

The Integration Model of the State of Vorarlberg
Short Version German – English

Shaping
the Future
Together

Foreword

Integration is a long-term process with many aspects. It cannot be accomplished overnight. With this in mind, the State of Vorarlberg acted with foresight by establishing a working structure early on for the development and promotion of integration. An important mediatory role in the State's integration efforts is played by the project group *okay.zusammen leben*, which was established in 2001. Integration can only function if the majority society remains open, adequate structures are in place and immigrants are willing to actively participate in the community. Consequently, integration is not a one-way street. If it is to be sustained, it requires clear rules and a process of "supporting and requiring."

Mutual respect and understanding are the keys to peaceful coexistence beyond ethnic boundaries and cultural identities. Education and language skills are decisive factors that determine the success of integration. We have no other choice but to actively embrace the integration challenges facing us. Our goal must be to create a common future for people from all backgrounds and ethnic groups. The State of Vorarlberg has successfully established a dialogue of equals, in which positive developments as well as problems are openly discussed. With an integration network comprising the State Government, municipalities, the project group, immigrant organizations and other partners, Vorarlberg's immigration policies have proved to be effective.

The State's integration model provides firm ground rules for current and future activities. All parties responsible

for integration, including the political parties represented in the State Parliament, collaborated on it. The State of Vorarlberg's established integration policy of "supporting and requiring" will call for a broad social consensus if it is to be maintained in the future. Our goal is to continue to be a state fully committed to integration, which is shaped by a high-performance economy, social cohesion and a productive approach to cultural diversity.

We would like to express our sincerest thanks to everyone involved in integration at all levels, including all institutions, municipalities and towns, for their outstanding contributions. Our thanks also go to the integration spokespersons in the Vorarlberg State Parliament, the Coordination Office and the various departments of the Office of the Vorarlberg State Government. We would also like to thank the Integration Conference members and our integration specialist Dipl.-Soz. Kenan Güngör, who is the expert coordinator for Vorarlberg's integration model, as well as his co-author Dr. Bernhard Perchinig.



Dr. Herbert Sausgruber
State Governor



Ing. Erich Schwärzler
State Councillor

Integration is a challenge that the whole of society must face together, and it needs to be approached systematically. It requires both clear concepts and plans as well as setting priorities. This integration model provides an important, future-oriented framework for our common efforts.



Dr. Kurt Fischer
State Parliament deputy,
Chair of the Integration Committee
(ÖVP – Austrian People's Party)

When we talk of integration, we usually refer to language integration. In the same breath, however, we must also require acceptance of our society's values and laws. It was important to me that “supporting” and “requiring” integration were given equal weight in this integration model. We have been successful so far. Now, it is time to act.



Dieter Egger
State Parliament deputy,
Integration spokesperson
(FPÖ – Freedom Party of Austria)

It is about time that politicians and government came to terms with the thought that integration is a two-way process requiring appropriate structures. This integration model is a policy paper in which the State of Vorarlberg recognizes that integration is the only option. The groundwork has been laid, as it were. The greatest challenge facing us now is putting the ideas into practice, particularly, those measures that have been set out and need to be implemented in the areas of education, employment, housing and health.



DSA Vahide Aydin
State Parliament deputy,
Integration spokesperson (Die
Grünen – Austrian Green Party)

While a society definitely benefits from immigration and the coexistence of people from different backgrounds, the process is never without conflict. Everybody must play his/her part to ensure the social and economic future of our state: politicians by creating adequate conditions, and citizens by taking full advantage of such opportunities.



Dr. Gabi Sprickler-Falschlunger
State Parliament deputy,
Integration spokesperson (SPÖ –
Social Democratic Party of Austria)

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Integration

Background

- Integration in Vorarlberg:
History and Current Challenges

Objectives

- Securing Fundamental Rights and Values: Living Diversity
- Facing Challenges: Realizing Potential
- Promoting and Requiring Participation in Society:
Strengthening Social Cohesion

Strategic Areas of Action

- Integration Policies in Vorarlberg: Approaches to
Consolidation, Improvement and Further Development



Background

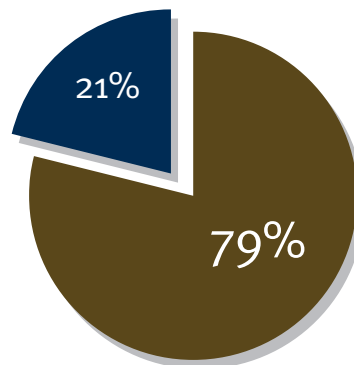
- **Vorarlberg: A State with a History of Immigration**
From Migrant Workers to a Residency and Integration Model
- **Integration in Vorarlberg: Developments and Challenges**
From an Industrial Society to a Service and Information Society
Vorarlberg: The Education State
Integration Policies and Integration Work

Vorarlberg: A State with a History of Immigration

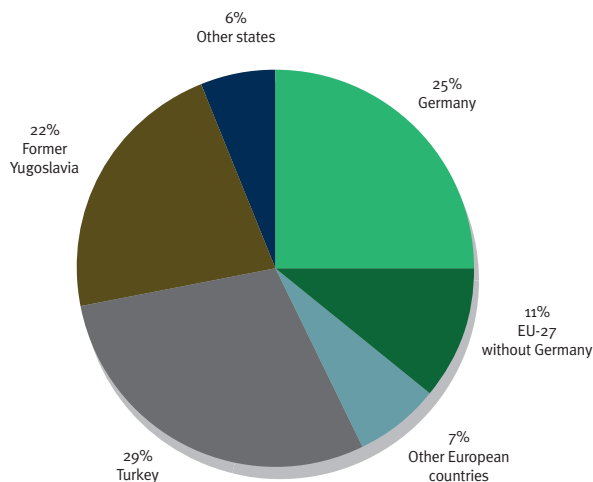
Vorarlberg is a dynamic region that has enjoyed demographic and economic growth for decades. Immigration has always been part of this growth. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the construction of the Arlberg railway and the first large hydroelectric power stations as well as the textile industry attracted workers from other regions of the monarchy or from Italy to Vorarlberg. Around 1900, up to 40% of the population in towns with large textile mills spoke Italian.

From the middle of the twentieth century, the largest immigrant groups came from South Tyrol, Carinthia and Styria. From the end of the 1960s and into the 1990s, there was a strong influx of immigrants from former Yugoslavia and Tur-

key. In recent decades, Vorarlberg also became a new home to refugees from various countries and regions, e.g. Bosnia, Kosovo and Chechnya.



Percentage of the population with ethnic backgrounds compared to the total population of Vorarlberg (2008)



Foreign nationals with a primary residence in Vorarlberg (reference date: 31/03/2010)

The number of EU citizens living in Vorarlberg grew as a result of Austria's membership of the EU and the enlargement of the EU. German citizens comprise the largest group of EU nationals. Immigration from former Yugoslavia, Turkey and other states, however, continued to decrease. In regards to countries of origin, native languages, social backgrounds and education, immigration to Vorarlberg is as diverse as never before.

As it is becoming increasingly difficult for individual countries to meet their needs for qualified workers, migration within Europe will be the rule, while the number of immigrants from other countries ("third countries") will continue to decrease. This new form of immigration is characterized by great mobility and less long-term residency by migrants.

From Migrant Workers to a Residency and Integration Model

The integration challenges facing us today are largely a result of two aspects of immigration history:

- The migrant workers recruited for the Austrian workforce from the 1960s onwards were mostly less well-qualified temporary workers who were required to do heavy manual work or simple tasks.
- Through their work they made an important contribution to Austria's economic upturn.
- The general and long held opinion of migrant workers – as well as that of Austrian policy makers – was that they would soon return to their home countries.
- This "repatriation illusion" meant that for a long time no integration measures were taken.

The present challenge is to make a concerted effort to rectify past immigration policies as well as to integrate new immigrants early on.

Integration in Vorarlberg: Current Developments and Challenges

The Service and Information Society

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, industry was an important reason for immigration. Today, the demand for less qualified workers in trade and industry continues to decrease. Businesses that have remained in Vorarlberg mostly require highly qualified and skilled employees with specialist education who are willing to do further training. A good

command of German and other foreign languages is becoming increasingly important in certain sectors and fields of business. A similar trend is also evident in the service sector, in which the demand for qualified staff with a good command of German has grown in past years.

Vorarlberg: The Education State

Education is an important resource for both industry and the service sector. If we are to secure Vorarlberg's future, we need to utilize the educational potential of the entire population of Vorarlberg.

The educational level of first generation migrant workers, which was often poor, has also had a negative effect on their children's educational performance. A great deal of potential is therefore wasted. Not only does this hurt those directly affected, it also slows down the future development of the state.

Many of Vorarlberg's adult education institutions, kindergartens, schools and other educational institutions have already taken measures to support people of ethnic backgrounds. These measures will have to be increased and refined if participation in education is to grow and the educational potential of immigrants and their children is to be better utilized.

Many immigrants have school and professional qualifications from their countries of origin which are often not recognized. This also results in the loss of important educational resources.

Greyer and More Colourful: Demographic Aging and Immigration

Demographic aging and a decreasing working population throughout the whole of Europe are irreversible facts. From

2016, those over forty-five will constitute the largest group in Vorarlberg's workforce. The number of people over sixty in proportion to the total population will noticeably increase in the following years.


Vorarlberg is, however, not only becoming greyer, it is also becoming more colourful due to the past and future immigration of younger people, in particular, who start families here. As a result, the number of people of ethnic backgrounds in proportion to the younger population and the workforce will continue to increase in the future.

Integration Policy Requirements

The primary role of modern welfare states is to provide and ensure equal opportunities and possibilities for self-fulfilment for their citizens. However, it is the responsibility of each individual to make use of these. Long-term immigration and temporary migration are a normal part of today's dynamic societies. Modern integration policies cannot be treated as isolated programmes. They are perceived as an integral part of social policies, institutionalized and shaped, and they address the following key issues:

- Targeted promotion of both access to education and social advancement through education
- Improved equal opportunities
- Improved awareness of structural disadvantages
- Increased personal responsibility of immigrants for integration matters



A magnifying glass is positioned over an open dictionary. The lens is centered on the word 'immigration', which is printed in a large, bold, serif font. The text around the lens is slightly blurred, showing other dictionary entries. The magnifying glass has a silver-colored handle and frame.

a person who comes
foreign country in order

immigration

of coming to a foreign
in order to settle there

Objectives

- Securing Fundamental Rights and Values: Living Diversity
- Facing Challenges: Realizing Potential
- Supporting and Requiring Participation in Society: Strengthening Social Cohesion

Securing Fundamental Rights and Values: Living Diversity

Vorarlberg: A Home for Everyone

By combining prevailing customs and ways of life with new diversity, Vorarlberg is able to offer everyone living here a place they can call home. The state has the ability to embrace and provide space for many different ways of life. The interplay of tradition and modern ways of life and work creates social and cultural diversity.

Thanks to this diversity, Vorarlberg has demonstrated a tremendous capacity to integrate throughout its history. Integration in Vorarlberg is, among other things, based on common values: a respect for people's efforts and hard

work, commitment in social interaction and a common responsibility for the future. Observing traditions and making them accessible to immigrants – as elements of integration – is just as important as being open to the cultures of new immigrants.

Appreciation of Diversity

In a modern and open society, freedom and tolerance involve recognizing and appreciating different values, ways of life and lifestyles. Diversity should be more than just living and working side by side. It should result in a productive exchange of experiences and in the acceptance of differences. This requires mutual respect as well as the willingness and the encouragement to engage in dialogue. However, it also means that citizens of ethnic backgrounds are able to keep

their own customs and ways of life that are worth keeping, while at the same time actively involving themselves in and adapting in some measure to the customs, practices and realities of living in this region.

Fundamental Values and Rights as a Common Basis

A pluralistic and tolerant society requires consensus on fundamental values and rights. These serve a double function in the integration process: they allow people to realize their individual ways of life, but they also set limits.

Fundamental Rights and Values

- Acceptance of democratic decisions and the rule of law
- Freedom of expression
- Respect for the person and dignity of every individual
- Non-violence
- Equal opportunities for both sexes in all areas of life

Not all aspects of life can, however, be governed by law, nor should they be. Unwritten rules and the everyday things we take for granted have to be negotiated on an individual basis.

On the one hand, we should strive for a balance between good relations and a trouble-free coexistence, in which there is space for one's own culture. The development of social environments and possible parallel structures, on the other hand, which may result in isolation and marginalization, are problematic.

Facing Challenges: Realizing Potential

Taking Challenges Seriously and Tackling Them in a Future-Oriented Manner

The difficulties facing integration should not be ignored, nor should they be glossed over or exaggerated. They need to be tackled with appropriate foresight and due consideration. This means that we can draw on the experiences, motivation, knowledge, skills and working potential of both immigrants and their children as well as of native Vorarlbergers. From this perspective, growing diversity no longer seems to be a threat, but a challenge full of diverse potential and possibilities for growth.

Realizing and Utilizing Potential

Controlled immigration provides new impulses and perspectives. Immigrants' language and cultural skills are important building blocks for the future. Multilingualism and access to other cultures are valuable additions to Vorarlberg's linguistic and cultural knowledge.

Vorarlberg benefits from immigration: multilingualism, knowledge, special skills, ideas, creativity, work performance and a love of life. Productive interaction with cultural diversity has a significant impact on economic and social development and is itself becoming a "soft location factor" for this region.

Assuming Responsibility Together

The opportunities arising from controlled immigration first need to be realized. Vorarlberg, as the host state, has the task of recognizing immigrants' abilities and skills. Furthermore, immigrants need to be provided with the resources





to acquire the necessary know-how for living here. Immigrants themselves are responsible for making the most of such opportunities and options. Through their actions they utilize their potential for both their own advancement and that of the state and thereby assume joint responsibility for a common future. The prerequisites are that they know the language of the country, possess basic knowledge of how the society functions and are willing to acquaint themselves with the institutions and rules of communal life by participating in it.

Supporting and Requiring Participation in Society: Strengthening Social Cohesion

Supporting and Requiring Participation, Language and Individual Initiative

Securing one's livelihood, finding a suitable living space and having assured access to education, health and social services are vital prerequisites for individuals to find their place in society.

An important part of integration takes place in public institutions, such as kindergartens, schools, youth centres, health and care centres as well as at sports facilities and cultural institutions. Participation in the above institutions creates a sense of common concerns and makes an important contribution to ensuring social cohesion, regardless of a person's interests, lifestyle and religious or political convictions. Institutions catering to specific groups and religious denominations may have a long history in, for example, the education and social sectors. However, a more pragmatic approach to working and living together promises greater success than strict separation.

Opening Up Public Institutions

Growing social and cultural diversity should also be evident in public institutions. In order to continue to ensure high levels of service for everyone, these institutions should increasingly focus on serving different needs in the future.

Employees possessing intercultural skills (hired with respect to equal opportunities for all) and having access to relevant professional training opportunities improve the quality of the integration services offered by institutions. Such a development strategy recognizes existing social and cultural differences. Furthermore, employees with ethnic backgrounds in the public sector send a clear message that immigrants are accepted by society and that they have real opportunities to socially advance and participate in society.

Immigrants are also encouraged to participate in and contribute to various public institutions and their development.

Fighting Disadvantages

Disadvantages, unequal treatment and marginalization have diverse social and structural causes. Real or perceived disadvantages pose a threat to social cohesion and impact the developmental potential of both individuals and different groups living in Vorarlberg. Transparent access to social resources and effective measures against discrimination send a strong signal against marginalization. They show that success is not determined by a person's origin or skin colour but by skills and hard work.



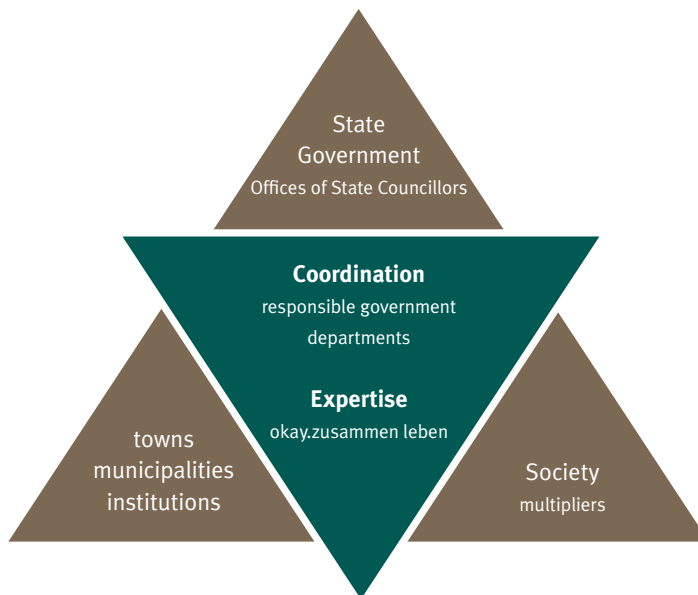
Strategic Areas of Action

- Integration Policies in Vorarlberg
- Language and Education
- The Economy and the Job Market: Access and Advancement
- Health and Social Services
- Living Together: Housing, Neighbourhood, Free Time and Socializing
- Culture and Religion
- Participation and Partnership

Integration Policies at the Government Level

Policies and Administration

Integration is something that affects us all and covers a broad number of policy areas and administrative departments. Good management and coordination of the numerous offers, activities and institutions relating to integration require both well-defined political and organizational areas of responsibility and structures at the government level. Active integration policies should focus on the key fields of children, youth, women and families.



Political and Social Interfaces

For integration policies to be successful, communication that raises awareness and interfaces with civil society are particularly important. These allow the government administration to profit from integration work as practiced and facilitate broad, cross-party support for integration policies. Political negotiations about goals and their realization are conducted with the parties represented in the State Parliament via their integration spokespersons.

The inclusion of expert organizations, such as the project group okay.zusammen leben and other citizens' initiatives, provides integration policies with a broad base of realistic support.

Cooperation between the Offices of State Councillors and the Integration Conference provides an interface between government, the government administration and civil society. The Integration Conference serves to promote dialogue and to identify future topics and areas for action. As a permanent body, the Conference consists of representatives from politics, government administration, immigrants and interest groups, relevant NGOs as well as other important agencies.

Language and Education

Integration in Educational Institutions

Immigrants and members of other social groups that underachieve at school are not always able to realize their full potential in our education system. One fundamental goal is therefore to promote the educational advancement of the entire population as best as possible. Educational institutions are supported by all stakeholders – kindergartens, schools, instructors and parents – cooperating constructively.

A proactive approach that benefits society in two ways is important. Investing in today's educational integration pays off in the form of productive skills and reduces the costs for later integration measures.

Promotion of Gifted School Children and Careers Advice

The potential of gifted school children of ethnic backgrounds is currently not being sufficiently utilized. Too few of these children attend secondary schools.

On the one hand, educational advancement depends upon opening up education institutions and, on the other hand, increasing a family's knowledge about educational options. This also requires outside support. Besides financial constraints, one large hurdle is the fact that, to some extent, parents do not have a clear idea about educational goals, nor do they have the necessary knowledge about the education system. Important steps are the current developments in immigrant communities to promote educational endeavours through providing information and support for parents.

Language Acquisition and Language Support for Children and Young Adults

Being able to speak the language of the country in which one lives is a crucial factor in all areas of life. Promoting language acquisition for children and young adults (and adults) is therefore a key element of integration policies.

Varied successful examples in Vorarlberg illustrate that preschools and schools are important places for language acquisition. A goal-oriented approach to the education and training of kindergarten teachers and school-teachers in German as a second language is a prerequisite for successful language learning.

Immigration entails multilingualism. The importance of multilingualism for individual, economic and social development is well documented. Appreciation and promotion of multilingualism are a sound investment in the future.

Supporting and Requiring Language Acquisition for Adults too

In addition to the Integration Agreement, adults who recently immigrated to Vorarlberg should be motivated and required to learn the language of the country as well as they can and to acquaint themselves with the state's customs as early as possible.

While integration courses and German language courses are not planned for EU immigrants and their families, they – just as those immigrants who have been living here for a long time – should be encouraged to take advantage of the language and integration support offered.

The Economy and the Job Market: Access and Advancement

Integration of Young Immigrants in the Job Market

The education of young adults of ethnic backgrounds often limits their optimal career choices. In order to improve their chances when entering the job market, young adults should be given good advice, support and receive assistance from mentors. Young adults without school-leaving or training certificates should have access to services allowing them to gain further qualifications. Careers advice, in which the parents are involved, should be intensified.

Recognition of Educational Qualifications

Immigrants with foreign qualifications often face the problem that their qualifications are either not or only partially recognized, or are only recognized after a complicated process. Valuable human capital is therefore wasted and lost. In order to better utilize this knowledge, the process of recognition should be improved and simplified.

Businesses would profit from knowing that applicants have the same skills as local school leavers or college and university graduates. Jobseekers would also have an easier time finding a job that corresponds to their qualifications.

Health and Social Services

Care, Support and Security

Quite a number of immigrants suffer from more serious health and social problems due to the psychological and physical stress caused by work and immigration as well as by socio-cultural differences. Therefore current preventative health services should be evaluated and adapted. A poor command of German, inadequate information and different approaches to sickness and health result in additional barriers to good health care. In order to ease their day-to-day work, health care professionals should also receive further training and be sensitized to the needs of immigrants. As a counteractive measure, particular attention should be given to children, young adults and families of ethnic backgrounds, who are at greater risk of poverty.

Growing Old in a Foreign Country

Many immigrants who came to Austria as migrant workers have either reached retirement age or will soon be retiring. For the most part, they used to do hard manual labour and, as a consequence, suffer from health problems and have smaller pensions. Meanwhile, most immigrants spend the majority of their retirement in Austria. As immigrant families become more acculturated they adopt Austrian family structures and role models: more and more former extended families are becoming small nuclear families. That is why the need for organized and institutional geriatric care and support is also increasing among families of ethnic backgrounds.

Living Together: Housing, Neighbourhood, Free Time and Socializing

Living Together as Neighbours

In comparison with large metropolitan centres, Vorarlberg does not have any urban districts with very high numbers of immigrants. Integration primarily takes place in one's neighbourhood. That is why a targeted policy of municipal and housing estate developments, taking the social and ethnic backgrounds of inhabitants into consideration, can improve the parameters for individual integration.

Work on Housing Estates and Conflict Resolution

Living quality is not just simply determined by furnishings, but also by the infrastructure and a residential area's image. It is also influenced by the presence of public spaces, such as adequately maintained green areas, well-designed playgrounds and other open spaces.

Opportunities and help for people to socialize while going about their daily business as well as for creating neighbourhood networks are particularly important for upgrading residential areas. Even consciously making an effort to greet each other may, for example, intensify social contacts within neighbourhoods.

Social Integration and Solving Conflicts Together

Vorarlberg's housing promotion guidelines state that municipalities should keep social integration in mind when allocating housing.

It should even be possible to draw on culturally sensitive and inter-cultural conflict mediation services on housing estates whose social makeup has clearly been changed by immigration in a relatively short period of time. Open youth work will also play an important role in organizing free-time activities and mediation.

People in a neighbourhood, including children and young adults, are integrated into the local community as partners and work together to improve communal life.

Culture and Religion

Cultural Policies and Cultural Institutions

Vorarlberg has been actively promoting immigrant culture for a long time. Integration in the cultural sector means ensuring

that immigrants, their culture and views are seen and heard in Vorarlberg's cultural landscape. This creates opportunities for fostering cultural identity through people meeting, getting to know and learn about each other as well as engaging in dialogue. Besides the cultural needs that they share with other groups, immigrants also have their own cultural needs, including, for example, speaking and maintaining their native language or observing certain holidays.

Religious Freedom and Religious Diversity

In the past decades, immigration to Vorarlberg has seen a rise in the diverse number of religions practiced in the state, putting religion increasingly into the centre of public interest. The Austrian Constitution ensures the freedom of religious expression by all members of a religious community recognized by the state. Religious freedom is only curtailed when religious interests conflict with the Austrian Constitution. The secular state is the guarantor of the constitution, and acceptance of it is the only basis for safe and respectful coexistence in a religiously diverse society.

Recognizing and Encountering Other Religions

Religious diversity entails recognizing and encountering other religions as well as being willing to interact with them respectfully. Religions can give people a sense of home in a society that is made up of different social, cultural and religious groups.

Religious communities in Austria are represented on numerous boards that shape our society, for example, at the level of local government, in formulating social policies or on ethics committees. These structures should be opened up further in order to include new religious communities so that these can also actively participate in shaping our society as well as voicing and exchanging their opinions. Inclusion



increases knowledge about social networks in new religious communities and creates additional opportunities for dialogue.

Participation and Partnerships

Working on Integration Together

Integration policies can only be successful if immigrants are engaged in the process. With this in mind, increasing numbers of immigrant organizations in Vorarlberg are focusing their attention on encouraging greater participation in life here in their country of immigration. More and more immigrants are also trying to integrate themselves to a greater extent, both professionally and socially. This development is positive and should be given the credit it deserves.

Supporting Individual Initiatives and Involving Citizens

Integration is only possible through cooperation and participation. Civil society's cooperation with immigrants can be im-

proved through supporting individual initiatives, establishing spaces for communication as well as searching for bridge builders between immigrants and long-standing residents. This demonstrates social recognition and increases identification with the municipality and the state. Throughout the past years, there has been a series of important initiatives in a number of municipalities promoting dialogue and cooperation between locals and immigrants, such as discussion forums or integration models. Integration also profits from the Vorarlberg tradition of citizen activism in public life and of addressing social concerns early on. There are already a number of models for successful cooperation between public institutions and civil society. The continuous development of these initiatives is an important aspect of the Vorarlberg integration model.

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The long version of the Integration Model of the State of Vorarlberg can be downloaded at www.vorarlberg.at/integration or ordered by phoning T 05574/511-24105

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