

trade unions. Here, and in relation to other items discussed, the workshop would possibly arrive at some very concrete ideas, proposals and conclusions (possibly also in terms of agreements, follow-up steps...)

### **Organisation**

The workshop is conceived as a 90 minutes exercise started with 2, maximum, 3 input presentations, with most of the time being devoted to open debate and brainstorming. The results will be fixed and presented accordingly.

## **THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL MODEL**

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The social model does exist. It may be defined in terms of common values held by the Member States and common institutions they have built and may be summarized under the following three headings: social state, social market, social partnership.

The Draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe sets forth common basic values in the form of an obligation for the European Union to combat social exclusion and discrimination and promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, solidarity between generations and protection of children's rights. Thus, the Union is endeavoring to ensure sustainable development: based on balanced economic growth and stable prices it seeks to establish a highly competitive social market economy and a high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment.

The common set of values needs to be concretized with a view to the social dimension of Europe. By agreeing on common minimum standards and gradually implementing the common objectives through the process of coordination in the fields of employment, social inclusion, pensions, health and long-term care, Member States have further been developing the European Social Model. In this context, access for everybody to innovative education and training is a priority.

The social partners and civil society have been brought into the decision-making processes and bear responsibility for the implementation of these objectives.

## **WHAT IS INTEGRATION?**

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Integration has become a key term in politics and everyday language. Quite literally, many consider integration the key to the solution of a variety of social problems. Then again, the frequent use of the term has contributed little to bringing it into sharper focus. What does integration really mean? Listening to people today, you often get the impression that they are not talking about the same thing. While for some, integration describes the peaceful coexistence of different population groups, for others it means the individual's efforts to secure his or her place in a host society. What for some signifies participating in economic and public life, for others means displaying

good conduct and blending in with their new surroundings. However, for us to find a final and generally recognized definition of what integration really means is just as unlikely today as it was when the Federal Commission for Foreigners, in its Report on Integration, explicitly renounced a definition.

### ***Where does Integration take place?***

Nevertheless, we have come a long way: Dealing with integration issues enables us today to see more clearly where integration takes place and what factors could be decisive for its success. Schools, for example, are central places where integration happens. A recent analysis conducted by the Federal Statistical Office shows that the second generation of foreigners has made considerable progress in terms of their education, in part even outperforming Swiss students. This success can be attributed to integration. The significance of schools for integration is further underlined by a new study on the networking of foreign adolescents, showing that immigrant children establish social contacts, apart from the family, best within class, and are likely to fall into a void once they have finished school and those relationships dry up.

Integration can also be observed in the workplace. Overall, the integration of foreign workers in Switzerland can be described as excellent. Reports of job-related tensions are only very scarce. However, work is very unevenly distributed in this country. Foreigners are by far overrepresented in the low-income bracket, which is an undeniable sign of insufficient integration. The same applies to high incomes, as it is also among well-paid top professionals in management, science and education that foreigners account for an above-average share – while the Swiss range somewhere in the middle.

Integration is especially clearly in evidence in residential areas, where there are concentrations of newcomers in so-called problematic or foreigner neighborhoods. These terms, however, in general do not describe the upscale residential neighborhoods in which the numbers of foreign residents are also above average, but rather the districts with a large share of foreigners among schoolchildren, streets and blocks with cheap housing and a tendency to go to seed. In the housing environment, successful or failed integration has direct repercussions on the quality of life and the chances of development.

Apart from housing, the public space is an illuminating indicator of integration. Experience tells us that lower-income groups newly moving into an area have fewer chances than others to meet in private places in their leisure time. In the 1960s, Italian seasonal workers hanging around train stations were a permanent nuisance to the locals, who felt harassed by them, and almost a symbol of a lack of integration upsetting the placidity characterizing the Sundays of that bygone era. In later years, asylum seekers from all over the world would supplant the Italians. And recently, adolescents from former Yugoslavia frequenting public swimming pools have led to tensions in many communities. But as soon as groups of foreigners found their uncontested place in society, the disputes over the use of public spaces would usually subside.

The issue of integration, however, goes far beyond foreigners, as it concerns the locals as well. Integration is closely linked to the issue of social stratification. The local, less affluent domestic population, too, is faced with social exclusion and disintegration. Losing your job can mean losing your circle of colleagues and friends and eventually the ground under your feet, irrespective of your nationality. Not finding or breaking off an apprenticeship, you are off to a bad start in your career, regardless of what passport you carry. Hence, the issue of integration has always

been closely connected to that of social strata. Often it is difficult to find out what problems are a result of the affiliation to a specific class and what are due to foreign nationality. Conversely, if you belong to a higher class, you have to make less of an effort towards your integration. This is reflected even in naturalization practice, where integration is often mentioned. But then, for the rich and famous it has hardly ever been a problem to obtain Swiss citizenship. Given the upper classes to which they belong, there is no need to present their case.

### ***Where is Integration necessary?***

This question becomes easier to understand once we look at ourselves: What about our own integration? Where are we integrated and where aren't we? We all live in one neighborhood or another, are members of one or several families, probably have been living in the same place for a long time or have just moved in or have changed jobs. How do we, having married into a new family or moved to a new neighborhood, experience our new environment? Will we be accepted by the old-established? Are we integrated in our community or do we lead an urban life taking place mainly in the workplace and at the center of town? What about our integration in church and in clubs and associations?

Obviously, the call for integration can't concern all areas of life equally. It meets its limits for example when it comes to the freedom of choosing one's own lifestyle, which is in itself one of the core values of our society. This freedom also includes being able to freely choose your own social relationships. Not too long ago, an entire generation derived its strength and identity from fighting with all its might against social integration, against absorption by the system and its values, as it was called then.

Integration is to take place not everywhere, but in a number of key areas crucial for living together in an open society and indispensable for this society to function properly. Compulsory school attendance for all, for example. Without education, nobody is really capable of succeeding in our society. Integration in the workplace is essential as well, in order to generate an income and be able to stand on one's own feet. That, however, makes it necessary for people to adapt. Punctuality, for instance, isn't Swiss fastidiousness, but simply a basic requirement of being able to stay afloat in a complex professional world based on the division of labor. The government's monopoly on force is just as elementary for an open society and non-negotiable. Modern societies, after all, don't rely on private armies or armed family clans for their security. Equal rights among men and women as well as our understanding of religion as a private matter in a laical state are just as essential.

The choice of leisure activities, on the other hand, is everyone's own business. It can't be subject to the claim for adaptation to domestic standards. Likewise, clothing, according to our understanding, is a private matter, as long as it doesn't upset public order. These remarks are meant to indicate that integration can't mean the comprehensive incorporation into all areas of life. Rather, when voicing the call for integration, it must be clear that integration can only limit itself to the central areas necessary for society to function properly.

Integration, moreover, is a two-sided process. It concerns all groups in society. When living side by side, both newcomers and locals change over time. Integration doesn't mean one group adapting to the others, but all groups developing together towards something new. These processes unfold slowly and are therefore often overlooked. And all of us together are changed even more by new achievements of civilization that challenge and force to adapt locals and newcomers

alike. Computers revolutionizing the way we work, the proliferation of mobile phones and the enormous increase in mobility, to name just a few examples, have changed our lives much more than the influx of new groups of migrants.

### ***Integration means Access and Recognition***

What is integration really all about? Perhaps a look at ourselves may again be helpful for a better understanding. When do we feel integrated? Generally, we feel that we belong to a group, a community or an association when we, like all the others, have access, are not excluded and can participate enjoying the same rights. On the other hand, we do not feel entirely integrated if we, unlike others, enjoy only limited access, at specific times or for specific topics or accompanied by specific people, for example. And that is exactly how newcomers feel. They get a sense of belonging once they have the same possibilities and chances of access. Adolescents from former Yugoslavia say that they consider being denied admission to discos discriminatory. Even when granted admission, they, being members of an ethnic group, are made to understand that they are only tolerated, "just this once". It is one of the main objectives of integration policy, therefore, to remove legal and social access barriers as best possible, with regard to access to schools and job training, to work and housing as well as to private organizations.

But integration has yet another meaning, because access alone is not enough: Being integrated means being accepted by the others. We all know of situations where we have been admitted, without, however, gaining full recognition. It can happen to all of us that in any given society we are dealt the outsider card. You are in, but still, owing to your background or your position, you feel out of place or are even shunned. Only through gaining access *and* recognition is a person truly integrated. It is another important goal of integration policy, therefore, to show appreciation and recognition to people from foreign extraction. Once you enjoy access and recognition, you have become integrated.

### ***A Longing for Belonging and being different***

How much integration is needed anyway? Once again, looking at ourselves is helpful: We all feel a double yearning for belonging, but also for being different. We can only live as part of a community, and doing so, we only feel at ease when we feel we really belong to it. At the same time, each one of us also feels the need to be recognized as an individual and as somebody special. And what applies to each individual, equally holds true for individual groups: It is said that we Swiss are a people made up exclusively of minorities, and that this is what accounts for the wealth of our multi-faceted country. Well, it is actually true! Just look at the different parts of our country, their languages and dialects, their denominations and religions, and their strong cantonal identities. Does this diversity complicate integration? Successful integration needs both, belonging and being different. To be a Grisoner in Zurich or a Valaisan in Geneva has never obstructed integration, but could, on the contrary, be important for the identity-forming process among immigrants. The same probably also holds true for today's immigrants. In fact, integration leveling out all differences would not only make the world an utterly boring place, it would be downright detrimental to the integration process. Social trends need diversity. Societies which know no diversity are mostly stagnant. It is no coincidence that in the history of mankind, it was cities such as Babylon or New York, places of tension and diversity, that exuded fascination and represented innovation.

The longing for belonging, for equality, but also the yearning for uniqueness and a special quality, was reflected with rare clarity by the Secondos' (second-generation foreigners) movement on the occasion of the Swiss federal referendum on naturalization: These young people expected to be given, at last, equality and the civil rights of the country in which they had been born. Being Secondos, they also unequivocally expressed their will to be perceived as a group, a group of young people with a migratory background, and with all its idiosyncrasies. The ambivalent desire for belonging and being different perhaps comes very close to what integration is all about.

### ***Integration through Time***

And when will integration processes be completed? In the first, second or third generation. Some consider naturalization the final step, the crowning conclusion of integration. Is that so? Or was it ever? Naturalization has always been but a relatively random milestone on a long road. Also, Switzerland, for decades, has practically given away Swiss citizenships in large numbers to foreign spouses of Swiss men, without ever asking said spouses whether they could tell *ja* from *nein* on their ballots. And the invective *Papierlischweizer* (paper Swiss) sufficiently indicates that citizenship does not necessarily mark the end of stigmatization. No, integration processes take a long time, several generations, in fact.

For a better understanding of integration in its temporal dimension, the following image may be helpful: the place where a stream and a river meet. It is here that after a thunderstorm you can see the stream continuing its course, calm, deeply blue-green, unaffected by the brown waters of its tributary, all churned up by the storm. For kilometers, both bodies of water flow side by side, clearly distinguishable by their different colors, not blending. Only much farther downstream do they begin to mix, as due to the different flowing speeds eddies start to form. After some time, the colors begin to blend, the differences start to diminish, and eventually, you can't tell which water comes from which river. And thus a new, single stream is born.

Meanwhile, and this is important within our specific context, the observer himself or herself has changed locations, standing in an entirely new spot, kilometres away from the place where the two streams have met. Not only has the water blended, the surrounding scenery has changed completely. And there you have integration in a nutshell. Differences remain visible over a long period of time. But at some point, almost unnoticed, integration has taken place. And society itself has arrived in another place, having absorbed foreign influences, believing that it recognizes itself in them. And thus a new mainstream has been born.

## **LIMITS TO SOCIAL MOBILITY: ROMA AS A SOCIAL STATUS**

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In spite of the fact that research of social construction of ethnicity dominates ethnicity studies, it has rarely been applied to the case of Roma. Analysis of a ghettoized Roma settlement in Lithuania helps seeing that society can see "Roma" as a particular caste without allowing its members to change their social position. Following the distinction between a social construct of ethnicity and a social group (Brubaker's "ethnicity without groups"), the conventional approach to status as a set of particular social roles is used for disclosing the limits to the social mobility of the Roma.