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Area of action "Social integration"

Analysis of cantonal reports for 2014

In the area of action "Social integration" the cantons issued calls for tender for various projects. There were already numerous local projects favouring the social integration of migrants prior to subsequent development and expansion under cantonal integration programmes. In 2014 the Confederation and the cantons spent a total of around CHF 7.6 million.

Social integration projects are intended to encourage social cohabitation and cohesion. In several areas of social life, the cantons support targeted projects aimed at helping migrants to become active participants in society. In 2014, emphasis was also placed on raising awareness.

Sharing knowledge and supporting project diversity

The cantons support the efforts of cantonal offices, communes, associations and organisations seeking to raise awareness of migration and integration issues. At the same time, migrants need to be made aware of the various integration services offered by established frameworks. For this reason, various projects have been launched to help migrants to become more self-sufficient in their daily lives. Performance agreements have also been reached between cantonal integration offices and migrant organisations. In the Canton of Geneva, for instance, migrant organisations have been given the task of contacting newcomers to explain their rights and obligations, distribute welcome brochures and encourage migrants to take part in a "project pool". The project pool is intended to help those seeking to create an association and pursue social integration projects, especially in neighbourhoods with a large proportion of migrants. The cantons also support numerous projects aimed at building contacts between foreigners and the local population and facilitating cohabitation. These projects develop and improve language skills, encourage the exchange of everyday knowledge, promote intercultural events for closer interaction, and encourage leisure activities. Cultural events and sports associations, in particular, are used in all linguistic regions of Switzerland to favour the social integration of migrants.

Participation in the political process

In the reporting year, several Cantons focussed on encouraging migrants to take part in political processes at communal level. In addition to greater information and awareness efforts, training courses were offered to teach migrants about the Swiss political system and the exercise of one's political rights.

Canton of Jura: "tutors-mentors" help migrants

In response to a study, the Canton of Jura's Office for Sports established a network of people with the abilities and skills needed to promote social integration. The selected individuals underwent training as "tutors-mentors". Their role is to build bridges between sports associations and migrants. In this manner, "tutors-Mentors" help and encourage migrants to take part in sports activities such as cycling, hiking, basketball and volleyball, etc.

Additional information: Association jurassienne des migrants, www.ajam.ch