, comparing Austria with other European countries. The question of the headscarf as a symbol of non-integration and its significance in the broader context of the integration of Muslims in Austria was also the focus of Pirsching's analysis (2006). Czarnowski (2007, 2008) collected abundant information about the heterogeneous Iranian sub-communities and associations in Vienna. Six-Hohenbalken (1993, 1999) investigated Turkish as well as Kurdish groups in Vienna. Kroissenbrunner is an expert on socio-political networks of Muslim immigrants in Austria and Muslim leadership among Turkish immigrants. From the purely legal perspective of the Austrian religious law Potz (2007) and Potz and Schinkele (2005) reflected on Islam, migration and integration in Austria. Reiser focused his study (1997) on the socio-political networks of Alevite immigrants and composed an informative doctoral thesis about the interests of Turkish migrant organisations in Vienna (2000). Schakfeh (2005), since 2000 President of the IGGiÖ, published a more general overview of Islam in Austria. Similar studies were carried out by Schmied (2005) and Strobl (2007).

Figure 4: Attitudes of Muslims regarding Austrians contrasted with attitudes of Austrians regarding Muslims



Sources: Rohe 2006, Gallup phone survey; <http://derstandard.at/?url=/?id=2454091>

Seilerbeck (2006) wrote about young Muslims in Austria and their position between western world, liberalism and fundamentalism. In 2006, Ornig finished a detailed analysis of second generation Muslims in Austria and the special problems in the context of their integration in the society. Rohe's survey (2006) about integration problems of Muslim immigrants, which was financed by the Austrian Ministry of the Interior, caused intense public discussions in the media as a result of his conclusions about their 'unwillingness to integrate'. The Muslims in the study were divided into the four categories of religious conservative (18%), traditional conservative (27%), moderate liberal (31%) and secular (24%). This analysis was heavily criticised by migration experts. It also caused an upheaval among the Muslim communities, who immediately claimed that they were being victimised by the study. However, according to the co-author of the study, the point of the study was to identify a problem area. Shortly afterwards, for the purpose of contrasting its findings with the results of the Rohe study, Gallup conducted a telephone survey about the attitudes of Austrians towards Muslims. This concluded that Islamophobia is a widespread phenomenon among the Austrian population (see Figure 4).

Tomenendal et al (2007) analysed Muslim NGOs in Austria in the context of the civil society dialogue about Muslim immigrants. Stickler (2008) analysed the IGGiÖ as an example of a 'special Austrian model' which refers to the unique status of Islam there. Rosenberger and Hadj-Abdou's study (2008) was centred on the anti-Islamic campaign discourse of the far-right political parties in Austria. Vrglevski et al (2008) wrote a popular article on 'Biber' about resentments migrant groups had against each other, and particularly against Muslim immigrants.

Schmidinger and Larise (2009) recently provided a descriptive handbook which provides an overview of political Islam in Austria. The doctoral thesis of Khorchide (2009) about teachers of Islamic religion in Austrian schools recently got a lot of media and political attention and initiated an intense discussion about the status quo of integration and the values of this group. Hofbauer's (2009) report completes this list with his most recent, popular publication about Islamic communities in Austria and their 'parallel worlds', which covers harmless religious people to fundamentalist movements.

General approaches and policies to improve the relations with Muslim groups

The municipality of Vienna has an explicit policy regarding intercultural relations which applies equally to Muslim communities and all the other ethnic groups in the city. The city considers all immigrant groups as equally important partners in dialogue and in the implementation of measures and actions to promote integration. They are also equally targeted in the city's measures and actions taken in the field of integration and diversity (see Wiener Integrationsfonds and Sarig, 2001). Basically religious groups and associations are regarded in an equal or similar way as those groups that are organised along national and/or ethnic lines.⁵⁵ Muslim organisations are considered by the municipality as important and indispensable partners in the city's diversity, and communication and information policies towards migrant communities. Such policies comprise an essential stage in the process of implementing diversity management in the city administration. Often MA 17 liaises with Muslim organisations. In the association platforms, the regional and district platforms, Muslim organisations and other NGOs are equally involved. Up until 2008, Muslim associations interacted very successfully alongside non-Muslim organisations under the umbrella group of the Vienna Integration Conference and its Networking Office. There are also institutionalised interreligious forums in the districts two, five, six, 11 and 16 and many Islamic communities hold 'open days' for their mosques. Finally, the annual *iftar* dinner at the end of Ramadan is an important annual event which takes place by invitation of the mayor.

⁵⁵ For additional information see <http://www.bmukk.gv.at/ministerium/kultusamt/index.xml> (website of the ministry for education, arts and science).

Successful communication also takes place between the city and ZAMAN Avusturya, a worldwide represented Turkish media organisation which has been active in Vienna since 2004. On 19 November 2008, the mayor, Dr Häupl, was officially presented with an award by ZAMAN for ‘Understanding and Co-existence’, for his outstanding role in intercultural dialogue (ZAMAN 2008). On another occasion, the city councillor for integration affairs, Mrs Frauenberger and Dr Struppe, head of MA 17, met about 40 young people with a Muslim background for a two-hour dialogue in Vienna’s town hall. Together, ZAMAN and MA 17 conducted a survey of 200 young people (aged between 15 and 25 years) with a Muslim background, on their attitudes towards and experiences of Austria, their chances on the labour market and their attitudes towards integration in general. The results of this survey were presented at this meeting (see ZAMAN 2009).

At the time of data collection there was no official representation of Muslim organisations among local political organisations. Some officials in the city and district councils have a Muslim background and are affiliated to Muslim organisations. One example is Omar Al-Rawi who is an elected member of the Vienna city council, representing the Social Democrats. Other examples of politicians with a Muslim background are Sirvan Ekici of the ÖVP, Nurten Yilmaz of the SPÖ and Alev Korun from the Green Party, who has also been a member of the National Assembly since 2008. All of these women have a Turkish migration background and are in particular engaged in women’s affairs.

With regard to financial support of Muslim organisations, the official IGGiÖ is funded from abroad but no information could be gathered about the extent of this support. Of course, some funding is also received for different Islamic projects from Turkey or Arabic countries, from private as well as from governmental sources. Most of this is used to build new mosques or prayer rooms, for example the mosque of the Islamic Centre was built between 1975 and 1979 on behalf of the King of Saudi Arabia Faisal ibn Abdul Aziz Al Saud, who financed the project. It was built in Osman style and has a minaret of 32 metres. The union ATIB receives regular support from the government of Turkey, with the consequence that it is influenced by Turkish policy.

Among the Iranian organisations, only the *Imam Aliy(as)* mosque is officially supported by the Iranian government. Regarding other organisations and projects, it is very difficult to know whether or not they receive any financial support from abroad, to estimate how much they receive or how influential the support is. The organisations themselves are not prepared to provide information about financial support from outside sources.

According to the city administration, it maintained some level of contact with all Muslim organisations in the city. The extent of this communication varies, and can be determined by the extent of financial support provided by the city. Because of the considerable number of small Muslim associations in Vienna it is not possible to state the specific number of organisations that may be relatively isolated. According to interviewees, not all Muslim organisations are in regular contact with the city.

Good practice examples of concrete activities and measures

The city of Vienna is oriented towards a general improvement of intergroup relations. MA 17 is developing a lot of initiatives, particularly at district level, as well as diversity oriented measures. The so-called ‘police projects’ are one important example; they aim to increase awareness among Vienna’s police force regarding the concrete needs of migrants and migrant institutions in general and Muslims in particular.⁵⁶ One such project is called ‘New Advice and

⁵⁶ See also <https://www.wien.gv.at/english/social/integration/neighbourhood.html#example>.

Help New' (*Rat und Hilfe neu*) (see page 23 for further detail). Further examples of measures to improve relations between Muslims and other populations are as follows:

- the city maintains regular contacts and discussions between city representatives and Muslim organisations;
- an information sheet is published during Ramadan;
- many mosques and Muslim organisations, in cooperation with MA 17, organise 'Days of Open Doors', (*Tage der offenen Tür*) involving activities between Muslims and the other groups. In November 2008 the Arabic mosque in Praterstrasse organised a 'Day of Open Mosque' to promote better understanding and interreligious dialogue between Muslims and the other religions. The same event took place in May, this time organised by the Islamic centre at Hubertusdamm. In November 2007, ATIB organised a similar event in the Islamic Centre in the district of Dammstraße.⁵⁷

There are also numerous activities organised by Muslim groups to improve intergroup relations in the city. Many of these are partly supported by the city, and are partly carried out by MA 17 at district level, including the already mentioned association platforms, days of open doors in many mosque associations, the Ramadan information bulletin for neighbours, and police projects. The impact of these initiatives cannot be quantified because there is no systematic evaluation process in place. However, it seems that all these intergroup activities and reports about them in local media are producing more interethnic tolerance and mutual understanding on both sides. Of course we do not live in an ideal world and thus not all non-Muslims or Muslims can be reached by those activities.

Public communication

In the context of recent international events, debates about the role of Islam have attracted more public attention. As a result, the view that religious rights should not be disputed has become more strongly contested. Owing to these developments, the Muslim issue has become situated in the debate around embracing the broader context of Islam and Turkey's membership to the European Union. Anti-Islamic stereotyping and discrimination is too new to Austria. Neither did it start with the September 11 Attacks in 2001 or the London and Madrid bombings in 2005. These stereotypes are historical, dating as far back as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, during the war between the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires, which is referred to as the 'Turks wars'.

The city has no special communication strategies for Islamic issues, other than its general strategies regarding diversity and improving the knowledge and information about Muslims and their interests among the whole Viennese population. Critical questions about 'Austrian Islam' are routinely raised by the Austrian public and media whenever the issue of 'radical Islam' is debated (see Beig, 2004, 2006, 17 March 2009; profil,). Thus each report on Islamic extremism and on questions about Islam in the West have these question as an undertone: 'how does it look regarding "our" Muslims in Austria?' And, 'are they perhaps also as ready for violence as the Muslims in the media?' When acts of terrorism do happen on an international sphere, representatives of the Islamic Religious Body are asked for 'official' statements (Hofbauer, 2009). The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) in Vienna, even observed that the events of recent years created 'an atmosphere in which Muslims must constantly defend themselves and explain that they were not terrorists (Strobel, 2006).

⁵⁷ See ORF on Volksgruppen 18 November 2008; ORF on Volksgruppen 20 May 2008; wienweb 8 November 2007.

Other common themes in the media include the issue of ritual slaughter of animals, Islamic cemeteries, and problems in school and gym instruction. Here, conflicts can arise with the school curriculum. For example, Muslim children may not eat food which they are required to prepare according to the Austrian curriculum. Issues can arise in swimming classes, because Muslim girls and boys may not be permitted to be in the same pool together. Problems also occur during outdoor projects and school meetings. Another media debate concerns some forms of dress, such as the wearing of the *hijab*. Discussions about the integration of Muslims flare up time and again, either as a consequence of similar debates in other European countries or because of a terrorist attack or news about Islamic extremism. Finally, media debates on migration policy in general often raise issues related to the integration of Muslims.

Following the September 11 Attacks, certain Austrian officials such as the then Minister for Foreign Affairs, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, expressed their rejection of all forms of terrorism, as did their counterparts around the world, but they refused to link the phenomenon with Islam. As in other European countries, there have been concerns that foreign imams are not well integrated, speak little German, and may be spreading radical ideas. The IGGIÖ agrees to monitor mosques and professes its willingness to intervene, which they say has very rarely happened in the past. The Ministry of the Interior plays a similar role in monitoring potentially problematic intentions.

In October 2007, Austrian authorities arrested a Bosnian suspect who attempted to enter the US embassy with a backpack containing explosives and nails. The motive for the attack was not immediately clear but gained much media interest (*Die Presse*, 2 October 2007).

The case of the Muslim couple ‘Mohamed M.’ and ‘Mona S.’ in 2008 also led to a lot of media interest as it was Austria’s first case of ‘home-grown’ terrorist activity (*Kleine Zeitung*, 13 February 2009).

The activities of the Islamic Federation in Vienna (*Islamische Föderation in Wien*, IFW) represent a positive example (among others) of very active media work by Muslims in the area of intercultural dialogue. The IFW maintains public relations with other social groups and associations and has various media outlets such as the newspaper DEWA, publications and broadcasts on the internet and the radio, its ‘College of Public Relations’ and, ‘Tulip – the Association for Intercultural Orientation’. The maintenance of its website (<http://www.ifwien.at>) is one of the main public relations tasks of the IFW. DEWA, the bilingual (German and Turkish) free newspaper provides information about latest events for the members of the IAM and other interested parties, both in print, and on its website (<http://www.dewa.at>). The IFW offers on its website (<http://www.radyodewa.at>) a multifaceted programme of cultural, religious and social issues. The College of Public Relations provides information in the German language; its emphasis is on interfaith dialogue, mediation and promoting integration in society of its core work, which involves training seminars, conferences, panels and symposia. Finally, the organisation ‘Tulip’ (Association for Intercultural Orientation), is a kind of bridge between different cultures, through which intercultural communication on various subjects such as literature, art, music, history and social sciences, is encouraged. It wants to encourage openness and tolerance.

Summary and lessons learnt

As Islam is an officially recognised religion in Austria, since the passing of the law of 1912, Islam has been institutionalised for many decades. Vienna has a long tradition of cooperation with Muslims and their organisations. For this reason, the demands of Muslim groups are more and more respected.

Functioning networks of dialogue occur between city officials and representatives of the Muslim communities. Due to the institutionalisation of this contact, the overall state of affairs in Vienna regarding relations with the Muslim population is rather calm, although conflicts do arise. The city has no explicit strategy for handling problems specifically related to Muslim religious manners. However, city officials exercise great flexibility in mediating conflict. Neither does

the city have a specific communication strategy for Islamic issues; it does have general ones to improve knowledge about Muslims among the non-Muslim population. In its relations with Muslim communities, the city applies the same policy to Muslim communities and other ethnic groups. Many conflicts are artificially exaggerated because of purely political interests. The attitudes of some indigenous Austrians towards Muslims are even hostile. Muslims can face prejudices in social life and in the labour market. In mass media and in public debates they are often accused of living in their own 'parallel world'.

MA 17 developed many initiatives, especially on district level, as well as diversity oriented measures. Examples of good practice include information campaigns in different mosques, supervision and support for the construction of mosques, political mediation between the city and Muslim organisations, association platforms, dialogue platforms, the Ramadan information bulletins, *iftar* meals between Muslim representatives and city officials, police projects and the Muslim cemetery, which was opened in 2008 in the twenty-third district, the first Islamic cemetery in Austria.

There are also numerous activities organised by Muslim groups to improve intergroup relations in the city, such as days of open doors in many mosque associations and participation in dialogue platforms. An example of fruitful cooperation between Muslim organisations and Austrian institutions is the Turkish Islamic Union (ATIB), which is involved in programmes developed for Turkish migrants that were initiated by the chamber of commerce and the chamber of work. The Islamic Federation in Vienna (*Islamische Föderation in Wien*) is a positive example (among others) of very active Muslim media work in the field of intercultural dialogue. The IFW maintains public relations with other associations and has various media outlets.

One disadvantage is that the impact of all these initiatives cannot be quantified because no systematic evaluation of any kind has been conducted.

Intergroup relations and radicalisation

The city of Vienna did not complete this section of the common reporting scheme. Instead, it pointed to the annual reports of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution and the Fight against Terrorism. The city gave the following explanation for this decision⁵⁸:

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'The City of Vienna has not answered these questions due to several aspects of this chapter: first and most importantly, the term radicalisation is not at all defined. In the City's opinion the term has foremost connotations with penal law, security and police issues which are not all the responsibility of the city of Vienna. Moreover, the term and its consequences in legal regard and reactions are of utmost sensitivity – especially with regard to immigrant groups - and it is therefore not in the interest of the city to answer these questions in the way and format they were forwarded. In a broad sense the whole range of social and integration and diversity policies and measures of the city of Vienna – not only the measures of dialogue and communication described within that module - are geared towards preventing radicalisation of young people of the whole spectrum – be it right-wing extremism resenting immigration and immigrants or from immigrant communities turning to extremist forms of religious belief – by giving them appreciation and respect, and most of all equal rights and chances for participation in all spheres of life. In this regard much has been done and undertaken since the early 1990s, but by the same token much remains to be done in the years to come.[...] Important examples of initiatives by the city of Vienna against racism and racist radicalism that can be mentioned are the joining of and cooperation within the European Coalition of Cities against racism, the passing of a 10 point action plan against racism as well as the establishment of an immigration commission to further a fact-based public discourse on immigration and the engaged efforts of the city councillor for integration to mobilise a coalition of forces through all sectors of society and political parties against racism and racist radicalism.'

City of Vienna's response to common reporting scheme questions regarding radicalisation

This part of the report is thus based on the available literature and the conclusions of the interviews with experts, and not on information provided by the city authorities.

Radicalisation within the majority population

The dominant model of political participation in Austria is party-centred. Political participation is clearly focused on the electoral arena and direct forms of decision making – for example, popular initiatives – are available, but they are comparatively weak and most often initiated by the political elites (Müller 2006, p. 109 f.). Party membership rates are particularly high: in the late 1990s, about 17.7% of the electorate held a membership, compared with only 2.9% in Germany (Mair and Van Biezen, 2001, p. 9). In general, unconventional forms of political participation, such as demonstrations, strikes, or illegal activities, are rare (Dolezal and Hutter, 2007). Nonetheless, since 1975 issues of migration, integration and racism have ranked third highest in terms of the number of participants of demonstrations (Dolezal and Hutter, 2007, p. 345). The torch-light demonstration against the popular initiative of the Freedom Party Against Immigration in 1993 was the third largest demonstration in the history of the Austrian Second Republic (Dolezal and Hutter, 2007, p. 343).

A range of reasons for the state and party centred political culture of Austria are mentioned in the research literature. First and foremost, the political structure is characterised by strong centralisation, a weak parliament and a clear dominance of government. A stable and relatively autonomous administrative system, in combination with a well-

⁵⁸ Comments of the city of Vienna to the draft report, submitted by email on 30 June 2009.

established system of corporatist reconciliation of interests of employers and trade unions within the ‘social partnership’ model, greatly restricts access of civic actors to areas of decision making (Dolezal and Hutter, 2007, p. 339). As popular initiatives and instruments of direct democracy can only be initiated by members of parliament, civic actors have limited means of influence, which makes aligning with a party a rational choice.

Furthermore, Austria’s political culture is characterised by informal decision making, a preference for consensus and for informal means of cooperation among the leaders of relevant bodies, within the framework of social-partnership (Talos, 2006, p. 427 f.). Two parties have never been involved in this informal process within the system of social partnership: the Freedom Party (FPÖ), an elitist far-right German nationalist party in the early 1980s with an electorate of around 6%, and the newly formed Green Party, which in its early years involved activists from the ecological movement with strong links to the Catholic and Protestant churches, human rights activists, disillusioned former members of the Social Democratic Party and activists from the radical academic leftist groups.

When in 1986 the late Jörg Haider was elected head of the FPÖ, he started to transform this former elitist party to a conservative populist party; up to 30% of its electorate were working class men. This German nationalist tendency, which presented Austria as a part of the larger German nation and was strongly opposed to minority rights for the ethnic minority groups in Austria⁵⁹ was replaced by an Austrian nationalism and a strict anti-immigrant position. On the other hand, the Green Party increased its profile in the area of human rights, particularly with regard to immigrant integration. Thus migration issues, which were formerly regulated to the closed political framework of the social partners, entered the parliamentary arena from the fringes. The transformed FPÖ and the newly founded Green Party gained political profile by focusing on an issue that had been neglected by the two big parties dominating the parliament – the conservative ÖVP and the Social Democrats – and transformed migration policies into a central political issue in the 1980s (Bauböck and Perchinig, 2006, p. 733 ff.).

Since the early 1990s, mobilisation against immigration became an important agenda of the FPÖ, whose share of voters in the Viennese council elections had risen from 9.7% in 1987 to 22.5% in 1991⁶⁰. From 1992 to 1993, the FPÖ organised a popular initiative under the slogan, ‘Austria first’, calling for the restriction of immigration and tighter border and internal controls. In response, a wide range of NGOs, public figures, church organisations and others organised a mass demonstration for tolerance and against xenophobia, the so-called ‘Sea of Lights’ (*Lichtermeer*), in which some 300,000 people participated, making it the third largest demonstration of the post-war period (Bauböck and Perchinig, 2006, p. 733).

⁵⁹ According to the Austrian Ethnic Groups Act, the following ethnic groups are recognised as ethnic groups (*Volksgruppen*) in Austria: The Slovenes in Carinthia and Styria, the Croats in the Burgenland, the Hungarians in the Burgenland and Vienna, the Czechs and Slovaks in Vienna and the Roma community. Recognised ethnic groups may use a set of cultural rights such as the right to education in their language or the usage of their language(s) before the courts. To be recognised as a ‘Volksgruppe’, several criteria, for example, Austrian citizenship and the settlement on a given territory for at least three generations, have to be fulfilled. Thus certain immigrants, such as those of Roma origin cannot make use of the rights guaranteed to the Austrian Roma.

⁶⁰ <http://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/daten/pdf/grstimmenanteil.pdf>.

Figures 5 and 6: Examples of FPÖ election posters: 'Vienna must not become Istanbul. He says what Vienna is thinking'; 'Rational fears. We are we.'



Source: ESI

Campaigning against immigration has been a major issue of the election campaigns of the FPÖ since the 1990s. They gained 27.9% of votes in the city council elections in 1996 (Table 4), dropping to 20.2% in 2001 and 14.8% in 2005.⁶¹ Since the early 2000s, anti-Islam positions (see Figures 5 and 6 for instance) gained prominence in the election campaigns of the FPÖ. In the election campaign for the general elections of 2006, for example, the FPÖ widely published advertisements and posters stating 'Daham statt Islam' (*At home instead of Islam*) and 'Pummerin statt Muezzin' (*Pummerin instead of a Muezzin*).⁶² In the election campaign for the general elections of 2008, the head of the FPÖ, Hans Christian Strache, argued that there should be no place for mosques and minarets in Austria, and complained about completely veiled women on Vienna's streets.⁶³ In January 2008, Susanne Winter, the head of the FPÖ in Graz, the Styrian capital, stated that 'Islam should be thrown back where it came from, beyond the Mediterranean Sea' and that Mohammed today would be regarded as a child molester. These statements raised sharp criticism from the Catholic and Protestant Churches and the other parliamentary parties. Even President Heinz Fischer distanced himself from this statement.

⁶¹ The Bündnis Zukunft Österreich (BZÖ) was founded after the split of the Freedom Party by former Freedom Party Members and presided by the late Jörg Haider. Whereas the BZÖ dominates the political landscape in Carinthia and the Freedom Party (FPÖ) only gained 3.7% at the provincial elections in 2009, the BZÖ only gained 1.2% at the city council elections of 2005 in Vienna.

⁶² *Pummerin* refers to the bells of St Stephan's cathedral in Vienna.

⁶³ <http://www.vienna.at/news/tp:vol:neuwahlen/artikel/ausschreitungen-bei-fpoe-kundgebung/cn/news-20080926-06443273>

Table 4: Share of votes of anti-immigrant parties in Vienna since 1985

City Council Elections	Share of votes (%)	
	Freedom Party (FPÖ)	Bündnis Zukunft Österreich (BZÖ)
1987	9.7	-
1991	22.5	-
1996	27.9	-
2001	20.2	-
2005	14.8	1.2

Source: *Perchinig, 2009*

According to analysis by the polling institute SORA, at the general elections of 2008, migration and integration policies were an important motive to vote for 73% of the voters of the FPÖ and for 75% of the voters of the BZÖ.⁶⁴ At the Viennese council elections of 2005, migration and integration issues were the main motive for first time voters for their voting decision, and in particular to vote against the Freedom Party (SORA, 2008, p. 21). Those who said migration and integration issues were a primary motive for their vote had a stronger preference for the Social Democratic Party and had a higher turn-out rate (63%) than those who did not mention the subject. Migration and integration have thus been mobilising factors for both anti-immigrant and anti-FPÖ voters.

Whereas strong anti-immigrant positions have found a home within the local party system, conservative extremist anti-immigrant mobilisation has a low profile. According to the report of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution and the Fight against Terrorism (2007), such positions only find weak support among the public and these parties have rather limited success in recruiting supporters (BVT, 2008, p. 31).

Potential links between the Freedom Party and the extremist scene became visible in the protest against the construction of an Islamic centre in Vienna on 13 September 2007. The Turkish-Islamic Union for Cultural and Social Collaboration (ATIB) planned to construct a new Islamic centre, including prayer rooms but without a minaret, on the site of their building in the twentieth district.⁶⁵ After the plan became known, a citizens' initiative was founded, which argued against the construction, fearing increased traffic and noise. The initiative set up a website against the plan called 'Goodbye to the mosque' (<http://www.moschee-ade.at>), which was funded by the FPÖ. They organised a demonstration, which was supported by the FPÖ and the conservative party of the district. The demonstration was attended by approximately 850 persons, several dozen wearing neo-Nazi outfits and shouting 'this is the march of the national opposition'. H. C. Strache, the head of the Viennese FPÖ, who has been repeatedly accused of having contacts with neo-Nazi groups, also attended the demonstration and was acknowledged with great applause by the group of neo-Nazis there, who were later involved in a row with counter-demonstrators.⁶⁶

According to the report of the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA, 2008), the number of officially reported and recorded incidents of racist violence and crime has oscillated between 322 and 528 cases in the period between 2000 and 2005 (FRA, 2008, p. 123). Austria was one of the three EU member states that experienced a downward trend in racist crime during the periods 2000–2005 and 2005–2006 (FRA, 2008, p. 124). The data provided by the report of the FRA are not broken down according to region or province.

⁶⁴ Institut für Strategieanalysen (SORA): Nationalratswahl 2008 .

⁶⁵ The construction was approved by the district building commission in March 2009.

⁶⁶ See <http://wien.orf.at/stories/221582/>.

The report by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia on the subject of racist violence in 15 EU Member States (EUMC, 2005) links the general political climate with regard to immigration and right-wing extremism. Diagnosing a generally unfavourable climate for immigrants, ‘where anti-immigrant/asylum policies have become mainstream’ (EUMC, 2005, p. 121), authorities focus on monitoring organised conservative extremism and widely neglect ‘everyday’ examples of racism and racist violence (EUMC, 2005, p. 122). On the basis of qualitative NGO and media reports, the report indicates that a range of minorities are vulnerable to discriminatory practices in Austria. Black African people are identified as being most at risk of racist crime, including police brutality (EUMC, 2005, p. 124 f.).

The annual reports on racism, published by the NGO ZARA since 2000, give the impression that discrimination based on ethnic or religious background is a widespread phenomenon and might also include acts of physical violence by discriminating individuals. Although most reported cases concern discrimination with regard to access to bars and clubs, or flat or job hunting, a number of incidents such as racist insults and harassment are carried out by neighbours or strangers, and often include an element of physical violence (ZARA 2000–2008). The data concern the whole of Austria and are not broken down by province.

In general, anti-immigrant positions and attitudes among the majority population mainly are voiced by voting for anti-immigrant parties like the FPÖ, and do not lead to organised political activities or violence. Organised anti-immigrant mobilisation centred on the construction of an Islamic cultural centre in the twentieth district. The demonstration against the construction of the centre was attended by leading politicians of the FPÖ as well as by neo-Nazis, and led to a row with counter-demonstrators. According to the reports of the anti-racism NGO, ZARA, acts of violence against immigrants result from individual encounters and are not systematically organised. In general, the impact of the election campaigns of the FPÖ on the climate in the city is viewed negatively by the city government, but there are no studies available on their influence on the local integration of migrants and minorities.

General approach, policies and measures towards these groups

The general perception and attitude of the city towards anti-immigrant positions and groups results in investments being made in conflict reduction in everyday life and on the building of networks between the administration, immigrant associations and other civil society organisations at district level (the so-called integration platforms). The political responsibility for integration policies lies with Mag. Sandra Frauenberger (SPÖ), the city councillor for integration, women’s affairs, consumer protection and personnel. Within the administration, the Department for Integration and Diversity of the magistrate of the city of Vienna is responsible for the implementation of the integration and diversity policies of the city.

The methods and measures used concentrate on networking between the administration, NGOs and politicians, the establishment of dialogue platforms and conflict mediation in districts where conflicts between different groups of the population occur frequently. Recently, the city has set up groups of mediators, which may be called in cases of conflict in housing areas. Furthermore, public relations campaigns in favour of peaceful coexistence are frequently run in the mass media.

Relations between groups

A number of NGOs are active against anti-immigrant or anti-minority positions. The Catholic and the Protestant Churches and their humanitarian associations like Caritas or the ‘Evangelische Diakonie’ play an important role in intercultural dialogue. They act as advocates of immigrants’ rights in public, organise advice centres and language training courses and provide shelter to asylum-seekers, refugees and immigrants in need. Another important association in the field of humanitarian work with immigrants is the humanitarian Peoples’ Aid Organisation (*Volkshilfe*), which has close connections to the Social Democratic Party.

Since the 1990s, several humanitarian associations engaged in the field of immigration and integration were established. The umbrella organisation ‘SOS Mitmensch’, which organised the torchlight demonstration against racism in 1993 – the third largest demonstration in Austria’s history – is still active, but has since then somehow lost its political influence. Its main activities include giving legal advice to immigrants and the publication of a monthly newspaper on integration issues. The Austrian League of Human Rights has also developed a strong focus on immigration and integration issues; its activities concentrate on organising workshops and the publication of a bimonthly newspaper on human rights issues. The Austrian Asylum Coordination, an umbrella group of NGOs working in the field of asylum, is also active against radicalisation and anti-immigrant positions. Its activities mainly concentrate on information and training provision in adult education centres and schools and the publication of a quarterly magazine on migration issues. Other NGOs active in this field include the Minorities initiative (*Initiative Minderheiten*), whose activities concentrate on the organisation of exhibitions and cultural projects and the publication of a quarterly magazine on minority issues, and the ‘House of Integration’ (*Integrationshaus*), which hosts refugees and immigrants and organises vocational training for them, and is also engaged in intercultural work on a neighbourhood level. The ‘Intercultural Centre’ is another NGO mainly active in organising intercultural activities at schools and within adult education.

The NGO ZARA (*Zivilcourage und Antirassismusbearbeitung*) provides anti-racism training, documents cases of discrimination and runs a legal office for victims of racism and discrimination. Their annual ‘racism reports’, which have been published since 2000, comprise the most important information source on developments in this field.

Most of these organisations are also partly funded by the city of Vienna, either through contracts to carry out certain activities or projects, or by direct funding. For example, the city is a main funder of the ‘House of Integration’ and ZARA, the anti-racist NGO. Until the end of 2008, the city funded an office for networking among migrant organisations. The Vienna Integration Conference comprised more than 100 migrants’ organisations and consultation bodies and aimed to progress the political participation of these groups, represent and lobby for immigrants’ rights and interests, and to be a link to the municipality. Funding was stopped, as, according to the city, organisations representing large groups of the immigrant population no longer cooperated, due to internal conflicts.

According to the study of Waldrauch and Sohler on migrant organisations in Vienna (Waldrauch and Sohler, 2003), a number of immigrant organisations focusing on antiracist and antidiscrimination activities have sprung up since the late 1990s, which complement the work of organisations that are based on nationality or ethnic origin or religion. A major catalyst of this development was the foundation of the EU ‘European Network against Racism’ (ENAR) (Waldrauch and Sohler, 2003, p. 416, p. 597). Currently the Austrian section of ENAR (ENARA) comprises 22 organisations and acts as a platform for antiracist NGOs.⁶⁷

As mentioned earlier, integration platforms comprising immigrant organisations, the district administration and humanitarian and social NGOs have been set up in several districts, which also act to prevent radicalisation by organising dialogue and cooperation.

The city of Vienna has no responsibility for the local police. The city has given no information regarding their public relations and communication strategies in this field.

⁶⁷ <http://www.enar-eu.org/Page.asp?docid=15741&langue=EN>

Summary and lessons learnt

The approach of networking with all relevant stakeholders and upholding sustainable informal communication and links with different associations was deemed a success by the head of the Department for Integration and Diversity of the city of Vienna, at the round table discussion on 30 March 2009.

Radicalisation within the migrant and/or minority population

Radicalisation tendencies: who and what

The annual report of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution and the Fight against Terrorism uses the heading 'Extremism and terrorism with relation to foreign countries' (BVT, 2008, p. 48 ff) to describe activities related to terrorism of immigrants and their offspring. According to the report, persons involved in these activities are most often Austrian citizens and members of the so-called 'second generation'. The majority of them originate from Arabic countries and countries of the near East, such as Afghanistan, Egypt and Pakistan, from the Balkans and from Turkey. In unusual cases, converts to Islam – particularly to the Salafiyya – have become active in extremist Islamic circles (BVT, 2008, p. 49).

According to the report, the internet has become a major tool to spread Islamic extremist propaganda and to recruit new followers. The internet is also used to publish manuals to build bombs or for training in martial arts and videos about terrorist attacks (BVT 2008, 50 f.).

The report also shows that the Global Islamic Media Front (GIMF), which was founded in 2004, is a major media platform for Islamic extremist propaganda. Since 2005, the GIMF publishes a daily internet broadcast under the label 'Caliphate Voice Channel' (CVC), which focuses on jihadist propaganda and can be downloaded for free on their website. Since 2006, a German version of the GIMF has been online.

The GIMF website broadcasts Islamic terrorist activities in Austria. On March 9 2007, the Caliphate Voice Channel published a video-message demanding the retreat of German and Austrian soldiers among UN forces in Afghanistan. The speaker stated, 'Until now Austria was a safe country, but this situation might change soon', making particular reference to Austria's tourism industry (BVT, 2008, p. 53).

In September 2007, investigations of the state police led to the arrest of two suspects, Mohammed M. and Mona S. Both were Austrian citizens with a middle-class family background and were in their early twenties; they were born and raised in Vienna. Mohammed S. had attended a private Islamic high school, Mona S. a public school. They had married according to an Islamic ritual, but not at the registrar's office. Both were accused of cooperating with Al Qaeda and of membership of a terrorist organisation. On March 12 2008, Mohammed S. was sentenced to four years imprisonment and Mona S. to 22 months imprisonment for the crimes they were accused of (BVT, 2008, p. 54). On August 27 2008, the high court declared the sentences null and void due to procedural reasons and demanded to repeat the trial (Pentz et al, 2008, p. 103 f.). This was because Mona S. had been excluded from the trial, as she refused not to wear her *niqab*, which was seen as unacceptable by the judge, as the jury would have to be able to see the face of the accused and the witnesses. The judge suggested to Mona S. to wear a headscarf instead, but she refused to follow this suggestion. The high court confirmed the legality of the exclusion of Mona S. from the trial (Pentz et al, 2008, 80, 104). On February 13 2009, the trial was repeated and the sentences of the first trial were confirmed.

The second aspect of radicalism mentioned in the annual reports of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution and the Fight against Terrorism concerns the Kurdish group, PKK. According to the report, about 4,000 persons living in Austria were sympathisers of the PKK. Their activities focused on propaganda, public relations and demonstrations. The report also mentions an illegal demonstration at the site of the UN offices in Vienna in favour of

Abdullah Öcalan. After 46 persons had violently entered the UN premises and demonstrated in favour of the release of Mr Öcalan, the police cleared the building and imprisoned one person. Sympathisers of the PKK also staged several, mostly peaceful demonstrations against the invasion of the Turkish Army in northern Iraq (BVT, 2008, p. 63 f.).

The third aspect mentioned concerns radical activities with regard to the Chechen conflict. In April 2007, a 22 year-old Chechen asylum seeker was killed by a 29 year-old Chechen due to internal political conflicts within the Chechen refugee community. Furthermore, the police learned of several cases of recruitment for suicide bombing among the Austrian Chechen community. Charges were pressed against two Russian citizens residing in Vienna because of their alleged membership in a terrorist organisation (BVT, 2008, p. 66). On 13 January 2009, Mr Umar Israilov, a former officer of the private army of the Chechen president Ramzan Kadyrow, was shot on the street in front of his home. Mr Israilov had asked for protection by the police, as he was on a death list of the Chechen secret service, but his request had been denied (*Die Presse*, 16 January 2009).

On 24 May 2009 the murder of the famous Sikh guru Sant Rama Anand (another guru was seriously injured) in a Sikh Gurdwara in Pelzgasse in the fifteenth district, caused serious inner disturbances among the Sikh communities not only in Vienna but also in the Indian region of Punjab. The violence was a result of conflicts between pious and more moderate Sikh communities (Grolig and Schreiber, 26 May 2009). On 15 June 2009 a Sikh shot at members of ‘Cobra’ the local police force, before he could be stopped and imprisoned (Grolig and Wolf, 19 June 2009).

There is very little literature available on religious radicalism in Austria. According to a study on political Islam in Austria, only a very small number of people are involved in radical jihadist activities. Even among Islamic groups with an Arabic background, where political interpretations of Islam can occur, reformist orientations dominate (Schmidinger and Larise, 2008, p. 103).

General approach, policies and measures towards these groups

The general perception and attitude of the city towards radicalism among immigrant and minority groups focuses on upholding sustainable relations with all immigrant organisations and fostering sustainable and continuous dialogue.

As explained by the head of the Magistrate Division on Integration and Diversity during the round table discussion on 30 March 2009, one of the city’s main strategies is to invest in a good relationship and continuous dialogue with all immigrant communities and to build networks between the administration, immigrant associations and other civil society organisations on district levels (the so-called integration platforms). The city of Vienna understands intercultural dialogue as a cross-sectional methodology to be applied to all policy areas. According to the city, sustainable dialogue is its key method to reach its general political goals, which, as already noted, are equal treatment; equality of opportunity; participation in all areas of society, including education, the labour market, social security and health services; political participation and participation in civil society, and access to public institutions. In this way, the city intends to support the social advancement of immigrants and the acceptance of diversity, as opposed to demands for assimilation.⁶⁸

The political responsibility for integration policies lies with Mag. Sandra Frauenberger (SPÖ,) the city councillor for integration, women’s affairs, consumer protection and personnel,. Within the administration, the Department for Integration and Diversity of the magistrate of the city of Vienna is responsible for the implementation of the integration and diversity policy of the city.

⁶⁸ Comments by the city of Vienna to the draft report, submitted by email, 30 June 2009. In the context of integration and diversity monitoring MA 17 would be very interested in valid and proved indicators for measuring a ‘good coexistence/social climate’ if such indicators are already available in other cities.

The methods and measures used concentrate on continuous informal contacts and dialogue and on networking between the administration, NGOs and politics. Furthermore, the city funds a wide variety of projects involving immigrant associations and religious organisations like mosques. Staff members of the Department for Integration and Diversity regularly give lectures on integration issues, on the premises of immigrant associations and in mosques and religious buildings of other faith groups.

Relations between groups

The already mentioned Vienna Integration Conference was a main tool of communication between different immigrant groups, but was abandoned in winter 2008. Now the integration platforms represent the main forum for bringing together different immigrant organisations, NGOs and the administration. They have been set up in several districts and act to prevent radicalisation by organising dialogue and cooperation. Intercultural or interreligious projects involving immigrant organisations are supported by the city. One such organisation, the 'Association of Muslim Austrians', received the Lupac Prize for Democracy from the Austrian parliament for their interreligious and intercultural activities in November 2009 (APA 197, 11 October 2008).

Radicalisation: Summary and lessons learnt

The dominant, party-centred political culture of Austria and the particular history of migration and integration policy making have not left much room for the development of anti-immigrant and anti-minority groups outside of the parliamentary arena. Instead, anti-immigrant parties have gained strength within the Austrian parliament and the Viennese city council since the early 1990s. Thus migration and integration policy issues have become important topics at local election campaigns, and have also influenced the decision to vote in favour of anti-immigrant parties, as well as against them. On the one hand, the inclusion of tapered anti-immigrant positions into the party system made these positions acceptable for a large part of the electorate. On the other hand, it did not leave much room for extremist groups outside the parliamentary system to mobilise on this agenda.

The political history of Austria has been shaped by a long tradition of conflict resolution through the informal cooperation of key figures in relevant bodies and organisations. A similar pattern of cooperation and dialogue shaped the reconciliation of the Catholic Church and the Social Democratic Party in the 1970s. In the early 1930s, the Catholic Church and the Social Democrats held antagonistic views during the civil war of the early 1930s, which were particularly focused on the city of Vienna.

The current policy of the city of Vienna regarding radicalisation seems to be shaped by this historical pattern. In order to prevent radicalisation and a new polarisation of society along the line of immigration, the city has focused on measures to enhance the quality of life of its citizens in districts with a high immigrant population and on mediation in day-to-day conflicts that can involve cultural misunderstandings. This focus on conflict mediation in everyday life is regarded as a successful means against radicalisation by the municipality and is also intended to reduce voting for anti-immigrant parties.

Lack of communication and hard line positions characterised the failure to find an agreement with a local citizens' initiative in the case of the expansion of an existing Islamic centre in the twentieth district. In this case, links between the political party FPÖ and neo-Nazi-groups became visible and the situation escalated towards rows between demonstrators and the anti-Islamic protesters.

The city addresses radicalisation among the immigrant population through dialogue and cooperation at the elite level. The main methods applied include the establishment of communication channels for informal conflict resolution and the development of forums for sustainable dialogue for all stakeholders, including immigrant organisations, the administration and NGOs, which mostly take place at district level. The strong focus on communication and sustainable dialogue with all stakeholders demands a detailed knowledge of the informal structures of immigrant organisations and communities; this is secured by decentralised offices of the Department of Integration and Diversity and the employment of staff with immigrant origin there.

This approach also reflects the historical dominant use of informal communication between key figures of organisations and other bodies as means of conflict resolution, alongside a strong focus on pragmatic, ad hoc solutions for acute problems. Whereas this focus allows utmost flexibility in finding solutions specifically tailored for each separate case, it may also reflect a certain appreciation of structural measures, scientific analyses, long-term concepts and scientific evaluation of outcomes. The dominance of ad hoc measures and the lack of clearly communicated policy goals may well also lead to a low level of consistency and may impair the evaluation of the efficiency and adequacy of measures taken. In this respect, the withdrawal of funding for the Vienna Integration Conference which served as a platform for the cooperation of migrant organisations, in reaction to internal conflicts, may serve as an example of the failure of this approach to develop sustainable platforms for formal interaction with migrant associations.

A communication-centred approach also relies on the city's capacity to reach all potential stakeholders which, in a dominantly informal setting, strongly depends on the personal capabilities of the actors involved. The low number of radicalised individuals might be read as a sign of success, although the involvement of young Muslims born and raised in middle-class families in Vienna in terrorist activities may also suggest a lack of understanding of the process of radicalisation within the 'second generation' and the need to improve means of reaching out to those of the second generation who are susceptible to radicalisation.

Key challenges and lessons for CLIP

In Austria the legal status of Muslims is unique in Europe because Islam has been an officially recognised religion there since 1912. The historically established framework of church-state relations consists of an institutionalised level of cooperation between state authorities and religious associations. Consequently the city of Vienna has a long tradition of cooperation with Muslims and their organisations. The state of affairs regarding interreligious dialogue is good. Functioning networks of dialogue between the city officials and the representatives of the migrant communities have been established. Open conflicts are relatively rare. Regular contacts and the exchange of information about the interests of the migrant communities are seen as key elements of good relations.

The city has an explicit policy on integration, which applies equally to all immigrant groups. The city of Vienna considers all immigrant groups to be equally important partners in dialogue and in the implementation of measures and actions to promote integration. The city has no explicit strategy to address problems specifically related to Muslims but applies great flexibility in mediating cases of conflict. In any case, many conflicts are artificially exaggerated by conservative political parties because of purely political interests. Conflicts regarding mosque buildings were mediated but still protests still occurred.

Compared to other European cities, the debate regarding Muslim women wearing a *hijab* is relatively moderate. Wearing the headscarf is not disputed due to the legal tradition of the Austrian church-state relationship. But this conflict-free situation is just the official side of the coin. In everyday life, many indigenous Viennese people and non-Muslim immigrants have a cold and even hostile attitude towards Muslims. Some Muslims have to face prejudices in social life and in the labour market.

One problem which is located outside the sphere of intervention of the city is the crisis of the IGGiÖ. Liberal Muslims criticise its internal structure, the lack of democratic decision-making processes therein and the overrepresentation of Sunnites in this organisation. Recently, the IGGiÖ was seriously distressed because of accusations concerning a lack of control over Islamic instruction at schools and the employment of unqualified teachers. Moreover there are strong efforts on the side of the Alevites to establish an Alevite religious community which, according to the Alevite leaders, would be completely independent of the IGGiÖ. Thus it is legitimate to say that the IGGiÖ is currently going through a critical phase.

MA 17 develops and supports many initiatives especially at district level. There are also numerous activities organised by Muslim groups to improve intergroup relations. Many of these are partly supported by the city, and partly implemented by MA 17. District platforms, association platforms, mosque open days, the Ramadan information bulletin for neighbours of mosques and police projects can all be recommended as examples of good practice initiatives which usually work well. A lot of dialogue occurs within these platforms, as it did up until 2008 within in the Vienna Integration Conference. However, the lack of joint, formal consultation bodies involving the city and ethnic and religious organisations must be classified as a deficit.

Migrant organisations are classified as an important resource in the context of integration. The objective of improving intercultural relations forms an essential part of the activities of MA 17. Local politicians directly cooperate with the ethnic communities and there is a lot of financial and organisational support for all those organisations.

Among the considerable number of models of good practices, the initiative 'Advice and help re-launched', the 'District's festival weeks', the language initiatives and EURO (European soccer championship in Vienna) should be mentioned here. Although the umbrella organisation Vienna Integration Conference which was funded by the city worked very well for several years and initiated a lot of valuable activities, it was not successful in the long run.

There are a number of outstanding issues regarding the needs and demands of migrant organisations. These include the improvement of the socioeconomic situation of migrants, especially in the area of education, labour market status, income, social security and housing; the improvement of their legal status, through effective anti-discrimination laws and bodies; more representation in the media (mainstreaming issues) and the improvement of public debates on related issues.

In Vienna, there are a lot of migrant media outlets and a good level of media cooperation between migrant organisations, mainstream media and migrant media. In this context, M-media, a migrants' organisation with a focus on media and media cooperation, is an important example of good practice.

Generally, ethnic/religious organisations have a very positive role to play in the field of integration, through interethnic and interreligious dialogue. Ethnic associations play an important role in developing measures and sharing information within their communities. The migrant organisations are also considered to be important stakeholders and their interests form part of the political debate. It must not be neglected that some associations representing conservative branches of Islam may be problematic because of their possible proximity to fundamentalist ideologies; however, the city explicitly tries not to exclude any group from dialogue.

Vienna is very active in the field of public communication. The communication strategy, 'Vienna speaks many languages' is an important cornerstone and is based on the principle of multilingualism. Further important initiatives in this field are the 'Multilingual Glossary of the City of Vienna', the 'Intercultural Calendar 2008' and the 'Feeling at home' projects, all of which promote peaceful collective living. There is also a good level of cooperation between ethnic and local media such as newspapers, radio and television.

Relations between different migrant groups in Vienna are not completely peaceful, as is the case everywhere in Europe. Of course, there are traditional conflict lines between some migrant groups, such as those between Serbs and Bosnians or Croats, or between Kurds and Turks. Traditionally, many conflicts in the countries of origin have had less of an impact in Vienna than in other European cities. Liaison at an official level usually stops problems occurring. However, in everyday life these groups have much less contact with each other. Most interethnic conflicts are difficult to influence by official political measures of the city.

One problem is that the outcomes of the measures set by the city in the field of intercultural dialogue cannot be quantified because no systematic evaluation of them takes place. In this field, combined efforts should be made in the future. Furthermore, tensions still exist among the indigenous population. The tolerant legal regulations are contrasted with racist attitudes within parts of the Austrian population and conservative parties that systematically foster sentiments against (Muslim) immigrants. Legitimate interests of the majority population are supported by the city, but there are also openly hostile attitudes which have often been exploited by extremist political parties. A great deal of further social and political measures will be necessary to improve the climate as a whole and to support the social issues of those parts of the population who are, or feel to be, in a weak social position (be they migrants or not) and are most fearful of change.

The current policy of the city of Vienna regarding radicalisation is to focus on measures to enhance the quality of life of its citizens in districts with a high proportion of immigrants, and on mediation of day-to-day conflicts which potentially involve cultural misunderstandings. This focus on conflict mediation in everyday life is regarded as a successful means of combating radicalisation by the municipality and is also intended to reduce voting for anti-immigrant parties.

With regard to radicalisation among the immigrant population, the city follows the tradition of dialogue and cooperation among senior personnel. The main methods applied include the establishment of communication channels for informal conflict resolution on this elite level and the development of sustainable dialogue forums for all stakeholders – including immigrant organisations, the administration and NGOs – particularly at district level.

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List of persons and organisations interviewed

Stefan Beig, journalist at *Wiener Zeitung* with a focus on Islam and Muslim organisations

Norbert Bichl, Head of the Advice Centre for Migrants (*Beratungszentrum für Migranten und Migrantinnen*)

Josef Böck, Department of Criminal Investigations Vienna, chair of the organisation 'Fair and sensible – Police and Black Africans'

Julia Czarnowski, researcher with a focus on Iranians in Vienna, Institute for Iranian Studies, Austrian Academy of Sciences

Sirvan Ekici, Municipal Councillor, Austrian People's Party of Vienna

Gebhard Fidler, journalist at *Wiener Zeitung*

Astrid Hafner, representative, Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs

Oliver MinRat Henhapel, Principal, Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Arts and Culture

Alev Korun, Municipal Councillor up until 2008, now Member of the National Council of Austria, Austrian Green Party

Margit Kreuzhuber, Austrian chamber of commerce (WKÖ), Department for Social Policy and Health

Alexander Krajlic, representative of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Vienna

Sabine Kroissenbrunner, Head of the Task Force 'Dialog of Cultures' in the Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs

Hansjörg Lein, Superintendent, Evangelical Lutheran Diocese, Vienna

Azem Olcay, Austrian Trade Union (ÖGB), Advice Centre

Osamwonyi Doreen, Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior

Johannes Peyrl, Chamber of Work Vienna, Department for Social Affairs and the Labour Market

Edwin Schäffer, Head of Diversity Department, Viennese Chamber of Commerce

Maria-Anna Six-Hohenbalken, senior researcher with a focus on Kurds and Turks in Vienna, Social Anthropology Research Unit, Centre for Studies in Asian Cultures and Social Anthropology, Austrian Academy of Sciences

Desiree Stix-Kern, Desiree representative, Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior

Ursula Struppe, Head of Municipal Department 17, Integration and Diversity Matters

Kurt Stürzenbecher, Municipal Councillor, Social Democratic Party of Vienna

Through the active cooperation of MA 17, a considerable number of representatives of Muslim organisations⁶⁹ and a representative of the 'Israelitische Kultusgemeinde' were invited to participate in a round table meeting, held on 30 March 2009. Unfortunately no representative was able to participate.

Minutes of the round table meeting, 30 March 2009, Austrian Academy of Sciences

Dr Ursula Struppe, head of MA 17, introduced the meeting with some statements concerning measures which promote intercultural dialogue with Muslim communities. In addition she sketched out the basic lines of the dialogue-oriented policy of the city of Vienna. Dr Stürzenbecher added a statement on the internal structure of the IGGiÖ and the point of view of the Social Democratic Party in Vienna. He emphasised that religion shall not be pushed away into a ghetto-like situation. Mag. Korun expressed her view that it is important to consider both official and unofficial dialogue. Muslims became increasingly visible in Vienna during the last five to 10 years. She enunciated the problems in the context of announcements of building a mosque or expanding one and the role of the politicians in this respect.

Dr Kroissenbrunner emphasised the diversity of Islam in Europe and the apprehension of dialogue in the Ministry of the Exterior. Furthermore she described the role of the ministry in the preparation of the European Conference of Imams. In addition to this, she described project about Turkish imams in Vienna. She verbalised the important topic of the participation of women and young people in public and political life.

Mag. Henhappel stressed the good level of cooperation between the Ministry of Education and Prof. Aslan from the Muslim Pedagogical Academy. He pointed out frictions between Muslims and the Orthodox Church since the Balkan wars. Furthermore he discussed the retreat of Muslim migrants into religion and the question of religious education in public and Koran schools. After this, a discussion began about the definition of integration between Mag. Stix-Kern, Dr Perchinig and Dr Struppe. Dr Struppe said that emotions remained relatively low in Vienna regarding the subject of Islam, relatively low compared to other European cities. Prof Fassmann asked about issues around planning in the context of minaret building. Dr Kroissenbrunner provided the example of the case of a minaret in the district of Bad Vöslau. Dr Stürzenbecher elaborated on the legal framework and the importance of constant dialogue in order to reduce conflicts. He argued that some cultural values of Muslim communities contradict basic rights and freedoms upheld in western constitutions.

Prof Fassmann asked once again about a formal process of intervention of MA 17 cases of mosque construction. Dr Struppe outlined the formal impossibility of such a framework. She emphasised the importance of informal intervention strategies. Mag. Ekici discussed the difference between integration and assimilation and criticised the effects of a 'snuggling' strategy. Mag. Henhappel once again outlined the case of mosque construction from the architectonic perspective. He expressed his opinion that the Osmanic style of ATIB mosques cause more conflicts than more neutrally styled mosque buildings. Mag. Korun endorses his opinion that the minarets have to be seen in the context of a debate about symbols. She emphasised the heterogeneity of the Muslim communities and the necessity of internal discussions in those communities, in cases of conflict about mosques etc.

⁶⁹ These included Mouddar Khouja, IGGiÖ; Ali Cankaya, Föderation der Aleviten-Gemeinden in Österreich, Türkisch Islamische Union für Kulturelle und Soziale Zusammenarbeit in Österreich (ATIB); Irfan Buzar, Hasudin Atanovic, Samir Redzepovic, Islamska Zajednica Bosnjaka U Austrij, Islamische Gemeinde der Bosniaken in Österreich; Adnan Aslan, Islamische Religionspädagogische Akademie.

Superintendent Lein outlined some examples of interreligious dialogue between the Christian churches and other denominations. Dr Kroissenbrunner highlighted the importance of local integration processes and the role of increasing cooperation with migrants' countries of origin. She also emphasised the importance of financial support from abroad in the context of mosque construction. Mag. Kroissenbrunner, Dr Perchinig and Dr Stürzenbecher once again started a discussion about the term integration. In the Viennese model, integration is understood as a cross-sectional matter. In this context, topics such as the *hijab* and the integration of women were elucidated. Lieutenant-Colonel Böck pleaded for a dialogue among all institutions involved in intercultural matters and addressed the problems of the African community in Vienna. Mag. Henhapel brought up the issue of interethnic contacts between different migrant communities. He stressed the importance of creating a common identity in Austria, comparable to the common US American model. Mag. Peyrl explained the relevant aspects of intercultural dialogue from the perspective of the Viennese chamber of work. Mag. Ekici pleaded for a multiple Islamic discourse and a discussion about the IGGiÖ and its role. She verbalised the views of some critics in the field of youth integration. Mag. Stix-Kern and Mag. Korun spoke of the importance of cultural plurality. In her final statement, Dr Struppe once again emphasised the flexible strategies of mediation adopted by the city of Vienna, which has contacts with groups that are considered to be problematic by the IGGiÖ.

Heinz Fassmann, Josef Kohlbacher and Bernhard Perchinig, Institute for Urban and Regional Research (ISR), Vienna