



*Governing Urban Diversity:
Creating Social Cohesion, Social Mobility and Economic Performance in Today's Hyper-diversified Cities*

Urban Policies on Diversity in Zürich, Switzerland

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1 Introduction

The main objective of the present chapter is to explore the conceptions and understandings of 'diversity' while critically deconstructing and assessing the core urban policy strategies and programmes that are associated with the discourse on diversity in the city of Zurich. Through the review and the critical analysis of key public policies, the principal discourses on diversity shall be uncovered and reflected. Thereby, it is explored whether diversity is perceived in a positive or a negative way, what aspects of diversity are highlighted or addressed, if there is a significant discrepancy between the different state levels regarding the use and the perception of diversity, and what implications the understanding and the interpretation of diversity have on the outcomes of the investigated policies.

In Switzerland, there is no explicit policy strategy on diversity, but the term is certainly used in political practice. The concept of diversity has its closest connection to the field of integration policy and is of further relevance for public community work and urban housing policy. Therefore, the use of the concept of diversity in Switzerland mainly relates to cultural and ethnic aspects as well as to immigration issues. The present chapter thus focuses on these policy fields and investigates the main discourses on diversity therein.

The research method for this chapter is based on a qualitative approach and involves documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews. The documentary analysis drew on relevant legal documents, strategy papers, annual reports and results of earlier research on the topic. Interviews were conducted with selected relevant actors from different levels of the public administration responsible for integration policy or other diversity-related matters, as well as with representatives of non-governmental organisations in the field of diversity and integration policy (a list of interviewees is provided in the appendix). The fieldwork was carried out from August until October 2013.

The main results of the analysis regarding the discourse on diversity of the public authorities in Switzerland are threefold. First, the focus of the debate lies on cultural and ethnic aspects of diversity, which carries the danger of neglecting socio-economic inequalities in society. Socio-economic diversity is arguably far more relevant and challenging with respect to the three overarching objectives investigated by the DIVERCITIES project – strengthening social cohesion, boosting economic performance and enhancing social mobility. Second, there is a clear emphasis in the discourse upon the integration of immigrants into the labour market and their contribution to the economy. Immigration per se is mainly perceived as positive, but cultural diversity is often seen in economic terms only, which does not necessarily contribute to a better social integration of immigrants. Third, regarding the understanding and the use of the concept of diversity, there are clear ideological differences between the city of Zurich and higher state levels. In contrast to the national and the cantonal policy, the city frequently uses the term 'diversity', and it does so in a more open, comprehensive and positive manner.

The chapter is structured around four main sections. Following this brief introduction, the second section provides an overview of the political system of Switzerland and the diversity-related governance structure in Zurich. It also reviews the key phases in the national discourse on diversity and immigration. In the third section, a critical analysis of policy strategies and resource allocations is presented that focuses on integration policy and, to a lesser extent, on the fields of community work and housing policy in the city of Zurich. Furthermore, non-governmental views on integration policy and diversity are introduced. Finally, the conclusions are set out in the fourth section.

2 Overview of the political system and governance structure

2.1 Governance structure and institutional map

In Swiss federalism – as in other federalist countries – the cantons represent the key players in most policy fields (Kübler et al., 2003). Urban policies that have a relation to the concept of diversity – such as migration, integration, education or spatial development – are mainly the responsibility of the cantons. In the cantonal administration of Zurich, there are four offices that explicitly deal with such issues: the cantonal integration office, the office of municipalities, the office for spatial development and the office of elementary education.

However, the confederation intervenes in the cantonal policy formulation by establishing overarching policy strategies linked with financial incentives and the provision of technical expertise. With the revision of the federal constitution in 1999, an article has been amended adding weight and authority to cities and metropolitan areas and their specific problems and needs (art. 50 para. 3). This article was the basis for a stronger strategic engagement of the confederation regarding urban policies. On the one hand, new structures for vertical cooperation between confederation, cantons and cities have been established, such as the ‘Tripartite Conference on Agglomerations’. On the other, the federal administration created so called pilot projects (*Modellvorhaben*) in the field of urban policies providing financial support to participating cantons and communes. Federal offices with a certain relation to societal diversity issues and to diversity policies on a city, district or neighbourhood level mainly comprise the Federal Office of Housing, the Federal Office for Spatial Development and the Federal Office for Migration.

At the metropolitan level, the Zurich Metropolitan Conference acts as a communication platform regarding questions on cultural diversity and integration, amongst others. It is organised as an association and comprises approximately eight cantons and 110 communes as members (Metropolitankonferenz Zürich, 2012). Since metropolitan areas in Switzerland are highly institutionally fragmented and socially segregated, voluntary policy-orientated cooperation often is the only effective form of governance and therefore widely implemented (Kübler et al., 2005). Furthermore, there are significant differences in the political orientation between the core cities and the surrounding communes, which often hinder decision-making within the metropolitan associations. As Kübler and Scheuss (2005) have shown, a threefold spatial-political cleavage has emerged within Swiss metropolitan areas. In core cities, ideological preferences are to the left and mostly in favour of classic unionist leftism and protectionism. In the poor suburbs we find preferences that relate to national conservatism and authoritarianism, while the low-density and middle-class suburbs tend towards right-wing liberalism. So, regarding issues of immigration and integration, the Zurich Metropolitan Conference performs a function as a think-tank that discusses and brings forward immigration-related issues and measures. Currently, a report has been completed investigating the effects of immigration-related population growth on the metropolitan area and demonstrating the resulting courses of action (Metropolitankonferenz Zürich, 2013).

The communes, the lowest level of the political system in Switzerland, enjoy considerable autonomy, which mainly consists of the right of local self-administration and the right to enact own legal norms (Häfelin and Haller, 2001: 278). The degree of autonomy is dependent on cantonal legislation, but in all cases it involves levying local taxes. At the neighbourhood level, it is mainly the responsibility of the respective city to develop and implement policy programmes. In the city administration of Zurich, there are four offices that are mainly involved in diversity issues: the office for social services, the office for urban development, the unit for the promotion of integration and the office for urbanism. However, during the last years and decades, the communes’ autonomy has come under considerable strain, as many mainly operational tasks have been dele-

gated to them – within the context of cantonal attempts to disentangle the allocation of tasks to cantonal and communal levels – and the dependency on higher state levels has increased (Ladner et al., 2000: 47). Especially in metropolitan areas, owing to the increased interventions of the cantonal authorities, the municipalities' financial and legal room for manoeuvre has been reduced (Kübler et al., 2005: 173).

At the neighbourhood or district level in Switzerland, we often find neighbourhood associations and local trade associations that influence the communal life and social cohesion. These associations are more and more consulted and integrated by the city authorities in the planning of community projects. In around 42% of all Swiss cities, the instrument of participatory urban planning – the involvement of citizens and neighbourhood associations in decision-making processes – has been implemented in the last years (Ladner et al., 2000).

As a typical consensus system (Lijphart, 1999), Switzerland is relatively open to different groups of the society or the business world. Regarding migrants, however, there is no strong, national, consolidated association representing different ethnic or linguistic groups. At different scales, we find diverse organisations constituted according to country of origin or religious affiliation. But these groups do not substantially influence the discourse on diversity. Migrants enjoy most influence on the political process at the communal level. In nearly all cantons in the French-speaking part of Switzerland (with exception of the canton of Valais), foreigners are allowed to vote at the communal scale.¹ In the city of Zurich, there has been implemented a Foreigners' Council in 2005. This council is a representative of the migrant population in Zurich and acts as an advisory commission to the city government.

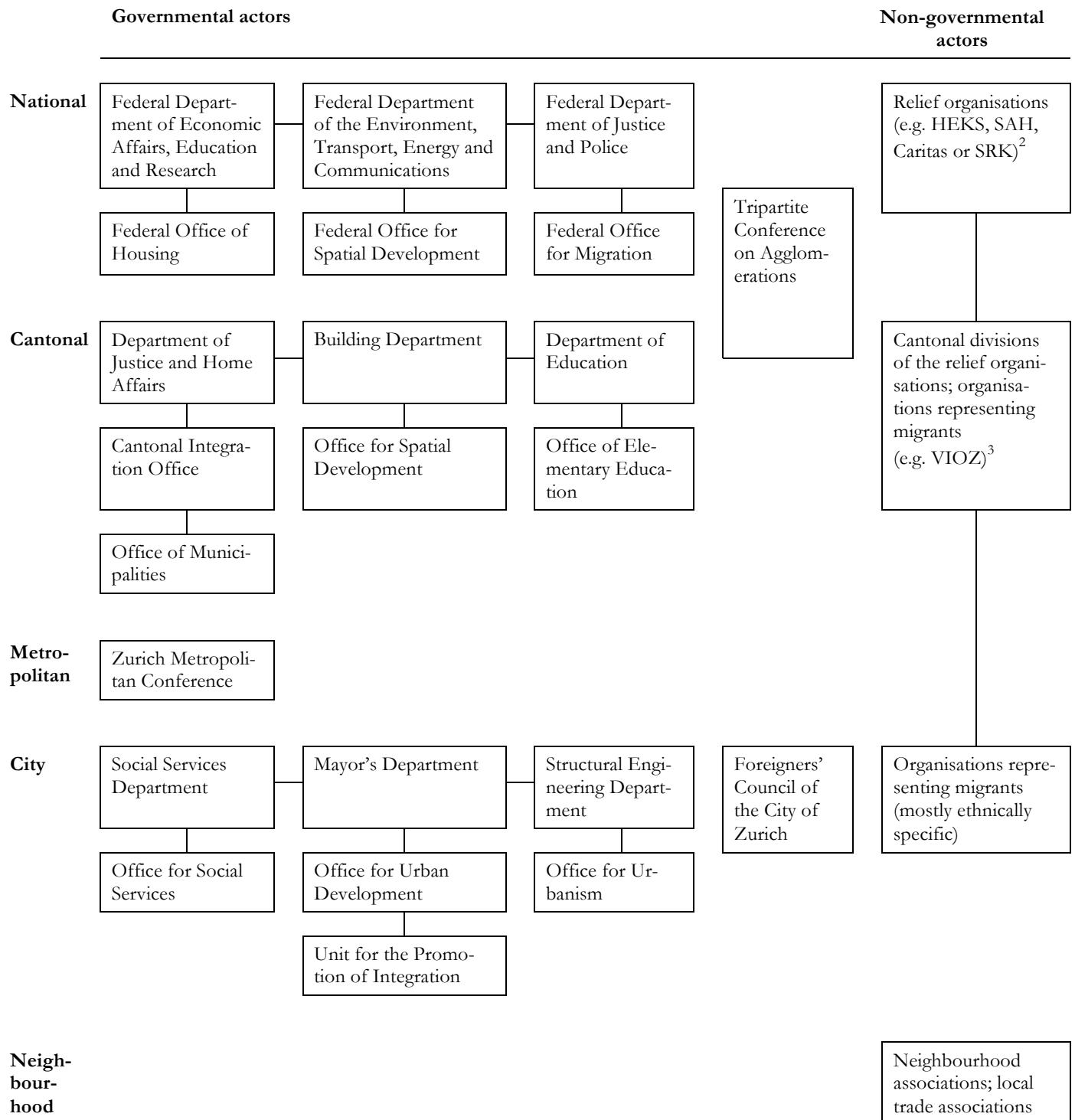
Figure 1 on the next page illustrates the formal and informal institutions in Switzerland that are relevant in shaping urban policies in Zurich and influencing the policy discourses on diversity.

2.2 Key shifts in national approaches to policy over migration, citizenship and diversity

Switzerland with its four linguistic regions is often considered a multi-national state or a 'nation of will' (because of its cultural heterogeneity) with different ethnic groups that live peacefully together. Although Switzerland is proud of its multi-cultural roots, it is also quite defensive regarding immigration and established a rather restrictive naturalisation policy. Switzerland like many other Germanic countries belongs to the *jus-sanguinis* group, where citizenship is traditionally transmitted by inheritance (the "blood"). In such countries immigrants' access to nationality is more difficult than in *jus-soli* countries such as France, where nationality is bound to the soil on which a person is born (Manatschal, 2011). However, the design and character of integration policies differ between Swiss cantons and are related to their cultural linguistic background and their respective understanding of citizenship and belonging. More specifically, German-speaking cantons are assumed to be influenced by Germany's *jus sanguinis* tradition, exhibiting thereby more restrictive integration policies than French-speaking cantons, which are in turn expected to be influenced by France's more inclusive *jus soli* understanding of citizenship (*ibid.*). The integration regime in the Canton of Zurich can be located in the centre of a scale ranging between very restrictive and very liberal types (*ibid.*).

¹ Foreigners also enjoy the right to vote at the cantonal level in the cantons of Jura and Neuchâtel.

Figure 1: Institutional map of the governance structure with respect to urban policies



² Abbreviations: HEKS: Swiss Interchurch Aid (*Hilfswerk der Evangelischen Kirchen Schweiz*); SAH: Swiss Worker's Aid (*Schweizerisches Arbeiterhilfswerk*); SRK: Swiss Red Cross (*Schweizerisches Rotes Kreuz*).

³ Abbreviation: VIOZ: Union of Islamic Societies in Zurich (*Vereinigung der Islamischen Organisationen in Zürich*).

In comparison with other European countries, Switzerland has a high resident foreign population of more than 20%. Switzerland is an immigration country: since the Second World War, approx. two million people have immigrated to Switzerland or do live here as descendants of immigrants (Runder Tisch Migration, 2011). A quarter of the current population thus immigrated since 1945 or has a migrant background (TAK, 2005). Migration enhances the population growth in Switzerland more strongly than in typical immigration countries like Canada or the US. Without migration, the population in Switzerland would be declining (*ibid.*).

The strong economic development after the Second World War stimulated the demand for foreign employees – especially from Italy. The Swiss government provided for most of these migrants only a temporary residence permit – as so called seasonal workers or migrant workers (D’Amato, 2008). The foreign employees made a strong contribution to the economic development and the growing prosperity in Switzerland. However, the quickly increasing size of the foreign population provoked the first defensive reactions in the Swiss population. As the economic boom lasted for many years, the conditions for migrant workers have been improved in the 1960s – due to the continuously rising labour demand and the socio-political claims of the countries of origin (*ibid.*). In the 1970s, the oil crisis led to a decrease in the number of foreign workers. But as the economic situation recovered, new seasonal workers were recruited from Spain, Portugal and Turkey (*ibid.*). In the 1990s, Switzerland then witnessed comparably high numbers of immigrants from the countries of former Yugoslavia. With the beginning of the 21st century and the ‘Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons’ between the European Union and Switzerland, immigration has changed: a substantial part of the foreign population in Switzerland is now well trained and highly qualified. Immigration today is thus very heterogeneous and differs across cantons and cities.

With the agreement on the free movement of persons that came into force in 2002, immigration policies have changed significantly: Switzerland imposed a stratified system of immigrant rights – differentiating between citizens of the EU and EFTA and citizens of other states (Riño and Wastl-Walter, 2006). Thereby, many social problems of the immigrant population from non-EU/EFTA countries are ascribed to deficits regarding their integration, although their difficult situation is principally affected by socio-economic status and less by origin (Prodoliet, 2006).

In 2005, a new federal law on foreign nationals⁴ was enacted regulating the admission and the period of stay of immigrants from non-EU/EFTA countries (and except for refugees that were granted asylum). A core element of the new federal act is the concept of ‘integration’. Already in 1998, the former act had been revised in order to financially support cantonal and communal integration measures, and in 2000, a regulation on the integration of foreign nationals had come into force.⁵ The strategy of this new integration policy is to combine rights and obligations concerning foreign nationals (Tov et al., 2010). The Swiss cantons are now entitled to set conditions for issuing or prolonging a residence permit. This condition is called an ‘integration agreement’ between the persons concerned and the cantonal administration. It regulates the reduction of ‘integration deficits’ regarding, for example, language skills, education, labour situation, knowledge of the Swiss political system, obedience to Swiss law, etc. (*ibid.*). In 2007, the regulation on the integration of foreign nationals has been revised according to the new law and comprises now an additional paragraph on these integration agreements.⁶

⁴ Federal Act on Foreign Nationals (Foreign Nationals Act, FNA) of December 16, 2005.

⁵ Regulation on the Integration of Foreign Nationals (VIntA) of September 13, 2000.

⁶ Regulation on the Integration of Foreign Nationals (VIntA) of October 24, 2007.

The new idea of integration might be associated with a welcoming and open approach – in contrast to earlier claims for assimilation. But the message stays the same: immigrants – especially from non-EU/EFTA countries – need to culturally assimilate to the Swiss context (Tov et al. 2010). In the two-dimensional framework of integration regimes developed by Koopmans et al. (2005) distinguishing between assimilationist, segregationist, universalist and multicultural regimes, Switzerland is considered strongly assimilationist, which can be seen as the most exclusive or restrictive type (Manatschal, 2011). Thereby, immigration policies heavily differ between citizens of the EU and EFTA and citizens of other states.

One of the most influential political discourses regarding immigration during the last decades emphasizes that excessive numbers of foreigners threaten Swiss identity (Riaño and Wastl-Walter, 2006). In the 1990s, right-wing parties started running anti-immigration campaigns and propagandized against the relaxation of conditions for the naturalisation of foreigners and especially fanning fears regarding the Muslim population in Switzerland. In November 2009, the Swiss people and cantons voted in favour of the popular initiative entitled ‘Against the Construction of Minarets’. In doing so, they also voiced their approval of a new provision in the Swiss constitution: ‘The construction of minarets is prohibited’ (art. 72 para. 3). This decision is a clear statement against the Muslim population in Switzerland – it does, however, not affect the four existing minarets in Zurich, Geneva, Winterthur and Wangen. Along with the free movement of persons, the so called ‘new immigration’ of highly qualified European immigrants – mainly from Germany – triggered some resentment in the Swiss middle class who is afraid of a potential social decline.

In February 2014, people and cantons now have approved the popular initiative ‘Stop Mass Immigration’, which calls for a significant change in immigration policy. The initiative demands the implementation of quotas for permits issued to foreigners and asylum seekers and wants to go back to a policy of admission restrictions and contingents. The corresponding modification of the Swiss constitution (art. 121a) contravenes the agreement on the free movement of persons – the consequences of this decision are still uncertain. But since the Swiss economy is heavily dependent on foreign workers, such an implementation of quotas is expected to have far-reaching implications on economic growth. The result of this popular vote may be seen as a reaction to the steady population growth during the last years – as a conglomerate of expressions of xenophobic tendencies, on the one hand, and of fears concerning the excessive consumption of natural resources, soil, infrastructure and living space, on the other. However, it confirms the political divide between French-speaking and German-speaking Switzerland and shows a clear urban-rural cleavage: French-speaking communes and urban areas mainly voted against quotas. The regions with the greatest diversity in cultural and ethnic terms thus rejected the initiative.

In the typology by Syrett and Sepulveda (2012), the Swiss case presumably corresponds best to the policy type ‘assimilationist policy’, where immigrants are seen as permanent, but their differences to the Swiss population should only be ‘temporary’. Policies have thus been implemented to explicitly enhance uniformity.

Table 1 on the next page provides a summary on the national political agenda on immigration.

Table 1: Summary on the national political agenda on immigration

Year / decade	Situation / event	Law / agreement	Agenda / discourse
1931		Federal Act on the Stay and the Admission of Foreign Nationals	Employer-driven; focus on admission restrictions
After World War II	Economic boom - rising demand for foreign workers		Xenophobic attitudes are spreading; discourse on 'foreign infiltration'
After 1950s	Several waves of refugees		Expressions of solidarity from the Swiss population
In the 1960s		Conditions for working migrants improve	
In the 1970s	Oil crisis – decreasing demand for foreign workers		
End of the 1970s	Economic situation recovered – demand for foreign workers increasing		
In the 1990s	Waves of immigrants and refugees from the countries of former Yugoslavia		Anti-immigration campaigns; right-wing parties are fanning fears against the Muslim population
1998		Revision of the Federal Act on the Stay and the Admission of Foreign Nationals	Insertion of an article for the financial support of integration measures
2000		Regulation on the Integration of Foreign Nationals	
2002 (into force)		Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons between the EU and Switzerland	Stratified system of immigrant rights – differentiating between citizens of the EU / EFTA and other states
Since 2002	Immigration changes: outset of the so called 'new immigration' of highly qualified European immigrants		
2005		Switzerland entered the Schengen area	
2005		Federal Act on Foreign Nationals (replacing the federal act from 1931)	Focus on integration; combining rights and obligations for immigrants; promoting integration agreements
2007		Revision of the Regulation on the Integration of Foreign Nationals	
2009		Vote in favour of the popular initiative 'Against the Construction of Minarets'	
2014		Vote in favour of the popular initiative 'Stop Mass Immigration'	

3 Critical analysis of policy strategies and assessment of resource allocations

3.1 Dominant governmental discourses of urban policy and diversity

In Switzerland, there are no policy strategies that are explicitly addressing ‘diversity’. Its German equivalent ‘Vielfalt’ is sometimes used in mission statements or concepts, but it does not have political relevance. The term under which a certain discourse on diversity takes place is ‘integration’, which will be the focus of the next sub-section. In the field of integration policy, we find some preoccupation with diversity issues, although to varying degrees depending on the state level. The discourse on diversity thus mainly tackles cultural and ethnic issues and it arises mostly in larger urban areas where cultural diversity is omnipresent and therefore on the political agenda.

Zurich is a culturally and ethnically diverse city: 31% of the city’s population are foreigners, 39% are born abroad and 61% have a migration background (Bundesamt für Statistik, 2010; Statistik Stadt Zürich, 2011). The interviewees from the city administration thus all agreed: *“Diversity is a reality in Zurich, a matter of course”* – and it has shaped city life for several decades. Generally, cultural diversity is an urban phenomenon: 85% of the foreign population in Switzerland live in metropolitan areas. Zurich, as other larger cities, is a melting pot of different cultures, languages and religions – the first public policies or approaches dealing with this diversity therefore already emerged in the 1960s. Due to the steady settlement of different cultural and ethnical groups, Zurich developed a rather open approach towards immigrants and social diversity – compared to higher state levels where the fact of dealing with integration and diversity issues arose rather hesitantly and late.

In 2007, the city council published a long-term strategy report on the development of the city that forms the basis of the spatial development strategy – the ‘Zurich Strategies 2025’. As one major challenge in the following years, the report addresses *‘the social cohesion in an urban society in terms of an integration of different social and ethnic groups and the interplay of generations’* (Stadtrat, 2011: 3). The report formulates 18 strategies in different policy fields such as education, health care, public finances or infrastructure. One area of action is thereby explicitly focussed on *‘how Zurich’s attractiveness and diversity can be guaranteed in the future as well’* (Stadtrat, 2011: 23). Within this area of action, an important strategy is labelled *‘promotion of a cosmopolitan and international spirit’* (Stadtrat, 2011: 24). To reach this goal, the city wants to maintain an active welcoming culture – new arrivals are welcomed and are informed about all aspects of the city. With its services, the city wants to meet the needs of the entire population and where necessary, official information is available in different languages. Furthermore, the city claims to participate in the development of a cosmopolitan and pragmatic integration policy at national and cantonal level. Another strategy is directed towards the *‘promotion of good co-existence’* (Stadtrat, 2011: 26). Here, the city relies on adequate social policy and housing to counter tendencies towards spatial social segregation. It ensures better integration of people with disabilities and guarantees the population a high level of security. Furthermore, it wants to create conditions for civil society engagement and vibrant neighbourhoods. A third strategy that touches the concepts of integration and diversity aims at the *‘development of a diverse residential city’* (Stadtrat, 2011: 30). Thereby, the city promotes a social mix of inhabitants in the neighbourhoods and the construction of affordable housing. Therefore, it ensures a proportion of at least 25% of its total portfolio of non-profit apartments.

In accordance with these long-term strategies, the city government formulates goals for the current legislative period. The legislative focal points 2010-2014 comprehend – amongst others – the goals of *‘developing city and neighbourhoods together’* and of an *‘early promotion of children’* (Stadtrat, 2010). Regarding the first goal, the city aims for diverse neighbourhoods with a mixed population. It

wants to sustain and strengthen the social and structural diversity of the urban neighbourhoods with specific activities, to ensure the participation of specific stakeholders and the general population in planning processes and to promote social cohesion by strengthening the engagement of civil society. The second goal of an early promotion of children supports the social and cultural integration of families especially from a socially disadvantaged environment or with low access to education.

A diverse society with a cosmopolitan spirit is obviously regarded as an important positive location factor of Zurich. Diversity is not something that should be overcome, but be guaranteed and sustained. It is called ‘*a gain and a potential that the city should benefit from with regard to shaping its future*’ (Stadt Zürich, 2012a). According to Christof Meier, the head of the specialist unit ‘promotion of integration’ of the city of Zurich:

“The city’s welcoming culture is an attitude. Actually, it is not only oriented towards foreign nationals, but it is a general statement. Besides concrete measures and activities towards the promotion of integration, the symbolic meaning of this statement is crucial. We want that one of the multiple identities of the inhabitants is associated with the city of Zurich.”

To uncover the discourse on diversity in more detail, the relevant policy strategies are presented and discussed in the following sections. Thereby, the assessment of policy strategies and programmes is mainly focussed on integration policy since this field is most directly related to the public preoccupation with diversity issues, as explored in the next sub-section. Other fields with a connection to diversity matters are public community work and housing policy and will be presented in the subsequent sub-sections.

Integration policy

The Swiss integration policy is a very good example of the functioning of federal structures and the application of the subsidiarity principle. The cantons are the key actors in this policy field, but the confederation influences the implementation by establishing and shaping incentive structures to foster the diffusion of ‘best practices’ and to advance a stronger harmonisation of cantonal legislations. The cantons act as intermediaries between the confederation and the communes where the concrete integration measures are implemented. Additionally, due to the extensive autonomy at the local level, the municipalities possess a wide scope of action regarding their integration objectives. With the current realignment of the national policy on foreigners, confederation and cantons play an even more strategic role by setting some general requirements – such as the development of an integration programme – and by co-funding the implementation of integration measures at the local level.

Zurich – as other larger cities – was directly confronted with different challenges regarding steady immigration for decades. At the same time, it was in the position – due to the high local autonomy and the right to levy taxes – to implement its own integration measures. It had sufficient resources to initiate and try out variable instruments and measures and was not reliant on the permission of the canton or the confederation. Therefore, Swiss cities – and especially Zurich – have successfully pioneered Swiss integration policy and possess now rich experience in implementing integration and diversity measures.

Further important actors in the integration policy sector are non-governmental organisations (NGOs). NGOs such as relief or aid organisations have always been highly involved in the development and implementation of integration measures and instruments. These organisations are often the first to notice the needs and problems of the migrant population. They subsequently

initiate tailored projects and programmes, which are eventually funded by the state. The implementation of integration measures is therefore rarely directly provided by government agencies, but mostly carried out by NGOs – steered by performance agreements and funded by the state.

A crucial principle of Swiss integration policy is the primacy of integration in the so called ‘standard structures’. This term stands for all institutions within the standard service provision of the state, in fields such as education, vocational training, health care or labour market (Bundesrat, 2010). Integration is understood as a cross-sectional task – as kind of integration mainstreaming – that should be performed in every area of daily life. Complementary to these standard structures, there is the ‘specific promotion of integration’ (Bundesrat, 2010). On the one hand, this specific promotion of integration aims at supporting the quality assurance in the standard structures by expertise, counselling and supervision (e.g. translation services in the public health sector). On the other hand, it aims at bridging gaps by addressing persons who have little access to the standard structures (e.g. migrant housewives or househusbands who were not educated in Switzerland, adolescents who recently arrived in Switzerland, families with young children, retired persons). These groups are in need of specific integration measures. The differentiation between integration in standard structures and the specific promotion of integration applies to all three state levels.

Integration policy at the national level⁷

Development of a national integration policy

At the national level, the formulation of an integration policy started with the revision of the ‘Federal Act on the Stay and the Admission of Foreign Nationals’ in 1998 and the insertion of an article for the financial support of integration instruments. With this legal basis, the federal government could for the first time provide financial assistance to cities and cantons that already implemented integration measures. In the year 2000, this article has been concretized in the ‘Regulation on the Integration of Foreign Nationals’. Since 2001, the federal government then provided financial contributions for the specific promotion of integration amounting to CHF 16.5 million (approx. Euro 13.4 million) per year (Bundesrat, 2010). According to the interviewed cantonal and communal integration officers: *“This new legal article was a key stimulus for the development and the advancement of integration policies and programmes.”*

In 2005, the new ‘Federal Act on Foreign Nationals’ had been enacted – comprehending a separate chapter on integration. These new directives define integration as a mutual process between the Swiss and the migrant population and aim for a better coordination of integration between all state levels (TAK, 2005). To foster the cooperation between the different state levels, the federal government drew on the ‘Tripartite Conference on Agglomerations’ (TAK) as an institutionalized political platform for the vertical cooperation between confederation, cantons and cities. In May 2005, the TAK launched the first national integration conference as an inventory of the present situation and a starting point for a long-term cooperation.

Following the developments at the national level, several cantons have implemented specific laws or regulations on integration in the last years. Generally speaking, they are in line with the national law, but they differ partially in their understanding of integration. Some cantons focus on the obligations and duties of the immigrants, other cantons put emphasis on the principle of non-

⁷ In Switzerland, there is a clear formal separation between the policy on foreigners and the policy on refugees. Integration policy only addresses foreigners who do not ask for political asylum, so all legal sources, policies or strategies regarding the policy field on refugees are not part of this chapter. However, since the creation of the Federal Office for Migration in 2005, both policy fields are united in the same office.

discrimination (TAK, 2009). Therefore, in the last years, Switzerland experienced a lively political debate on the ‘right’ and ‘proper’ integration policy, all important political parties presented position papers and in the national parliament as well as in cantonal and communal councils several political proposals and initiatives have been submitted. As a consequence, the head of the federal department of justice and police organised an integration dialogue with representatives of the cantons, where the need for action has been clearly highlighted. The dialogue showed that an advancement of the Swiss integration policy is necessary: first of all, a common understanding of integration is needed as well as an assessment and an eventual amendment or even a realignment of the integration policy (TAK, 2009).

Within the framework of the TAK, a common process for the advancement of the integration policy has been launched that resulted in a comprehensive report and nine recommendations in 2009. The recommendations comprise for instance the implementation of a nationwide address of welcome and a first general information for every newly arriving immigrant as well as stronger legal bases at all three state levels (TAK, 2009). To finance the suggested measures, substantial additional expenses are expected. This report now constitutes a common basis of the communes, the cantons and the federation towards the further development of the integration policy.

Objectives and basic principles of the integration policy

According to the federal act on foreign nationals from 2005, integration denominates a mutual process that presupposes on the one hand the willingness of foreigners and on the other hand the openness of the domestic population (art. 4 para. 3). The main objective of the integration process is a peaceful co-existence based on the values of the federal constitution and in a spirit of mutual tolerance and respect (art. 4 para. 1). Confederation, cantons and communes see as a main common integration objective the strengthening of social cohesion. To achieve this objective, integration policy rests upon four equally important basic principles: *‘realize equal opportunities, realize present potential, consider diversity and demand individual responsibility’* (BfM and KdK, 2011).

As these objectives and principles already show, the main formula of Swiss integration policy shaping all public and political debates is *‘to support and to demand’* (*‘fördern und fordern’*). On the one hand, integration policy should provide opportunities for immigrants to become part of the economic, the social and the cultural life (art. 4. para. 2). Realising equal opportunities and fostering the participation of foreigners are thereby crucial principles. On the other hand, it is regarded as necessary that immigrants make a personal contribution to their own integration. It is required that foreigners concern themselves with the societal context and the living conditions in Switzerland and, particularly, that they learn a language of the country (art. 4 para. 4). Part of this ‘demand side’ of integration policy is also the new possibility of concluding an ‘integration agreement’. The cantonal administrations are authorized to combine the issuing of a residence or work permit with certain conditions such as a language or integration course. Of course, this regulation does not have any effect regarding immigrants from EU/EFTA countries.

Diversity as a concept is thus present in the national integration discourse – diversity is understood as a *‘valuable component of society’* (BfM and KdK, 2011). However, the term is used rather reluctantly and not depicted as something worth pursuing or investing. The corresponding principle only declares to *‘consider diversity’* within integration policies. The migrant population should be integrated in the policy formulation and immigrants should generally be provided with equal opportunities.

Organisation, resources and measures

At the national level, the Federal Office for Migration is responsible for all matters covered by legislation on foreign nationals in Switzerland. Cantons and cities have also established integration offices that provide counselling, information, coordination and promotion of integration. The cantonal integration officers are the formal contact persons for the Federal Office for Migration. Furthermore, all integration officers are organised in the 'Conference of the Communal and Cantonal Integration Officers'. In the political sphere, the horizontal and vertical coordination of integration policy takes place within the 'Tripartite Conference on Agglomerations' (TAK) and the 'Conference of the Cantonal Governments' (KdK).

Regarding the integration in the standard structures, the federal government aims at better rooting and stabilizing integration policy as a core public task (Bundesrat, 2010). In 2007, a package of measures was adopted that should improve integration activities in the present standard structures. Furthermore, the federal government recommends the amendment of several federal acts in order to create the legal bases for appropriate integration measures and to attach the principle of non-discrimination. Due to the federal state structure and the thematic broadness of integration, numerous actors are responsible for integration issues, the delimitations of these fields are not always clear and the resources for integration activities within the standard structures cannot be stated properly.

With respect to the specific promotion of integration, structures, tasks and resources are more evident. Along with the implementation of the new federal act on foreign nationals comes a paradigm change regarding the roles of the confederation and the cantons and their funding of integration measures. The federal government does not finance concrete integration measures any longer, but takes up a more strategic role (BfM and KdK, 2011). The federal funds for integration go directly to the cantons – linked with the obligation of a cantonal integration programme and of a 50% co-financing of the programme by the canton. The confederation therefore defined three crucial pillars of the specific promotion of integration (BfM and KdK, 2011):

1. information and counselling (e.g. address of welcome and first general information for newly arriving immigrants)
2. education and labour (e.g. language courses)
3. mutual understanding and societal integration (e.g. translation services)

If cantonal governments wish to receive federal funds for their integration policies, they need to submit an integration programme that comprises an evaluation of the existing integration measures and the planned activities for the next years – sorted according to the three pillars.

Starting in 2014, the funds for the specific promotion of integration will thereby increase substantially. The federal government raises its financial contribution by CHF 20 million (approx. Euro 16.22 million) to CHF 36 million (approx. Euro 29.2 million) per year (BfM and KdK, 2011). These funds go directly to the cantons within the framework of an agreement on a four-years integration programme with every canton. However, the cantons need to make an equal financial contribution to their integration policy in order to receive the federal funds.

Furthermore, the federal government pays out an 'integration flat rate' to the cantons concerning the policy on refugees. A total of CHF 58 million (approx. Euro 47 million) per year goes to the cantons in order to promote the vocational integration and the language acquisition for recognized refugees and provisionally admitted persons (Bundesrat, 2010). This flat rate does not change with the happening advancement of integration policy, but is still unconditionally due to the cantons.

Integration policy at the cantonal level

Legal bases and objectives of the cantonal integration policy

A first development of a canton-wide integration policy was the establishment of the ‘Cantonal Working Group for Immigration Issues Zurich’ in 1980. This association was founded with the intention to represent the interests of migrants and to get them involved in the public discourse. In 2003, out of this working group the Cantonal Integration Office was established, associated to the Cantonal Department of Justice and Home Affairs. The head of the integration office, Julia Morais, is the cantonal integration officer and the formal contact person for the Federal Office for Migration. In the canton of Zurich, there is no law on integration, but in 2006 a regulation on integration⁸ was enacted that mainly specifies the goals and duties of the integration office. Today, the integration office is responsible for the cantonal policies on foreigners and on refugees.

According to the cantonal constitution, canton and communes shall support the coexistence of different population groups in mutual respect and tolerance (art. 114). Furthermore, they shall promote the participation of these groups in public affairs and shall take measures to integrate the foreigners residing in the canton of Zurich (art. 114). Congruent with the national objectives, the cantonal government draws on the integration principle ‘to support and to demand’ (*fördern und fordern*). Integration policy should therefore realize equal opportunities, give equal access to all public services, strengthen social cohesion and involve migrants in the political integration process. However, the government also demands individual responsibility in the sense that every migrant should make a personal contribution to the integration process. In 2007, integration was declared an important component of the legislative period and the ‘support and demand’-formula was incorporated into the legislative focal points.

So the strategic orientation of the cantonal integration policy is in accordance with the national objectives and the concept of diversity is not interpreted in a different manner. According to the cantonal integration officer: “Diversity is just a new label for integration and does not add value?”. To her, the label is not of utmost importance – her focus is on concrete projects to better integrate and involve immigrants in the canton of Zurich.

In the canton of Zurich, the integration in standard structures is regulated in the respective cantonal act and is financed through the normal budget of these directions (FI, 2013). For instance, according to the cantonal law on public education⁹, schools with a highly diversified body of pupils – regarding origin, language and socio-economic status – receive additional financial and technical support by the cantonal government (para. 25). The specific promotion of integration, on the other hand, is governed and implemented by the cantonal integration office.

The new integration programme of the Canton of Zurich

With the realignment of the national policy on foreigners and a change regarding the funding strategy – from ‘single case’ federal contributions to contributions to cantonal integration programmes – the government of the canton of Zurich decided in 2011 to develop a cantonal integration strategy and an integration programme (FI, 2013). The cantonal integration office was mandated with these tasks. In 2012, the integration strategy has been elaborated, and in 2013, the integration programme has been developed and submitted to the federal office for migration.

⁸ Regulation on Integration of September 20, 2006.

⁹ Law on Public Education of February 7, 2005.

The most important objectives of the present integration programme are the following¹⁰:

- to systemize the promotion of integration together with the communes,
- to expand the first general information for newly arriving immigrants,
- to adjust the language and integration courses according to the needs and demands,
- to promote integration via the employers as well as
- to strengthen the social integration with reference to the so called ‘new immigration’.

Similar to the federal government, the cantonal government thus wants to systematise the promotion of integration by directly negotiating with the communes instead of single private project providers. The canton now also operates with financial incentives: conditions for the receipt of federal and cantonal funds are a communal integration programme, the appointment of a communal integration officer and a co-financing of the communal integration measures by the municipalities of at least 45%. From 2014 onwards, the canton will therefore conclude performance agreements with the communes and provide support for the elaboration of a communal integration programme. In order to adjust the integration measures according to the needs and demands, the communes are divided into three groups: ‘big cities’, ‘focus communes’ and ‘initiative communes’.¹¹ The two ‘big cities’ – Zurich and Winterthur – are already well equipped and provide a wide range of integration measures; they already have an integration programme and an integration officer. The integration strategies of these two cities will not change, except from the fact that all cantonal and federal funds go primarily to the city and then to private providers of integration projects such as aid or relief organisations. ‘Focus communes’ are those municipalities that are in the focus of the cantonal strategy: urban or suburban communes with a comparably high percentage of foreigners or foreign language speaking pupils. The cantonal integration office is seeking a close cooperation with these municipalities to optimize the communal integration services and to establish an integration officer. The term ‘initiative communes’, finally, denominates all other municipalities that may want to establish an integration programme on their own initiative and are interested in cantonal and federal support.

According to the cantonal integration officer, regarding direct contributions to private providers of integration projects, the cantonal integration office just supports quality management in language courses, an agency for intercultural interpreters, a legal service institution for migrants and integration courses for small population groups in their mother tongue.

Starting in 2014, the canton of Zurich will receive federal funds for the promotion of integration amounting to CHF 6.5 million per year (approx. Euro 5.2 million), if canton and communes pay together at least an equal amount for their integration measures (Regierungsrat, 2013), which, was the case in the last years. The expected revenues are CHF 3.7 million (approx. Euro 3.0 million) higher than before the system change. Furthermore, a step-by-step increase of the cantonal budget for the promotion of integration is planned from 2014 onwards. According to the integration officer, it was therefore possible to create a new position in her office in 2013. At the moment, in the integration office there are 7.6 full-time posts. Furthermore, the canton receives an unconditional ‘integration flat rate’ relating to the policy on refugees in the amount of CHF 6.9 million (approx. Euro 5.6 million) per year (Regierungsrat, 2013).

¹⁰ See: Excerpt from the protocol of the Government of the Canton of Zurich, session on June 12, 2013: 682. Cantonal integration programme.

¹¹ See: Excerpt from the protocol of the Government of the Canton of Zurich, session on June 12, 2013: 682. Cantonal integration programme.

Integration policy at the city level

Strategic orientation of the integration policy

In the city of Zurich, the understanding of integration differs from the prevalent concept at the national and the cantonal level. The city report on integration (Stadt Zürich, 2009: 8) states that the design of the integration policy is based on three reference points: *'realizing equal opportunities, strengthening individual competences and promoting a culture of positive welcome'*. Immigrants should therefore have equal access to societal resources and public services, they should be empowered and supported to participate in everyday social and working life, and they should be socially recognised and respected. The Swiss integration principle 'to support and to demand' is not referred to in policy documents of the city of Zurich. Demanding responsibility or an individual contribution of the immigrants is not a pronounced part of its understanding of integration.

Based on the report on integration, the city government defined six guidelines and several sub-objectives of its integration policy for 2012-2014. As higher state levels do, the city government thereby distinguishes between integration in the standard structures – such as the education system, the vocational system or the public health sector – and the specific promotion of integration. Likewise, there is a clear primacy of integration in the standard structures. The integration guidelines and their sub-objectives read as follows (Stadt Zürich, 2012a):

- Enhancing equal opportunities
 - Children and adolescents are supported and educated according to their skills.
 - Public services should reach all inhabitants – important information is available in different languages and well understandable.
 - The city of Zurich fights against discrimination and barriers to integration.
- Enabling individual responsibility
 - The city promotes the population's linguistic, social and everyday mathematical competences that are needed in social and working life.
 - Zurich's social networks shall be better known and the city thereby expands its cooperation with business companies.
- Maintaining a culture of positive welcome
 - Zurich welcomes newly arriving immigrants, informs them in a familiar language about important integration activities and provides them with useful orientational knowledge.
 - The population is informed about their fundamental rights and about the important rules of daily life.
 - The different cultural and religious traditions in Zurich may be visible and shall be appreciated.
- Promoting good co-existence
 - Zurich promotes activities that use the potential of the population's diversity and promote mutual understanding and common action.
 - The different population groups are empowered to participate in developing the city.
- Approaching challenges
 - The city identifies and denominates problems of integration and approaches them actively.
 - The city confronts prejudices against migration and against the goals of their integration policy with an open and objective dialog.
- Active positioning in integration policy
 - The city provides groundwork and is involved at regional, national and international level to exchange experiences as well as to discuss and develop integration measures.
 - Zurich participates in the national political discourse on integration and in the policy-making process. Thereby, it focuses especially on the specific situation of urban areas.

- The city enables public discussions on current issues regarding migration and integration. A conference on migration is organised annually.

Furthermore, the city of Zurich became a member of the European Coalition of Cities Against Racism (ECCAR) in 2007 and thereby affirmed its commitment to fight racist discrimination. At regular intervals, the city government now publishes reports on racism, where the public administration and the public services are critically surveyed and evaluated.

The specific promotion of integration

The specific promotion of integration – that comprises all integration measures outside the standard structures – is undertaken by the ‘promotion of integration’ at the office for urban development in the mayor’s department of the city of Zurich. Head of this specialist unit is Christof Meier. A first coordination unit for immigration issues already emerged in 1969 – with the beginning of the new century, it was renamed as promotion of integration and incorporated in the office for urban development. This office was founded in 1997 with an emphasis on cross-sectional issues and tasks in the urban administration.

The activities of the unit for the promotion of integration are based on the report on integration 2009, the above-mentioned integration guidelines and a first mission statement from 1999. This statement was a first strategic approach towards an integration policy in the city of Zurich and specified measures for a good co-existence (Stadtrat, 1999). The current realignment of the national policy on foreigners and the corresponding development of a cantonal integration programme will not change a lot of the city’s approach towards integration. The city already has an integration officer and an integration strategy and finances a wide range of integration measures. Zurich will continue its integration activities under the new cantonal roof. With the higher federal funds starting in 2014, the city will however receive higher financial contributions. This additional amount will be used – according to the head of the unit for the promotion of integration – to consolidate the existing activities and services, not to additionally expand the scope of integration projects.

Among the diverse activities of the unit are a general address of welcome and first overall information for newly arriving immigrants, the support of the standard structures regarding integration issues, annual meetings with migrant organisations, the sponsoring of language and integration courses carried out by non-governmental actors, the participation in intra-administrational working groups and general public relation activities. Lately, the reception service has been largely expanded: every newly arriving immigrant receives a welcome letter, is invited to a welcome reception and a guided tour of the city (several events per year in six different languages) and has the possibility to seek advice at the ‘welcome desk’ of the unit without prior notice. There is also an integration credit where the city supports projects aiming at creating higher social cohesion. Currently, the unit for the promotion of integration contributes CHF 200,000 (approx. Euro 163,000) per year. According to Anna Schindler, the director of the office for urban development: *“The city’s integration effort is generally a model for success.”*

Regarding immigration and integration issues, there is extensive cooperation within the city administration. On the one hand, there is project-related cooperation such as, for instance, the collaboration between the social services department and the unit for the promotion of integration with respect to migrant counselling (project ‘Infodona’). On the other hand, project-independent cooperation emerged that is bound to administrative structures. Here, there is an ‘integration delegation’ of the city government that discusses cross-departmental integration issues and problems.

To date, according to the interviewees the financial resources of the specialist unit for the promotion of integration range between CHF 6 and 7 million (approx. Euro 4.9 to 5.7 million). There are 13 persons employed what equals 9 full-time posts. The expected budget increase through the higher federal and cantonal funds will presumably be substantial, but is not yet definitely determined. According to the integration officer, the resources are sufficient to manage the current challenges posed by immigration processes.

Other policy fields associated with the discourse on diversity

Community work, socio-culture and community coordination

Community work, socio-culture and community coordination are public services located at the office for social services in the social services department of the city of Zurich. These public community services focus on a sustainable social integration of all inhabitants in the city as well as on a high quality of life in all neighbourhoods. They act as an interface between the city administration and the neighbourhoods and support the interest of neighbourhood associations, inhabitants, local trade associations and other neighbourhood groups. Public community work is raising awareness of specific needs of the community, linking and empowering people and groups, providing spaces of encounter and supporting inhabitants and associations in realizing their wishes (Sozialdepartement Stadt Zürich, 2014). The cantonal and the federal administration are not relevant actors in this policy area.

The office for social services works with a broader concept of integration than the specialist unit 'promotion of integration'. Integration is not only understood as integrating immigrants into society, but as 'social integration' – as strengthening social cohesion across all social classes and ethnic groups. The interviewees from the office for social services put it like this: *"Today, integration is not just about Swiss citizens and foreign nationals, but it is an issue that concerns every social stratum – it is about social integration."* Therefore, the city provides varying socio-cultural encounters and meeting points, such as neighbourhood centres, neighbourhood festivities, activities for children (e.g. a children's cinema) and meeting places for teenagers. The emphasis of these public services is thereby less on promoting multiculturalism, than on bringing people together, strengthening their identification with the neighbourhood and helping them realize their own initiatives and projects. Several of these services are run by non-governmental organisations, but funded by the city. Thereby, the socio-cultural approach is very neighbourhood-specific. In some quarters, immigration is an important topic, in others we find a high percentage of elderly people – some neighbourhoods are already very committed and organised, in other neighbourhoods people need to be empowered to express their needs. According to the head of the office for social services, Mirjam Schlup: *"The new immigration has changed something – a lot of immigrants now have substantial resources and are interested in making a contribution to their new home."* So, the community coordinators have to identify the needs in a certain community, to work with the relevant groups (e.g. a specific migrant organisation, an organisation representing elderly people or family associations), to create platforms of exchange and to link the people with the responsible offices of the public administration.

A further important field of activity of the public community work is to foster the inclusion of different population groups into participatory processes of urban planning projects. When the structural engineering department creates concepts for the development of a neighbourhood or a new building complex, it is today a standard procedure to set up a participatory process and get on board the inhabitants of this neighbourhood or their organised representatives such as neighbourhood organisations, migrant associations or local trade organisations. The contact persons are in these cases the responsible community coordinators. The legislative focal points 2010-2014 that refer to integration issues also boosted this intra-administrational cooperation. The inter-

viewees described it as a great opportunity to take up comprehensive projects, to try things out and to strengthen interdisciplinary cooperation – due to the additional financial support by the city government. During the last years, social urban development has always been considered more frequently in the context of spatial planning projects. Furthermore, a cross-departmental ‘core group on the development of neighbourhoods’ was implemented in 2006 to approach every kind of socio-spatial matter at the neighbourhood level. However, regarding these participatory processes in urban planning, there were no specific efforts to address and explicitly include ethnic minorities or hard-to-reach groups so far.

The office for social services also has a broader understanding of diversity than integration offices. Diversity here does not only have a cultural dimension, but is also understood as a socio-economic and a demographic approach. Thereby, diversity is perceived as generally positive. According to the head of the office for social services, there is a clear consensus in the department: *“We want a diverse city and we are proud of it”*.

At the national level, there are two policy programmes associated with neighbourhood development processes and societal diversity (Eberle, 2009: 169). First, in the context of the new federal agglomeration policy, the Federal Office of Energy (BFE) and the Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE) implemented a programme focussing on a sustainable development of neighbourhoods (BFE and ARE, 2011). In a joint effort, they provide and promote an instrument – named *Sméo* – that serves as an evaluation tool for neighbourhood projects. This tool uses comprehensive sustainability indicators covering ecological, socio-cultural and economical aspects to validate urban development processes. Second, in 2008, the ARE launched the programme *Projets urbains* that focuses on social cohesion in residential areas (ARE, 2008). This programme provides financial support and technical expertise for development projects in deprived neighbourhoods in small- and medium-sized cities and urban municipalities. Despite these – rather marginal – federal initiatives, the development of neighbourhoods is primarily governed by the respective city.

Housing policy

According to the ‘Zurich Strategies 2025’, an important objective of the city council is the *‘development of a diverse residential city’* (Stadtrat, 2011: 30). With its housing policy programme, the city council pursues the following three goals (Stadt Zürich, 2012b):

- *Attractive residential city:* Zurich shall remain an attractive residential city for all classes of population and every age group.
- *Socio-political stability:* The city council promotes a social mix of inhabitants in the neighbourhoods, which shall contribute to socio-political stability and high quality of life. Thereby, the provision of a high percentage of affordable housing and non-profit apartments is a crucial measure for a diverse residential city.
- *Cooperation:* In order to establish its housing objectives, the city council seeks cooperation with the most relevant actors in the housing market such as foundations, housing cooperatives and private property developers.

In 2011, an article has been added to the municipal code – approved in a popular vote – to foster social housing and provide affordable living space for persons living in poor economic conditions as well. The city of Zurich already has a long tradition regarding the construction of social housing – today, 25% of all rental housing in the city are non-profit apartments. The objective of the new article now is to raise this percentage to one third of all rental apartments until 2050.

Social mix as an important goal of housing policy is present in most countries of the Western world (e.g. Galster, 2007). In Zurich, this debate became prevalent in the end of the 1990s, with a realignment of the urban development policy moving towards an ‘entrepreneurial city’ (see Harvey, 1989; Hall and Hubbard, 1996). Accordingly, in the context of growing international competition, the city council tries to put the city in an attractive position for future investors. In her analysis of the neighbourhood development policy in the city of Zurich, Widmer (2009) shows that these development processes may be seen as part of the new competition-oriented urban development policy. Therefore, ‘less attractive’ neighbourhoods have witnessed several development programmes and image projects in order to not prevent or hamper the marketing measures of the city. Thereby, the concept of social mix was used to increase the percentage of Swiss middle-class families in poorer neighbourhoods (ibid.). Social mix housing policy thus could be regarded as a new name for state-induced gentrification.

However, during the last decade, such neighbourhood development processes and image projects ranked lower on the city agenda, and with the new housing policy programme that clearly focuses on affordable housing and non-profit apartments the city obviously tries to implement some sort of countermeasure against ongoing gentrification processes. According to the city council (Stadt Zürich, 2012b: 6), the city is committed to provide non-profit rental housing to those persons having difficulties in accessing apartments on the free market – in particular low-income households, elderly people, families and students. Therefore, with its objective of realising the ‘*development of a diverse residential city*’, Zurich presumably has a twofold purpose: the city shall provide enough space and possibilities for its diverse population, but at the same time safeguard its good position in the global competition of business locations.

At the national level, there is only a smaller policy programme focussing on housing in the context of societal diversity. The Federal Office of Housing (BWO) has been engaged for several years in issues of developing deprived neighbourhoods and integrating the foreign population (BWO, 2007). To this end, the BWO commissions research projects and funds the realisation of concrete neighbourhood projects.

Synthesis of the governmental discourse on diversity

In Switzerland, diversity is not (yet) a term of high political relevance and it is not clearly related to a certain policy field. However, the concept of diversity is encountered most in the field of integration policy and has further connections with public community work and housing policies. Therefore, the preoccupation with diversity mainly refers to cultural and ethical differences as well as to immigration issues.

Across all state levels, immigration per se is perceived as mainly positive. Switzerland is highly reliant on foreign workers and the public administration has therefore a positive attitude towards migration and diversity. The cantonal integration officer stated in this context:

“Without immigrants, nothing would be going on in the canton of Zurich – neither economically, nor culturally. Within the public administration, immigrants are regarded as enrichment.”

However, all interviewees agree that – although the steady influx of migrant workers is regarded as valuable and as a mutual enrichment – the daily work with migrants may constitute a challenge, mainly due to linguistic difficulties.

Regarding the understanding and the use of the term ‘diversity’, there are clear differences between the three state levels, though. At the national level, the guideline *‘to consider diversity as a valuable part of society’* is one of four basic principles of integration policy. The main objective of the Swiss integration process is a peaceful co-existence in mutual tolerance, but diversity per se is generally not something that should be supported or even expanded – it is not regarded as an asset. Furthermore, the term is not often used in the national discourse. The process of integration should then be realized in two ways. On the one hand, the state should provide equal opportunities for migrants to become part of the political, the economic, the social and the cultural life. On the other hand, individual responsibility is required. Immigrants should make a personal contribution to their own integration. The integration policy of the canton of Zurich and its understanding of diversity is in accordance with the national level. The concept of diversity is not interpreted in a different manner. According to the cantonal integration officer, diversity is just a new label for integration and does not add value. It is therefore not frequently used. The twofold integration principle *‘to support and to demand’* is also applied in the canton of Zurich – immigrants should be supported in their integration and their participation, but they are similarly asked and sometimes formally obliged to integrate themselves into society.

In contrast to the national and the cantonal strategy, the city of Zurich does frequently use the term ‘diversity’. The city wants to be seen as open and cosmopolitan – diversity is thus a location factor and should therefore be actively sustained and guaranteed. Contrary to higher state levels, diversity is clearly called *‘a gain and a potential’* (Stadt Zürich, 2012a). Whether diversity is just regarded as a location factor or as a positive end goal in itself thereby depends on the policy field and on the individual office of the city administration. For instance, the office for social services takes a slightly different approach here than the office for urban development. Regarding the concrete process of integration, the city of Zurich does not emphasize repressive measures, but does rather rely on support and empowerment. Demanding responsibility or an individual contribution of the immigrants is not a pronounced part of its understanding of integration. This difference to higher state levels becomes evident in the wording of the integration guidelines: confederation and canton *‘demand individual responsibility’* while the city wants to *‘enable individual responsibility’*.

These differing discourses on integration and diversity are caused by the different proximity to the ‘object’ on the one hand and by the different political context on the other hand. The city of Zurich was always directly confronted with a high influx of immigrants and was therefore forced to find new and innovative ways to integrate newcomers already decades ago. It thus seems very probable that a more open and pluralist conception of diversity emerged. Additionally, Zurich is politically dominated by left-wing parties – contrary to the cantonal and the national level – which corresponds to a more open and welcoming approach towards immigration. These ideological differences regarding the attitude towards diversity and integration resulted in a rather reserved relationship between the integration officers at cantonal and local level, which does not facilitate the necessary cooperation in common integration issues.

Nevertheless, the kind of diversity addressed does not differ between confederation, canton and city – the discourse mainly refers to cultural or ethnic diversity. Socio-economic and socio-demographic aspects of diversity also play a role sometimes, but primarily connected with immigration and the presence of different ethnic groups in Switzerland.

With respect to the analytical framework classifying urban policies based on Fincher and Iveson (2008) and Fainstein (2010), it is not an easy task to categorize the Swiss policies presented above. The confederation, the canton and the city of Zurich elaborated comprehensive integration strategies that have an overall approach and address multiple categories of the framework. These

strategies involve several objectives and basic principles and they all aim at enhancing economic performance, societal cohesion and social mobility. However, at national and cantonal level, there is a certain emphasis on ‘economic integration’ – confederation and canton invest in immigrants to strengthen their abilities and qualifications for the labour market. Therefore, language courses are a crucial element of their integration strategies. Furthermore, it is about enhancing the access to resources and public services such as housing, health and training. Therefore, integration policy at national and cantonal level corresponds most to the first category of the framework ‘policies for equity and (re)distribution of resources’. At the city level, where the government is directly confronted with all aspects of a diverse society besides the occupational activities of migrants – such as the housing situation, the leisure activities, dealing with the families of migrant workers and their needs – the integration objectives are considerably broader. In addition to the focus on economic performance, the urban integration policy also clearly tries to strengthen social cohesion, to fight discrimination (e.g. the membership in the ECCAR) and to give a voice to foreigners (e.g. the support of a foreigners’ council), what belongs to the second category of the framework ‘policies for diversity and recognition of multiple voices’. Also, the third category ‘policies to create spaces of encounter and spaces of democratic deliberation between groups’ is present at the city level: the public social community work provides spaces of encounters in neighbourhoods and fosters the inclusion of different population groups into participatory processes of urban planning projects. In contrast to confederation and canton, the city thus puts emphasis on the second and the third category of the framework – besides the first category that is addressed at all state levels.

3.2 Non-governmental views on diversity policy

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) play a crucial role in the development and implementation of policy instruments in the field of integration and diversity in Switzerland. NGOs such as relief or aid organisations often act as bridge builder between the public administration and certain population groups: since they have good access to the local population, they early notice the needs and requirements of under-represented and disadvantaged groups and initiate first assistance and support. Usually, such projects will then be supported and funded by the state. The implementation of integration measures is therefore mostly conducted by NGOs, but is steered and funded by the government – typically by means of a performance agreement.

The present section reflects the opinions, beliefs and arguments of four crucial NGOs in Zurich: the Foreigners’ Council of the City of Zurich, the Swiss Interchurch Aid (HEKS), the Swiss Worker’s Aid (SAH) and the Union of Islamic Societies in Zurich (VIOZ).

The *Foreigners’ Council* was founded in 2005 – it acts as a representative of the migrant population in Zurich and is an advisory commission to the city government. In this function, the council may carry out public relations work in connection with integration policy, make recommendations and submit petitions to the city government. Today, the council has 24 members who meet six times a year. They have established four specialist commissions that are tackling questions of ‘age and health’, ‘media and the public’, ‘police and security’ and ‘school and home’, and have quite close relations to the responsible offices of the city administration. At least once a year, the council meets with the whole city government to discuss relevant and current issues regarding the migrant population of Zurich. Two co-presidents head the Foreigners’ Council, decisions are reached by a simple majority of votes and all members receive a fixed yearly attendance fee by the government.

The *HEKS* is the Swiss aid organisation of the protestant churches and one of the largest relief organisations in Switzerland. It was established in 1946 and is organised today as a foundation

carrying out projects in Switzerland and abroad. In Zurich, the HEKS is present with a regional office. Here, the focus lies on the social integration of disadvantaged groups: the HEKS provides services regarding integration into the labour market, education, language courses, intercultural translation, legal advice and counselling, provision of living space and support with daily living.

The *SAH* is a worker's aid organisation engaged for socially and economically disadvantaged people. It was founded in the 1930s; it is a politically and denominationally independent organisation, but has its roots in the labour movement. Today, the SAH is organised in ten independent regional offices and is the largest provider of labour market measures in Switzerland.

The *VIOZ* constitutes the umbrella association of all Islamic societies in the canton of Zurich. It was established in 1995 with the primary intention of finding a common solution to the issue of Muslim graveyards in cemeteries. This goal has been partially achieved: Islam-compliant burials are now possible in the city of Zurich and in two other larger municipalities in the canton of Zurich. Further long-term objectives of the *VIOZ* are the legal recognition of Islam under cantonal law¹² and the construction of a central mosque in Zurich. Islam is the second largest religious community in Switzerland next to the Christian religious community: 4.9% of the population in Switzerland belong to the Islamic community, in the canton of Zurich more than half of the Muslim population migrated from the Balkan region (Bundesamt für Statistik, 2011; Widmer and Strebel, 2008: 25). Since Islam is not a legally recognized religious community in the canton of Zurich, there is hardly any statistical information on the Muslim population in the city of Zurich.

In their assessment of the public policies on integration and diversity, the representatives of the four NGOs all agree in most respects. The integration activities by city and canton are widely regarded as comprehensive, good and appropriate. The public integration offices are perceived as engaged, professional and helpful, and all organisations agree to the open attitude of the city towards immigration and diversity. However, the strong focus on integration into the labour market is widely criticized. The representatives of the NGOs argue that immigrants are still mainly perceived as work force – the nationwide emphasis on language courses, for instance, serves the interests of the Swiss economy, but does not necessarily make a large contribution to the social integration of immigrants. Mahmoud El Guindi, President of the *VIOZ*, explains:

“Language skills are of course an advantage, but just one of multiple factors. Language ability is not sufficient and does not necessarily foster social integration.”

The representatives of the HEKS therefore emphasise, that measures for a comprehensive social integration need to be considered and financed to the same extent as measures for the integration into the labour market.

Regarding the current realignment of the national policy on foreigners, positive and negative aspects have been mentioned. On the one hand, the additional funds granted by the federation are appreciated and very welcome. On the other hand, it is feared that the associated professionalization of integration policy creates new bureaucratic hurdles. During the last ten years, new quality management and controlling systems generated continuously more work for the NGOs. Already

¹² Switzerland is established as a secular state and does therefore not maintain institutional relations with individual religious communities. It is the responsibility of the cantons to regulate the relations between state and religions. Thereby, the relationship between church and state takes the form of recognition of religious communities as corporations under public law, known as state churches (Migraweb, 2014). The catholic and the protestant churches are widely recognised and some cantons also give the Jewish community a public law status. However, the Muslim religious community is not legally recognized in any canton of Switzerland.

today, smaller organisations can no longer apply for public mandates since they do not have the administrative capacity. With the new integration policy, where all individual communes are directly responsible for their integration measures – instead of the canton – NGOs have to collaborate with much more partners and their bureaucratic effort will probably rise even more. However, the cooperation and the contact with city and canton are regarded as good, frequent and productive: the NGOs feel supported by the public administration and are also often contacted by the administration about relevant matters.

In their views on diversity, there are no differences between the four NGOs, either. All representatives have a comprehensive and positive understanding of diversity. They see diversity mainly as *“enrichment for society”*. Thereby, they perceive their own role as sensitizing the public administration to the existing diversity. However, it is criticized that there is too strong emphasis on immigrants in the diversity discourse. The interviewed persons identify the crucial gap in Swiss society as between well educated and poorly educated persons, while the criterion of migrant background is of secondary importance. The representatives of the HEKS point out that: *“There are also poorly educated Swiss citizens with low socio-economic status, who should not be forgotten in the debate on diversity and social integration.”* So, since the discourse on diversity in Switzerland mainly addresses cultural and ethnic issues, the preoccupation with socio-economic diversity has been given too little attention so far.

Future opportunities and challenges regarding integration and diversity are difficult to assess today, since the realignment of the national policy on foreigners is currently entering into force. Nevertheless, the NGOs are worried about the rising bureaucratization in this policy field. Additionally, the fact that canton and city do not have a common line with respect to integration policy is mentioned as a problem. Since there are some ideological differences between the two state levels – and the relationship between the two integration officers is rather reserved – their messages are not always consistent and their integration activities sometimes not concerted. This situation may hamper the future cooperation between the relevant actors in this policy field. With respect to this necessary coordination, some representatives of the surveyed NGOs encourage the creation of a central interface. The head of the Zurich division of the SAH, Hans Fröhlich, stated that:

“An intermediary is needed that would provide an overview of the immigration activities and the current requirements and would plan the needed activities of all public and private providers in the local integration field. So far, there is no general systematic exchange of information between all relevant public and private actors in the field or a systematic approach towards the implementation of integration measures.”

Furthermore, to foster social integration, legal recognition of other religions – especially Islam – is supported. Such a demonstrative act would set an example and facilitate peaceful co-existence in the future.

4 Conclusions

In Switzerland, the concept of diversity is mainly associated with immigration and limited to cultural and ethnic aspects. Immigration generally ranks high on the political agenda: a quarter of the current Swiss population immigrated since 1945 or has a migrant background (TAK, 2005). Migration thus enhances the population growth in Switzerland more strongly than in typical immigration countries like Canada or the US. With the beginning of the new century, the approach towards immigration changed: the national policy on foreigners, which was rather employer-

driven and mainly drew on admission restrictions, adopted the concept of integration. Thereby, integration is defined as a mutual process between the migrant and the Swiss population providing rights and obligations for immigrants. Due to the 'Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons' between the European Union and Switzerland that came into force in 2002, the legislation on integration only applies to immigrants from non-EU/EFTA countries. The Swiss integration regime is thereby considered strongly assimilationist (Manatschal, 2011). The steady immigration also arouses fears in the Swiss population, which has led to a strong negative attitude towards immigrants – especially from Muslim countries.

The debate on diversity therefore particularly tackles immigration issues and has its closest connection to the field of integration policy. The interviewed representatives of relevant NGOs criticized this emphasis of the Swiss diversity discourse on cultural and ethnic issues. In their opinion, socio-economic diversity is a far more relevant category than migrant background and has been given too little attention up to now. Socio-economic inequalities may be less visible than ethnic diversity, but are arguably far more relevant and challenging with respect to the three overarching objectives investigated by the DIVERCITIES project – strengthening social cohesion, boosting economic performance and enhancing social mobility, and should therefore not be neglected.

With respect to the normative meaning of the diversity concept, there are significant ideological differences between the city and higher state levels. In contrast to the national and the cantonal strategy, the city of Zurich does frequently use the term 'diversity', and it does so in a more open and positive manner. Zurich, as a culturally and ethnically very diverse city, was rather early and directly confronted with a high number of immigrants, and therefore implemented new and innovative integration measures already decades ago. The city consequently developed a more pluralist and positive understanding of diversity: while federation and canton just advise '*to consider diversity as a valuable part of society*', the city perceives its diverse population as an important location factor, "*a gain and a potential*" that should be actively sustained and guaranteed. Regarding integration strategies, the city emphasises the empowerment of its migrant population and refuses repressive measures – contrary to higher state levels. While confederation and canton thus '*demand individual responsibility*', the city wants to '*enable individual responsibility*'.

Nevertheless, at all state levels, there is a clear emphasis in the discourse on diversity and integration upon the integration of immigrants into the labour market and their contribution to the economy, what is widely criticized by the representatives of the NGOs. They argue that diversity is too often seen in economic terms only, which does not necessarily contribute to a better social integration of immigrants. In relation to the theoretical framework of the DIVERCITIES project and the three objectives of social cohesion, economic performance and social mobility, Swiss integration policy mainly aims at strengthening social mobility – i.e. the possibility of immigrants and their children to move upwards in society with respect to employment and income – and at boosting economic performance in Switzerland. However, the ideological differences between the state levels become apparent here as well: only the city of Zurich explicitly focuses on enhancing social cohesion through the involvement of migrants into decision-making processes and by providing spaces of socio-cultural encounters and activities.

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6 Appendix

List of the interviewed persons

City of Zurich

- Mirjam Schlup Villaverde, Director Social Services, Social Services Department of the City of Zurich
- Anna Schindler, Director Urban Development, Mayor's Department of the City of Zurich
- Christof Meier, Head Promotion of Integration, Urban Development, Mayor's Department of the City of Zurich
- Esther Diethelm, Professional of the Social Services Department of the City of Zurich

Canton of Zurich

- Julia Morais, Head Cantonal Integration Office, Department of Justice and Home Affairs, Canton of Zurich
- Lukas Guyer, Deputy Head Management Control of the Government, Chancellery of the Canton of Zurich

Non-governmental organisations

- Francesco Genova, Co-President Foreigners' Council of the City of Zurich
- Antoinette Killias, Head National Division, Swiss Interchurch Aid HEKS
- Mylène Nicklaus, Head Zurich Division, Swiss Interchurch Aid HEKS
- Hans Fröhlich, Head Zurich Division, Swiss Worker's Aid (SAH)
- Mahmoud El Guindi, President of the Union of Islamic Societies in Zurich (VIOZ)