



# The Canton of Neuchâtel

## Intercultural Profile

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### Integration of foreigners, governance and participation

Neuchâtel is a French-speaking Swiss Canton on the shore of the picturesque Lake of Neuchâtel. The Canton's economy is dynamic, based primarily on the watch industry, unemployment is low and there is a high degree of social cohesion and acceptance of difference.

According to the most recent data about the population (December 2010) the Canton has a population of 170,897. The extent of ethnic diversity is remarkable: some 150 nationalities are represented, with 40 or more languages spoken. "Non nationals" include 39,386 resident people and make up 23% of Neuchâtel's population, including: Portuguese (6.79% of the Canton's population); Italians (4.81%); French (3.53%); The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (1.68%) and Spanish (1.29%). The "Neuchâtois de souche" (Neuchâtelans by origin) are only around 25% of the total population. There are also 884 asylum seekers.

The most up-to-date GPD/capita figures for Neuchâtel are of CCHF 66,117.

The Canton enjoys a relative equality of salaries, being negotiated by the social partners, regardless of national origin—indeed incomes tend to be higher for most qualified foreigners—provides a positive economic foundation. And the gap in access to quality housing, between migrant and indigenous tenants (in a context where renting is the social norm), is less in Neuchâtel than elsewhere in Switzerland.

Gender inequalities remain substantial and there is a problem of immigrant women being trapped into prostitution. But women from Muslim backgrounds do not find themselves facing communitarian authoritarianism: the Miss Wine Festival 2010 was won by Muslim women, yet there were no protests about how they chose to dress (we leave aside here the issue of sexual objectification).

The Canton includes 52 communes which are autonomous political entities. Neuchâtel (since the 1848 republican revolution) and Geneva are the two Swiss entities historically constituted as republics. Since 1849 foreigners have the right to vote in the Canton of Neuchâtel (only a handful of Swiss cantons have granted such a right). In a 2007 referendum the right of foreign residents to vote and be elected in municipal (not cantonal) elections after one year of residence in Neuchâtel (following the reception of a Swiss residence permit which

requires 5 years of residence in the country) was accepted. In the June 2008 elections 12 elected representatives were foreign nationals.

Against the background nationally of strengthening populist politics exploiting anxieties about immigration, Neuchâtel was one of Switzerland's four cantons to vote against the banning of minarets at the recent (controversial) referendum. It has a significant history of openness. The right to vote at the municipal level was granted in 1849 to foreigners settled in Neuchâtel. The right to vote was extended at the cantonal level in 2000. Since 2007, after five years of residency they can stand for local government positions and they can be elected at both legislative and executive levels. The emergence of foreigners among elected cantonal representatives is changing public perceptions.

## **Intercultural commitment**

A number of initiatives implemented by the Neuchâtel Canton concern its commitment to the intercultural approach. The canton has formally adopted a public statement and implemented an intercultural strategy and action plan. It has allocated a budget for the implementation of its intercultural strategy and action plan, including an evaluation process for its intercultural strategy. As a result, Neuchâtel Canton has a dedicated cross-departmental co-ordination structure which is responsible for its intercultural strategy and action plan. The Canton runs an [intercultural cities webpage](#).

Local citizens who have done an exceptional thing to encourage intercultural in the local community are acknowledged. Among the various activities, the Neuchâtel intercultural library supports learners of French in both their new and native languages by providing books. In this way, parents have materials for reading to their children in their first language, thus supporting the children's L1 acquisition and development, while allowing parents to maintain their roles as educators for their children. Additionally, children have access to French in order to acquire and develop their L2.

The political aim of the intercultural strategy is social cohesion. Integration is seen as the long-term solution to this challenge but not the goal in itself. As a result, there is never a point where it is thought that the job has been done and the perspective is dynamic rather than static.

Does it work? The Canton has developed 21 indicators of integration, allowing any individual's level to be established—measures such as length of stay, working time, financial autonomy, language acquisition, crimes, debts, bringing up children, associational activity. But this can't address be aggregation how integrated society is as a whole.

## **Governance of intercultural policies**

The success of Neuchâtel's intercultural policy (Neuchâtel has the best score on the [Intercultural cities INDEX](#)) is due to a large extent to the multi-layered and yet coherent and effective system of governance of diversity in place based on the canton law of 1996 (first of the type in Switzerland) and the new Cantonal constitution of 2002. The governance system consists of:

1. **A Multicultural Cohesion service** with multi-cultural staff of 15 who speak between them many of the 95 languages present in the community. The Service has a mandate to work with other institutions at all levels and take policy initiatives. The Office has a good operational capacity and an integrated approach including several policy fields. Meeting the challenge of this diversity can clearly not be done by the Canton alone. It operates via a vast network of associations—African, Latin-American, Islamic, Turkish, Kosovan, Albanian, Macedonian— which provides a vehicle for consultation and programme implementation.

The role of the Service is to apply the Cantonal Law on the Integration of Foreign Nationals, of 26 August 1996, aiming at mediating and fostering harmonious relations between Swiss people and foreign nationals and to promote the integration of foreigners in the Neuchâtel canton. It oversees the Multicultural Cohesion Service (Service de la cohésion multiculturelle - COSM) under the responsibility of the Département of the economy

It works in close co-operation with the Working Community for the Integration of Foreigners (Communauté de travail pour l'intégration des étrangers - CTIE), see below.

The Service has three principal and very important functions with regard to integration policy. It acts as

- a specialised contact centre,
- as the cantonal Commissioner for Foreign Nationals and
- as a logistical body for the CTIE (see below), migrant organisations and the groups concerned by the various aspects of the presence of foreign and migrant populations.

The Service offers **interpretation and mediation services**, based on a three-party involvement model and a network of 85 mediators (adopting a “pragmatic” – vs. cultural – approach). It includes a unit (Centre de compétence integration) providing targeted information in order to promote social and integration policies, as well as a unit (centre de compétence) to prevent racism and discrimination.

Along with the welcome programme for new arrivals (ANA) and the Neuchatel’s Citizenship Charter, the key integration programmes carried out by the Service are:

- professional integration, including (since 2005) the collaboration with watch enterprises;
- the implementation of the Federal 12 measures concerning integration of pre-primary children;
- preventing forced marriages, an initiative (since 2007) implemented by the Conseil d’Etat including an information campaign and the distribution of over 1000 leaflets;
- the FeNEtre sur le monde programme, including radio broadcasting of significant cultural and sport events paying attention to the migrant integration and intercultural relations dimension;
- the Vivre ici en venant d’ailleurs programme (since 2002) including the publication and the radio broadcasting of narratives by people of foreign origin living in the Canton.
- Targeted information is also available through the InterDialogos review ([www.ne.ch/interdialogos](http://www.ne.ch/interdialogos)) published at La Chaux-de-Fonds.

The Service has been developing a “Integratio Tempo” tool to track and identify key issues and developments concerning the integration of migrants. The tool maps the position of migrants according to two intersecting tensions: inclusion-exclusion and aggregation-segregation. Such mapping produces four main positions. integration, distinction, discrimination, insertion. It is based on 12 basic indicators and some complementary indicators.

2. **Committee for the integration of foreigners** (CTIE). The Committee has 40 members and function as a consultative body for the Conseil d’Etat (Cantonal government) since 1991, which emits recommendations

which for 15 years have always been adopted by the Conseil l'Etat, and validates the policies and projects of the Service du Délégué aux étrangers. The Committee meets 4 times a year in plenary and holds sub-committee meetings (3-4 time a year for each sub committee).

Committee involves representatives of ethnic communities (but not of religious communities because the Canton is officially secular) in numbers proportionate to the members of the group. The representatives are proposed by the communities and appointed by the Conseil d'Etat (Cantonal government). Representatives of other groups (employers, trade unions) and geographical entities are also included, in particular in sub-committees. For instance the sub-committee on employment and social problems: Italian community, Catholics and Protestants, representatives of the watch and construction industries.

Each session focuses on a theme or an issue such as criminal behavior (with a presentation by the head of police), the cross-border workers (do they “steal” the jobs of locals – a researcher and the head of the observatory explained that there is no job dumping); integration through football; Islam between myth and reality.

The Committee has also an operational budget.

Immigration policy is a competence of the federal level while integration policy is a competence of the local level. Integration policy makes no distinction between people in relation to their legal status. At the same time, some fundamental principles/values have to be respected by all. No other Swiss canton has yet an authority for the fight against racism.

Current priorities for integration policy:

- a) Professional integration. Studies show that non-Europeans are often victims of discrimination.
- b) Housing integration
- c) Citizenship

Although the integration policy of Neuchâtel is considered successful, the Canton's participation in Intercultural cities is motivated by the need to constantly anticipate and be prepared for new challenges since the social context changes constantly and situations are never consolidated. One of the key challenges identified by the Canton is the policy of the federal government restricting immigration and not facilitating integration.

For additional information: [The annual reports by the Multicultural Cohesion Service](#) (Service de la cohésion multiculturelle - COSM); the [monthly newsletter](#); an [overview of Neuchâtel's management intercultural diversity](#) as example of public politics is provided by Oriane Von Gunten in the four-page article “Swiss interculturality in Neuchâtel”.

## Public discourse and welcoming policies

In Switzerland immigration is sometimes feared by the population as a potential source of the dilution of values and non-loyalty. To ensure the universal knowledge of cantonal values, Neuchâtel has developed a charter of citizenship and the civil values which are explained to the newcomers.

The Canton does not force people to learn French but encourage them to do so by participating in all aspects of social life – language learning is seen as a result of this social and cultural integration, not as a condition, and this approach works.

### *The 2006 Neuchâtois campaign*

Neuchâtois ([www.neuchatois.ch](http://www.neuchatois.ch)) lasted for 9 months and had great success in attracting 260 000 participants to the 186 manifestations, 561 events. 450 press reports were produced. The campaign followed the 1994 project "Hello, Stranger" and the Muslim weeks in 1998. The campaign has been prepared for 3 years by one full-time person supported later by a small team.

Activities involved theatre shows, educational activities in schools, film projections, gastronomy (local restaurants offering exotic meals), radio and TV emissions, a book with poems and articles by journalists, thematic exhibitions, conferences and debates, poster campaigns, table mats in restaurants, press conferences. The Day of the republic celebration involved speeches by different foreigners and activities involving them in order to work diversity into the foundational myth of the canton.

Partners were foreigners associations, museums, theatres and cultural centres, schools, the university, cinemas, media, public transport, "Passion cinema", Gastro Neuchâtel, youth centres. The main square features big map of the world with little pens indicating passers by's origin, that of their parents and grand parents and showing visually that "everyone is a stranger"...

On top of this each district organised their own cultural and sport activities, conferences etc.

The success of the 2007 referendum on voting rights showed that foreigners are regarded more positively than before (the previous referendum on granting municipal voting rights to foreigners had failed).

Since 2009, a remarkable tool is the [Neuchâtel's Citizenship Charter](#), a text (translated into several languages) that outlines Swiss democracy fundamental principles and which is distributed to every person that is arriving in the Canton. This contrasts with the individual contract of integration in Zürich, in that it presents integration (as in the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue) as a two-sided process rather than placing the onus on the migrant/refugee to assimilate. The document states that the "*Canton of Neuchâtel is a State that guarantees its citizens fundamental freedoms and rights (a liberal State), a State in which people participate in the formation of the common will and the exercise of power (a democratic State), a State that grants its citizens a certain degree of social protection (a social State), a State in which there is no official religion but where religious freedom is the rule (a secular State). Neither Swiss nor foreign nationals have an obligation to adhere to these principles and values. But everyone, whatever their nationality, is expected to abide to Swiss laws and regulations. As the Federal Court has clearly ruled: 'Foreign residents in Switzerland are subject to the same legal framework as Swiss citizens. However, if they come from other cultures, they have no legal obligation to adapt to the Swiss lifestyle'*".

This is paired by the Neuchâtel: Welcome leaflet explaining the integration programme.

In order to make integration policies visible the Canton organises an Award programme, the "[Salut l'étranger!](#)" prix. It was established in 1995 in order to acknowledge tolerance policies within the Canton. In 2009 it received 20 nominations (it was awarded to the women's group Femmes de Coeur et d'épices).

The Canton COSM itself was awarded in 2010 the "Excellence dans les services publics" Prix. This was awarded by the Société Suisse des Sciences administratives and the Institut des hautes études en administration publique in the category "Gouvernance publique".

## Employment and business

The overall employment situation in the Canton is satisfactory, in part because of the economic dynamism of the region but also due to relentless efforts of public authorities in favour of worker's integration. Indeed, professional integration is one of the three priorities of the cantonal integration policy.

Reasons for the emphasis on professional integration: the Swiss industrial products (such as luxury mechanical watches) are exported in the whole world and need to be adapted to foreign markets, but also the republican tradition and the strong workers' movement with an internationalist tradition, which has been very welcoming to foreign workers. The integration through the workers' movement has in the past worked well, but it collapsed with the weakening of trade unions. It then it became incumbent upon public authorities to facilitate foreign workers' integration.

Workers' integration is the focus of projects such as ALTER CONNEXTON: for young people in difficulty, mentoring by other young people who have managed in their lives, as role models and de-connect them from the criminal networks; CONCIERGES ET HABITAT: intercultural training for the concierges so that they can also be a link with the host society; MIGRATIONS FEMININES: ensure respect for the rights of women in bars, prostitutes, forced marriages, domestic violence, genital mutilation.

Outstanding issues in relation to employment and integration:

- management of diversity in enterprises
- trans-border workers
- differences in legal status and their impact on employment newly arrived asylum-seekers don't have the right to work, when they eventually work the employers need to pay extra taxes to the city)
- non-recognition of qualifications
- too rigid legislation with regard to conditions for delivering work permits.

Recommendations:

- employers to take better into account professional qualifications of migrants
- enterprises to celebrate and take advantage of the diversity of their personnel. For instance the Chamber of commerce in their brochure about the next 25 years praises intercultural mixing and immigration as a source of population growth.
- employment services to train their employers in intercultural communication and employ immigrants as councilors
- state and para-state services such as police, buss drivers, teachers to open up to foreigners
- increase the offer of French classes and use the European language portfolio
- Enforce the use of anonymous VCs in job applications. A study of the Swiss Integration Forum in 2003 demonstrated that CVs with foreign names were systematically rejected. Geneva is experimenting with anonymous CVs. Others suggest to combat the problem by coaching managers in intercultural competence rather than by imposing anonymous CVs.

**NIVAROX** (producer of mechanical hearts for the big Swiss watch brands) – “we will be obliged to integrate people, there is no other choice.”

The number of people employed by the Neuchâtel watch-makers fell from 90.000 to 30.000 people in a couple of years in the 1980s when the Japanese quartz watches crowded out the mechanical Swiss watches.

Now the demand for Swiss mechanical watches is again up and the turnover is increasing 25% per year. The needs for workers are growing accordingly in a context of low natural population growth (1.4 children per woman in Switzerland). The Swiss watch industry is de facto dependent on foreign workers and has developed programmes, together with the association of CIOs of the Swiss watch group, the association of Neuchâtel industries, the association of Heads of enterprises, to improve the managers’ intercultural skills through:

- seminars about intercultural relations
- training courses – sessions with 10 managers two half-days
- seminars par function (for instance DRH)

In addition, training classes are organised for new foreign workers to present and discuss

- the Swiss political system
- the Citizens charter – Swiss principles and values
- residence status and related problems
- the educational system
- health and welfare issues

The following projects have been put in place to improve access of foreigners or people of migrant origin to employment (and enlarge of the pool of potential employees):

*Speranza 2000* – recruitment and training of marginalised young people, in co-operation with social services who select suitable candidates following technical criteria. The young people are observed at the work place for 12 weeks and eventually offered a work contract of unlimited duration. For 1 year, all 48 young people participating in the project have remained in the enterprises. Around 30% of them only were Swiss nationals.

*Speranza bis*: a home-to-work scheme for mothers who had stopped for 10-15 years to work and cannot find jobs. Over 20 women have already participated.

Another scheme will be developed for people with disabilities. The managers will also be trained in this respect.

The trainings have been extended to the entire SWISS group.

In the future the scheme might be exported to all economic branches of the canton, especially in branches where there is a shortage of workers. A class with 10 young people has been set up by Gastro Neuchatel for service in restaurants/hotels, and the group will find employers for those who succeed in the class.

The same scheme has been extended to France in order to find workers for French enterprises.

## Media

In Switzerland there are almost no journals which have national penetration. The main newspapers in Neuchâtel are L'Express (since 1738) and l'Impartial (since 1881). They have around 40 journalists, together circulate in 40.000 copies and are read by around 100.000 readers, i.e. over 60% of the Canton population. The readership is however aging and the newspapers find it hard to renew it.

The journalists are often of immigrant origin or foreign residents and are very sensitive to the diversity and integration issues despite the fact that their readership is much more conservative. However, sensitivity and respect for diversity are a matter of editorial policy for the newspaper and they would not change their policy to avoid possible conflicts.

The newspapers report often on the celebrations of different ethnic communities. During the training camp of the Portuguese team for Euro2008, they will publish one page in Portuguese everyday and present Portuguese culture.

Valérie Kernen is a free lance journalist who resigned from her job in radio to be able to present a different type of information. In her view the media have no time to go towards foreign residents, to take the time to discuss with them – the groups the most stigmatized are those whom journalists have the least time to approach. This is why she started to write portraits of people of immigrant origin. Each time the interview takes several days – journalists who work as employees have no time for this sort of thing. The city pays for her work. RTN diffuses her report since 4 years because they don't cost them anything.

One of the Neuchâtel media's flagship initiatives has been the week of integration in public service media which involved a number of reports about foreigners and their lives. The week has been very successful.

There are almost no community media in Neuchâtel.

## Cultural projects

The canton does not have as such a policy of access to culture (artistic policy). They support cultural institutions but do not work on cultural participation, for instance with schools. At federal level the policy is to focus in school on academic learning and leave aside artistic and sport education. It depends on the good will of schools to work on integration, civic issues, art etc. but schools feel too overburdened to develop new activities.

Some of the projects supported by the Service du Délégué aux étrangers can be cultural if they are done for the purposes of integration. Thanks to the Neuchâtois campaign, the partnership with cultural actors has been greatly developed. Cultural activities can be effective if they are followed by debates.

In the context of a Federal integration programme cultural and neighbourhood projects were supported, and the Service helped NGO actors to present such projects. Now the Federal policy has changed and the new programme 2008-2011 which will support only language classes and information session. The demand for cultural projects is growing but there resources of the canton are limited – they provide around 600 € per project in contrast to 10.000 € in the context of the federal programme. The Canton encourages (financially) projects where two or more ethnic associations work together.



The Association "Internos" has as an explicit goal to encourage operation between associations. Bibilomonde is an intercultural library which works with many associations.

In the context of Neuchàtoi an African association worked with a local museum so that the portraits of several personalities from Neuchâtel were made by people of African origin.

The city of **Chaux-de-Fonds** (a municipality in the Canton of Neuchâtel) has as a fundamental objective to encourage intercultural and community exchanges and thus develop a stronger social fabric. The city creates conditions, advises and orients social actors towards an intercultural exchange. The city is planning to establish a task force of representatives of local services in different fields and reflect on a more formal intercultural strategy. Another project is to prepare a report on the city actions of the in the field of culture, including from the point of view the role of culture for integration.

Club 44 – organises every week a lecture and debate on a certain theme. The canton museums, the Romanish popular theatre work with Club 44 so that cultural events staged are followed by discussions.

*La plage de six pompes* (a festival of street theatre) and Les Vivamitiés (an annual series of events around a particular country) are examples of cultural events with an intercultural inspiration. The cultural institutions also participate with dedicated exhibitions, concerts, plays – many outdoor events and free.

*Théâtre du Passage Compagnie du Passage* have been established in 2000. Their choice is to work on humanistic and political themes, not on integration as such. They have adapted the play "5 men" by an Australian author, performed by immigrant actors, about the life of 5 immigrant construction workers. The play has been extremely successful.

The classical cultural institutions all face the challenge of reaching out beyond their usual audiences. Publicity and free invitations work up to a point. The Neuchàtoi campaign has definitely brought in new publics. The Service du Délégué aux étrangers proposes a list of addresses to cultural institutions to target new publics to participate in events which have an intercultural value. They also provide support (publicity etc.) to cultural events organised by associations.

## Education and youth

Today there is no policy at the level of the Canton de Neuchâtel in relation to intercultural education. There are civil education classes dealing with religion and humanism. There are also mother tongue classes. Schools may organise integration activities at their own initiative but these are not integrated with other policy levels.

Schools participate in the integration effort by organising, for instance, adaptation classes with accelerated French language programme. These classes can appeal to the intercultural mediation service of the Canton; information sessions are organised for parents; a class for "youth in transition" is put in place for pupils who need to improve their language skills before continuing regular education and who are older than the age of obligatory schooling.

Primary children from non-Francophone backgrounds are given two years support to learn French and catch up. There is not the same flexibility at the secondary level, because of the constraints of the timetable, amid pressure from the Federal Government to raise the country's overall PISA rating. Non-Francophone parents may offer their children little support in pursuing the 'higher'

subjects. Secondary students at the centre who spoke to the ICC experts however all saw it as normal that there were several nationalities in class and were very competent in French while speaking their mother tongue en famille.

The Youth and Integration Service (Service de la jeunesse et de l'intégration) offers support to students who are involved/facing issues of violence, disabilities, dropping out of school. It was established in 2008 and responds to the invitation by school heads to intervene in order to support families and teacher mediators who are dealing with students' difficulties (absenteeism is mainly a female problem, violence a male one). The socio-educational counsellors usually work with families in order to establish and to improve significant and positive relations between the school and the families (with the help of linguistic mediators when necessary). They also help to facilitate the transition of specific students when enrolling in secondary school. Challenges tend to be greater for refugee children: whereas the families of immigrants often join them only if and when they have become settled, refugee families arrive all at once and have no chance to adjust in a graduated way.

A particular goal of the integration programme is to offer alternatives to young people who might otherwise engage in delinquency, in a context where even such parties as would otherwise claim to be anti-racist have adopted the language of the radical populist right.

Youth activities taking place at the municipal level include support to the local Youth Council and (16-25 years old) Youth Parliament. Educational second chance initiatives focus on the Semestre de motivation, helping (15-20 years old) young people who are failing to participate in secondary school curricula to design their own project to enrol again. The support includes helping young people to adequately prepare to pass the necessary tests, without which access to apprenticeships cannot be secured. Motivation is a particular challenge for young people from less well socialised households, as with some Portuguese migrants whose attitude to integration is instrumental because of the expectation of return and with some from ex-Yugoslavia, for example because of the Albanian boycott of the Serbian education system in Kosovo. Children of undocumented/precarious immigrants often face irregular schooling.

Younger (11-15) kids can count on psychological support from local counsellors who implement "case management" strategies to handle critical situations. Other measures are implemented to support parenthood and to enable parents to facilitate the integration of pre-primary school children. The Service has designed seven measures to encourage reading abilities at the crèche level, structured in a 2009-2012 programme that is hosting daily 500 children between 4 months and 6 years of age, paying attention to a "mixité" approach to reading abilities, against the backdrop of a range of maternal languages. The Service co-operates with the Federation of the Migrant Communities to provide coaching to parents who are facing difficulties, involving the work of volunteers who have a migrant background themselves.

The Alter Connection project is addressed to 15-25 years (male) youth and it is meant to respond to the gang phenomenon by providing contacts with potential role models, successful people who have a migrant background. It is centred on six key mentors who are collaborating with a network of secondary mentors.

## **Intercultural mediation and the police**

The Service du Dédélégué aux étrangers offers a mediation service (SDE), defined by the law on the integration of foreigners, to individuals or groups who request it (and sometimes at their own initiative) and plays an active role in the negotiation between the parties involved in a particular

conflict. The service operates through a network of non-salaried mediators, interpreters and a centre for consultations offered in the mother tongue.

Initially interpreters came as volunteers through charity organisations, only in 2000 an agreement was signed to begin remunerating interpreters with a symbolic sum. In 2006 the remuneration was established on a salary basis with social insurance etc. Remuneration is, however, still low in comparison with market rates.

The interpreters are recruited, certified and trained as necessary, including in relation to migration, mediation and intercultural issues. Now the service has 83 interpreters mastering 40 languages and covering 95% of languages spoken in Neuchâtel.

Schools often solicit mediators, for instance when some African kids were placed in institutions when family conditions were judged unfavorable and parents thought that this was based on a racial prejudice.

The service is open to all, regardless of origin, they are attentive not to “overethnicise” the questions (and are aware of the dangers of natives feeling forgotten if all attention is focused on issues of culture only). Perhaps it is a good idea to change the name of the service which was necessary in the beginning to mark the focus on this public but which now has been overcome.

The SDE deals also with cases (complaints) linked to presumed acts of intolerance, racism and exclusion and provide advice, mediation and other interventions depending on the case. They carry out awareness-raising, training (public administration, police schools, professional centres, schools, enterprises) and monitoring of the phenomena of intolerance and racism and help improve reactivity to acts of racism and intolerance.

An interesting example of the effectiveness of this work is the case of a heavy racist attack by a couple of young people against a refugee centre. The court sentenced the perpetrators to follow an anti-racist training with the Centre, a training which produced proven behavioral changes.

The Police offers a mediation service since 2008 through a network of médiateurs urbains: urban mediators who are able to provide adequate supports to public events such as the Euro 2008. These (police) multilingual mediators have the role to identify and to prevent potential conflict during the key moments of (international) sport and cultural mass events. The Euro 2008 experience was based on the 2006 “policiers de quartier” experience and it proved positive. It involved forty mediators over a period of three weeks (50% of them from the COSM mediators pool). They handled a total of 28 cases (only in two cases the mediators had to further involve the police). It sparked the idea to introduce in five city neighbourhood the “policier social”, trying to interact pro-actively with local inhabitants to prevent local tensions and conflicts.

Issues present themselves on the streets more chaotically than when formally presented in the police station and there is no overlap between these mediating officers, who wear yellow ‘mediator’ tee-shirts and other agents. With one for each of the five neighbourhoods, they each have each to meet some 3,000 people by knocking on their doors and asking them about their problems—90 per cent have nothing to do with the law as such but with neighbourliness issues like noise and rubbish.

## Housing

The current urban situation reflects a shortage of residential building. The new housing policies are trying to avoid process of "ghettoisation" and they are aimed at encouraging "mixité". A key idea is to support collaborative practices by favouring the cooperative construction and management of residential buildings: they should be offered to residents at a price 20% lower than the average market price. Although the Canton retains most of the housing administrative power, it is possible to influence housing policies at the municipal level by favouring specific land management policies and by prioritising pre-primary, school and social service at the community level within a social cohesion strategy. But the deregulation of the housing market means the role of public authorities is constrained.

The **Louis-Favre/Le Tertre** neighbourhood **association** focuses on facilitating community bonds and activities in public places (i.e. the local square) and to create community narrative events such as "theatre from the local street windows". The association is based at the local (public building) **Hôtel des Associations**, located in Rue Louis-Favre 1, where a bar and a variety of working spaces facilitate the activities and office work of local groups and associations.

There is some social segregation in education in the city, because of the Swiss tradition that the upper class lives outside. But children attend the local school and there is very little by way of a private sector. Religious education is conducted by clerical figures coming into the school rather than being part of the curriculum. There is no ban on the Muslim veil: such issues are resolved through negotiation. Clashes tend to be along lines of colour (including between Portuguese and African youngsters) rather than religion. The majority of those who end up neither in education/training nor employment tend to be African, because of employer discrimination on the apprenticeship route into the labour market.