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Area of action “Language and learning“ Analysis of cantonal reports for 2014

In 2014, integration support was further developed and expanded in the area of action “Language and learning”. The Confederation and the cantons spent around CHF 43.9 million.

The range of language courses was already quite extensive before the launch of cantonal integration programmes. Back in 2011, the “Language and learning” programme provided around 4,240 courses to 100,000 participants. In 2014, the range of courses under cantonal integration programmes has expanded and become more professional in all cantons. The development of cantonal language learning concepts and closer networking between the various actors are part of the professionalisation process. Today, there is a very broad and diverse range of language courses, which include not just language courses but also special courses catering to specific needs.

Suitable courses for all target groups

While the range of courses varies from canton to canton, common features can nevertheless be observed. Language courses for migrants are mainly focussed on acquisition of a national language of Switzerland. Some cantons also offer courses to improve basic skills such as general mathematics. In 2014, under the area of action “Language and learning”, the cantons introduced a larger number of better-quality courses catering to the specific needs of temporarily admitted foreigners and refugees, teenagers and young adults who have recently arrived in Switzerland, parents with children to look after as well as individuals with irregular work schedules. Therefore, favourable general conditions such as reachability, suitable class schedules and childcare services will facilitate or ensure access to courses.

Establishing networking and information tasks

In the area of action “Language and learning“, the cantons work closely with the Confederation and communes, providers of language courses and social partners. In 2014, the cantons also strengthened coordination and networking between the various contact points and established frameworks on their territory. Strong networking will help to improve coordination and information flows as well as knowledge transfer. The various electronic platforms set up by the cantons also facilitate information flows. These platforms provide information to counselling offices and target groups concerning language courses. In addition, initial information meetings and welcome events are used as an additional information channel.

fide making headway

All subsequent development and professionalisation of language courses require introduction of quality control instruments and measures. Many cantons have used the start of cantonal integration programmes to establish or clarify minimum requirements that must be met in order to qualify for subsidised language courses. As for pedagogical and didactic approaches in the classroom, work with fide has become even more consolidated. Lesson plans based on fide principles focus on the communication needs of migrants living in Switzerland. The fide Secretariat began its work in March of the reporting year. In 2014, it also launched a modular training course for language instructors. This course leads to issuance of a fide certificate "Language instructor for migrants". Some cantons provide funding to help pay for this certification.

fide for day-to-day life

"Thanks to fide, I am able to align my language courses even more closely with real situations. Learning the local language not only becomes more concrete but also much more closely related to the day-to-day lives and needs of students. We interact with one another, develop specific skills and I encourage students to play an active role in shaping their learning process."

Raffaella Simeone

Language instructor for migrants

fide Secretariat

The fide Secretariat is the information centre and national contact point for all questions concerning fide.

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