

14. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are aimed at local and national policymakers, Muslim communities and civil society organisations. They reflect key findings from this report and address the need for further engagement by Berlin City Council with its myriad and growing communities. At the same time, responsibility lies with communities to initiate actions and efforts which bring about change in policy, practice and behaviour. While recognising that Berlin offers a number of very positive practices on inclusion of its diverse communities, this report calls for policies to tackle socio-economic disadvantage and minority inclusion, so as to ensure that the groups that make up the city's diverse population are consulted, and that their specific needs are understood and accommodated.

14.1 Identity

14.1.1 Nurturing Diversity

1. The Federal Commissioner for Migration and Integration (as well as the Berlin Senate, managed by the local office against discrimination, the *Landesstelle für Gleichbehandlung – gegen Diskriminierung*) should consider broad national, as well as specific local campaigns for raising awareness about discrimination on grounds of gender, ethnicity and religion as an offence, and against German and European law. This campaign should consider strengthening the use of inclusive language which does not separate 'Germans', from 'people with migration history'.
2. The Senate Administration, in co-operation with academic institutions, should consider making funds available for research into understanding the role faith plays in forging identity, and understanding faith as a positive resource for policies and politics.
3. The Senate Administration for Education should take positive steps to support the notion of multiple identities, including religious identities, into teacher training and the educational system.

14.2 Education

14.2.1 Encouraging Aspirations and Confidence

4. In order to support teachers to encourage higher aspirations and confidence among pupils, the Berlin Senate Administration for Education, Science and Research, and the *Kultusministerkonferenz* at the national level, should incorporate and strengthen cultural diversity training into initial teacher training. Such training should be undertaken regularly and be offered as part of continuous professional development for both teachers and head teachers. The Berlin Senate Administration for Education, Science and Research,

should invite contributions from different faith communities to contribute to the content of this training.

5. The Senate of Berlin are urged to strongly consider publishing the *Leaflet for Berlin schools (Handreichung für Berliner Schulen)*, which was created by the Senate Working Group 'Islam and School' (*Arbeitskreis Islam und Schule*); also to re-establish the fruitful co-operation with the Working Group. This informative leaflet, intended for teachers, contains material about Muslim communities and aims to spread knowledge about Muslims and ethnic minorities for educational purposes.

14.2.2 Addressing Perceptions

6. The Berlin Integration Policy should be utilised to establish partnerships between local schools and civil society organisations and Muslim community groups in order to address common misperceptions between teachers, parents, and pupils. Such partnerships, led by the Senate of Berlin, should be effective in creating a better mutual understanding between families with immigration history and education staff, and should explicitly consider the involvement of religious Muslim organisations. The Berlin Senate should follow the examples set by some of its districts, which have included religious Muslim organisations in consultation structures.
7. District schools in Berlin should consider intensifying personal contact with, and building mutual trust between, teachers and minority and Muslim parents by creating opportunities for informal contact. A successful example would be the parents' cafés (*Elterncafé*) that take place in different schools in Berlin outside of a formal school setting. The Berlin Senate, as well as individual district schools, should consider employing staff who can act as mediators between teachers, Muslim pupils, and parents. These mediators could include observant and/or scholarly Muslims with experience in conflict resolution, and who have the ability to contextualise religious arguments and their understanding.

14.2.3 Quality of Schools

8. The Berlin Senate for Education should consider increasing the budget for investing in schools with high immigrant populations. This would allow for smaller classrooms and improved quality of learning. The Senate should ensure that reducing funds does not affect the quality of schools in more socially deprived areas, and across the field of education generally. Cost-cutting in education can lead to far-reaching consequences for the future of any city's population.

14.3 Employment

14.3.1 Empowering young Muslims

9. The Berlin Senate should consider establishing a mentoring programme in all schools with a high percentage of pupils with immigration history. Former pupils of both immigrant and non-immigrant backgrounds should be used as role models. This can be undertaken in collaboration with organisations such as *Kumulus* and others, in turn improving knowledge for pupils about a variety of educational and professional possibilities.
10. Schools, district, city and national employment offices should explore seminars and events offering specific career guidance, including how to prepare curriculum vitae and build and use social networks for improved labour market possibilities. The Berlin Senate and district authorities, as well as prospective employers (private and public), should consider apprenticeships and training for young Muslim and ethnic minority graduates who are under-represented in various professional sectors (including politics and the media). This would create opportunities for a better understanding of career openings within these areas, as well as simultaneously stimulating interest in these fields which are under-represented by minorities.
11. The Berlin Senate Administration for Integration, Employment and Social Affairs, and the Senate for Economy, Technology and Women, together with local employment agencies and employers, should explore the role of public-private partnerships. Such ventures should be designed to create strategic plans to raise employment prospects for job-seekers, including those from an ethnic-minority background.³⁰⁸

14.3.2 Addressing Religious and Ethnic Discrimination

12. The *Landesstelle für Gleichbehandlung und gegen Diskriminierung* (Anti-Discrimination Office) of the Berlin Senate, in co-operation with anti-discrimination NGOs and the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, should offer greater advice and guidance to employers on how to ensure that they uphold national and European legal obligations on anti-discrimination on the grounds of religion and ethnicity. This could include further information about various legal instruments which prohibit discrimination, such as The General Equal Treatment Act (AGG), as well as compiling and disseminating good practices from employers who have recognised the need to have a diverse workforce reflecting the society in which it operates.

³⁰⁸ General Recommendation: FRA – European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (ed.), “Community Cohesion at the local level: addressing the needs and concerns of Muslim Communities. Examples of local initiatives.” Vienna, March 2008, p. 51.

13. The OSI research indicates that discrimination on the grounds of visible manifestations of religion is a particular concern for women who wear the headscarf. The Berlin Senate's *Leitstelle für Gleichbehandlung und gegen Diskriminierung* should consider further evaluation of the effects that the Berlin 'Law of Neutrality' (*Neutralitätsgesetz*) has on the economic, social and civil participation of Muslim women wearing head coverings with a view to possible reform of this law.
14. Muslim organisations in Berlin should consider stronger engagement in combating discrimination by strengthening networks with local policymakers and relevant anti-discrimination NGOs, as well as raising awareness within their communities.
15. The Berlin Senate should consider the creation of a specific advice and support centre for victims of anti-Muslim discrimination and racism, in addition to the already existing centres for support against ethnic and other discrimination. This centre should gather and document such cases, as well as offer support (including access to legal advice) for those seeking redress against religious discrimination, with emphasis on anti-Muslim prejudice. The Senate Administration should consider supporting a Muslim organisation which in collaboration with an existing anti-discrimination organisation, would strengthen trust between the community, officials and the civil society partner. Any such effort should include the Senate's *Leitstelle für Gleichbehandlung und gegen Diskriminierung* and the Berlin Commissioner for Integration and Migration.

14.4 Housing

14.4.1 Preventing Segregation and Addressing Discrimination

16. The *Local District Administration* are urged to consider a stronger focus on a shared local identity and policies (including urban regeneration) which could centre on encouraging collective investment and the upkeep of local neighbourhoods. OSI respondents highlighted their concerns in the neighbourhood revolving around the need for improved cleanliness of the streets, developing traffic-reduction measures, and supporting retail trade in order to maintain the surroundings.
17. The *Federal Office for Anti-discrimination* should support equal access to housing, and monitor complaints of discrimination when attempting to access adequate housing. The Federal Office should offer information leaflets available in different languages, as well as establish an office within an institutional department which could collect complaints, monitor discrimination cases and make recommendations to tackle cases. Furthermore, the *Federal Office for Anti-Discrimination* should consider awareness-raising of

the commitments underpinning equality and non-discrimination laws such as The General Equal Treatment Act (AGG) in regards to housing.

14.5 Health and Social Services

14.5.1 Create a more Inclusive Environment

18. Health care is generally viewed by OSI respondents as satisfactory. However, the needs of elderly Muslim patients in hospitals and care homes are an emerging concern, especially for those who do not speak German. Recognising that the health sector is overwhelmingly viewed in a positive light, hospitals should consider ways to address the linguistic/cultural/religious needs of a growing elderly Muslim population and how to provide appropriate service to this group.
19. *Hospitals and doctors' surgeries* should provide information in different languages and where possible, reflect the diversity of its patients through the ethnic and religious composition of its medical and administrative staff.

14.5.2 Recognising the Needs of Vulnerable Groups

20. The OSI findings touch upon the health and social security needs of specific vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, women and refugees. The Berlin Senate for Integration, Labour and Social Affairs should undertake research into the increased risk of poverty faced by these and other specific groups and how to allow for their particular needs to be addressed by the health sector.
21. The Berlin Senate for Integration, Labour and Social Affairs should ensure that individuals without residence permits have their basic health needs met through the principle of the right of all to basic health care
22. As part of the effort to improve social-service delivery to youth, the Berlin Senate, together with specific district administrations, should strengthen investment in youth organisations. Emphasis should be placed on the employment of professional youth-workers from different ethnic and religious backgrounds. Reducing funding and budgets should not affect the area of youth work, as this group is especially vulnerable and affected in terms of education and employment opportunities.

14.6 Policing and Security

14.6.1 Improving Relations between the Police and Muslim Communities

23. The Berlin Senate of the Interior, together with the Berlin *Polizeipräsident* should encourage local police stations to have a greater number of police officers in neighbourhoods and to increase their visibility. This will aid in

fostering greater trust between communities and police and demonstrate that the police are not only focused on Muslim communities as regards security-related incidents.

24. Local district police forces and Muslim and migrant organisations should work together to actively encourage Muslim-community involvement in the criminal justice system. Muslim organisations can also support the police by seeking new avenues for them to partner groups such as local mosque associations.
25. The Berlin Senate of the Interior, the Berlin *Polizeipräsident*, and heads of local police stations should explore with local imams the possibility of joint patrols in Muslim majority neighbourhoods.

14.7 Participation and Citizenship

14.7.1 Promote Inclusive Civic Identity

26. In order to support Muslims in having a stronger sense of belonging within German society, the Berlin Senate should consider initiating an awareness campaign for and with Muslim and migrant organisations. This campaign should focus on the rights and responsibilities of all in society, and should emphasise a common and inclusive civic identity. The Berlin Senate should develop an award scheme that encourages and rewards creative contributions from the population.

14.7.2 Provide Clarity on Muslim Organisations Cited in National Intelligence Reports

27. The *Federal Government*, and especially the *Federal Ministry of the Interior*, should consider reviewing regulations that have the effect of excluding Muslim organisations from public funding. The role of the *Verfassungsschutz* needs to be critically reviewed, by examining the disruptive effects of its reports on the participation of Muslim organisations.
28. The *Senate Administration for the Interior*, as well as the *National Ministry of the Interior*, should ensure that local and national intelligence agencies add a preamble to security reports about how their findings should be understood. It has to be clear that the citation of certain organisations within these reports does not classify them as organisations with terrorist links, and should not disqualify them from seeking public funding.

14.8 Media

14.8.1 Promoting Ethnic-minority Representation in the Media

29. The respective *Landesmedienanstalten* (State Media Authorities) in Berlin, and other federal states, should increase the representation of Muslims as well as other minorities in media councils (*Medienräte*). They should also build capacity within Muslim communities by supporting media scholarship awards in order to improve ethnic-minority representation in this field.
30. Journalism schools should consider including modules focusing on providing religious and cultural histories of various faith and ethnic-minority groups in Germany. Partnerships could be formed with migrant and Muslim organisations such as the umbrella organisation *Initiative Berliner Muslime IBMUS*.

14.8.2 Strengthen Mechanisms for Challenging Distorted Images of Muslims

31. Muslim organisations and various media institutes (*Medienanstalten*), such as the *Medienanstalt Berlin Brandenburg*, should consider strengthening existing networks and consultative mechanisms between media personnel and Muslim representatives, with the aim of challenging distorted images of Muslims and minorities. Such mechanisms should also seek to offer alternative Muslim voices to journalists as well as to strengthen mutual trust.

14.8.3 Building the Capacities of Muslims in the Media

32. Muslim organisations should develop/seek clear and effective media training for their staff and representatives in order to successfully promote their positive work and initiatives across local and national media.