

## **Presentation: Tandem<sup>®</sup> / Training Course "Policing in a multicultural society"**

The Tandem<sup>®</sup> program is part of the large police training course "Policing in a multicultural society", designed in 1999 by the International Center of Cultures and Languages (ICCL) in Vienna, Austria. The course is financed by the Austrian Police Academy/Federal Ministry of the Interior.

It is supported by the UNHCR.

Over a period of seven months 20 to 25 high level police officers from all over Austria take several seminars in two semesters, comprising altogether 130 teaching units.

In these seminars the police officers reflect about their daily work, about principles of communication, their dual role as defenders and violators of human rights and they are informed about strategies in conflict management and socio cultural implications of migration and life in Austria as a migrant/refugee.

### **Intercultural-Tandem<sup>®</sup>**

"Tandem<sup>®</sup> Learning" in cultural contact is the central element of the course as it provides the police officers with direct contact with representatives of the migrant population outside their work situation.

The Tandem<sup>®</sup> seminars take place on five evenings, each four hours in length, during the seven months of the overall police training course.

The Intercultural-Tandem<sup>®</sup> experience involves a series of interactions between the group of police officers and an equal number of migrants from other countries. The interactions occur in structured group settings and in one-on-one Tandem<sup>®</sup>-pair relationships. To date, there have been over 150 high level police officers and approximately the same number of migrants who have participated.

### **Objectives**

The Tandem<sup>®</sup> program is designed to give participants the opportunity to get to know people from different cultural backgrounds in a new and positive way. Both police officers and migrants are used to having mainly negative experiences with each other during their everyday work and life. Through the Tandem<sup>®</sup> program, police officers get to personally know migrants and learn about their lives and cultures; and, in turn, the migrants get an insight into the life and working conditions of the police officers. Thus, prejudices are dismantled and a mutual understanding can be developed. Sometimes they even become friends.

### **Joint projects**

The Tandem<sup>®</sup>-pairs conduct joint projects: translating an information sheet for asylum seekers into several languages, making a video film about preparing meals together or a game about languages are just some examples of the many good ideas which were developed in the last years. During the last evening, a celebration with a music program, a common dinner, and the sharing of the Tandem<sup>®</sup> partners' joint projects takes place.

### **National and international responses**

In the last several years, there has been a big interest in this tactic within Austria and in the larger European context. In 2004/2005 the ICCL carried out a pilot-project with the police in Budapest about transplanting the tactic.

### **Contact information:**

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