



OÖ Guidelines
The basics of
living together.

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GUIDELINES

The basics of
living together.

**CLEAR
RULES.**

**FIXED
VALUES.**

FOREWORD

Upper Austria is the region of togetherness and solidarity - a democratic, open and diverse society. People with different influences, backgrounds and beliefs live here together. Diversity is a fact of life - in some areas it is an opportunity and in certain areas it is a challenge. In order to achieve successful cooperation, a common foundation is needed: shared values, binding rules and mutual respect.

Many people with a migration history have lived here for years or generations. They are part of our society, work and are involved in associations, families, businesses or neighbourhoods – often, of course, this sometimes comes with special challenges. Despite the diversity, we share many basic concerns: a good life for our children, security, education, work and social recognition.

At the same time, social changes – especially through migration and refugee migration – call for new requirements. Different role models, values or religious beliefs can lead to tensions. An open society must be willing to provide support – but also be able to set boundaries where human dignity, equality or the rule of law are violated. Openness and tolerance do not mean arbitrariness. Anyone who wants to live here must adhere to the shared values.

With these Upper Austria Guidelines, we want to highlight what connects us, not what separates us. Anyone who wants to be part of this community must be prepared to follow the basic rule, take responsibility for themselves and society and contribute to the well-being of everyone. This is the only way we can successfully secure our common future – in an Upper Austria that is strong through cohesion, performance, respect and fairness.

Mag. Thomas Stelzer

Upper Austria Regional Governor

Dr. Christian Dörfel

Regional Minister for Integration

WHY WE NEED A SET OF VALUES

Our society is changing: Globalisation, digitisation, migration and new lifestyles are changing the social fabric - and this includes Upper Austria. Different lifestyles constantly meet in everyday life – at work, at nursery or during sports.

Diversity increases the need for guidance. People want to know what they can rely on, what connects us and where the boundaries lie. A set of values makes this clear. These values demonstrate what we share with each other – and what we can and sometimes must expect from each other.

A focus on the Constitution is important, but not sufficient. Laws regulate the outside – they say what is allowed or prohibited. But coexistence is also based on social and cultural values that are not included in the law, but are essential for coexistence.

We need **clarity about our core values** especially in times of growing diversity. Immigrants are often expected to adapt to local values – but when asked what these values are exactly, the answer often remains vague, arbitrary or contradictory. This lack of clarity weakens not only the ability to integrate, but also mutual understanding. How can immigrants get their bearings if we cannot determine what the aims should be? That is why we need an understandable, comprehensible and broadly accepted set of values – **for locals as well as for immigrants.**

Values offer guidance, without patronising. They offer a practical compass for everyday life: What applies to everyone – regardless of origin, religion, ideology or social status? What strengthens trust in our society – and what jeopardises it?

A modern set of values determines rights and obligations. These values do not want to make anyone equal, but rather to create a framework in which we can live together fairly and respectfully – particularly in a more diverse society. They set limits when human dignity, equality or freedom are violated. And they invite people to get involved, take responsibility and stand up for each other.

They do not protect against conflicts – but they give us the basis for resolving conflicts fairly and without violence. And they strengthen what holds us together: Trust, fairness, freedom, responsibility and community.

These values describe the most important foundations for a good coexistence – on three levels: constitutional, social and cultural. It is a guide for immigrants and a reminder of the responsibility of the majority society.

THREE INTEGRATION-RELEVANT GROUPS - WHY WE MUST DIFFERENTIATE THEM

Upper Austria has become diverse in terms of language, culture and religion. People with a migration history don't just differ in their background, religion or language, but also in their education, social situation, lifestyle and values. Therefore, we can't just talk about "immigrants". Generally speaking, there are three groups and they differ in their willingness and ability to integrate and their integration progress¹. This is important so that well-integrated people are not equated with problematic groups – and so that we can set clear expectations of those who refuse to integrate. These three groups are not rigid categories but part of a dynamic social structure.

1. Integrated groups (approx. 70%)

The large majority have lived in Upper Austria for years or decades, or were born here. They are well integrated legally, economically and socially, are part of society, are involved in the workplace, in clubs or in the neighbourhood - and feel connected to the region. Many people in this group have long upheld the fundamental values, are high achievers, but rightly expect social recognition, visibility and participation. It is precisely this group that must not be overlooked. A system of values that merely identifies and generalises problems risks losing the confidence of these people. Which is why the set of values aims to achieve the active appreciation of completed and lived integration.

2. Groups making an effort to integrate (approx. 20%)

These groups include, in particular, new immigrants, refugees or socio-economically weak people with low levels of education or uncertain living conditions. Many of them want to integrate, but often struggle with barriers: lack of German skills, access to the labour market, poor housing conditions and lack of networks. This requires a set of values that not only demands, but also encourages: It must set expectations (e.g. willingness to take training and learn the language), but also build bridges and create prospects. Only in this way can integration succeed without risking social exclusion.

3. Anti-integration and anti-democratic groups (approx. 10%)

These groups are characterised by withdrawal into isolated environments, the refusal of common rules and anti-democratic attitudes in part. This is not primarily about economic hardship or lack of opportunities, but about conscious delimitation: through social and cultural self-isolation, patriarchal patterns of dominance, rejection of diversity, equality or state authority. This is where understanding and tolerance end. A liberal, democratic society must counter anti-integration or extremist tendencies.

The values of Upper Austria respond to this diversity with a balanced strategy: They include recognition for successful integration efforts, encourage and demand commitment from those who are still in the early stages – and they draw clear boundaries where the democratic order is undermined.

¹ Classification into integrated, integration-oriented and anti-integration groups is a rough, analytical classification based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative data on origin, social situation, education, employment situation, language skills, values and recognition orientation, as well as expert assessments.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE UPPER AUSTRIA GUIDELINES

- 1. Everyone has dignity and deserves respect**
Everyone has equal value. If you want respect, you must behave respectfully yourself - your words and actions. This includes courtesy and good manners.
- 2. Freedom calls for responsibility – it ends where the freedom of others begins**
Being free means choosing how you live your life, without harming others. Freedom applies to everyone, not just for yourself.
- 3. Women and men are equal – no ifs or buts**
Women may not be oppressed, controlled or treated badly - regardless of their culture or religion. Men and women deserve equal respect in their professional and personal lives.
- 4. There is no room for hate and extremism – from any side**
Democratic and fair rules apply to and protect everyone. Anyone who threatens, devalues or excludes others harms our togetherness. This is not tolerated.
- 5. German and education open doors – they are mandatory, not optional**
Language creates understanding, education opens up opportunities. Anyone who wants to integrate must learn. Parents are responsible for the education of their children.
- 6. Securing the future and prosperity – through performance and community spirit**
Performance, diligence and energy are the basics for personal advancement and well-being. Anyone who takes responsibility and considers the common good strengthens our region and helps shape our future.
- 7. Help for anyone who really needs it – not to be exploited**
Anyone who receives support must be prepared to contribute something themselves - through work, further education and integration. Anyone who exploits this violates solidarity and must expect consequences.
- 8. Disputes are resolved through discussions – not with violence**
Differences of opinion cannot be avoided. They must be resolved with discussions and understanding, not with threats or violence.
- 9. Shared spaces require mutual consideration**
Public spaces such as streets, parks and squares belong to us all. Consideration, cleanliness and appropriate behaviour are expected from everyone.
- 10. Protect diversity – clear boundaries to prevent negative developments**
Differences often make togetherness more colourful and vibrant. But diversity is not an excuse to undermine human dignity, equality or the law.
- 11. Preserve and shape our home together**
Home means where people feel a sense of belonging and responsibility. Anyone who wants to belong should be prepared to contribute through commitment and voluntary work.
- 12. Religion provides support and guidance – but no religion is above the law**
Everyone is free to believe, or not believe what they want - but no-one may force their religion on others or place it above the law.
- 13. Our culture deserves respect – anyone who lives here must act as such**
Anyone who lives here can bring in new things but they must respect our region's values and customs - and must adapt, but without having to give up their own identity.

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01

Everyone has dignity and deserves respect

In Austria, the dignity of every human being is non-negotiable – it is the foundation of our democratic order and our social coexistence. It applies to anyone who lives here – regardless of origin, religion or social status. Anyone living here must be prepared to share this core value and to maintain it in their dealings with others – at work, on the street, in the classroom or in the neighbourhood. At the same time, respect is not a one-way street. Anyone who expects it must offer this themselves – to fellow human beings, State institutions and society. Respect does not mean accepting everything, but also setting limits when values are violated. We advocate for a strong state based on the rule of law, for clear rules – and for a society based on freedom, equality, performance, cohesion and mutual respect.

We acknowledge the vast majority – immigrants and locals alike – who treat each other respectfully, peacefully and on an equal footing in everyday life.

We set clear boundaries: Anyone who devalues or insults others because of their gender, religion, way of life or origin has no place here.

Questions to consider:

- Where did you last experience respect in everyday life?
- When did you last feel disrespected?
- What is respectful behaviour for you – and what is not?
- How can you show respect in everyday life?

Practical examples:

- Offering your seat to an elderly person or a pregnant woman on the bus.
- Not mocking classmates due to their background, language or appearance.
- Interacting politely with people in all professions.
- Not insulting people due to their headscarf, kippah, cross or clothing.

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02

Freedom calls for responsibility – it ends where the freedom of others begins

Freedom is a precious asset. It enables every person to shape their own life. But freedom is never limitless. It involves responsibility – towards yourself, towards others and towards society as a whole. It ends where it violates the rights, security or dignity of others. Anyone claiming rights and freedoms must consistently grant them to others – regardless of whether they think, believe or live differently. As freedom without responsibility leads to recklessness – and endangers coexistence. Freedom of expression is not a licence for hatred, incitement or polarisation. Anyone who only emphasises their own rights, but does not care about the consequences for others, contributes to division. Anyone who puts religious, ideological or political beliefs above the common social framework jeopardises respectful coexistence. Freedom of religion allows the exercise of faith – but not the assertion of claims to absoluteness that undermine these freedoms.

We appreciate everyone who respects their own freedoms and those of others.

We set clear boundaries to religious or ideological calls to hate, to those with contempt for those who think differently, or to those who abuse freedom to devalue others.

Questions to consider:

- Where is freedom in everyday life particularly important to you?
- When have you experienced someone taking advantage of freedom at the expense of others?
- Where is the line between freedom and inconsiderateness for you?
- How can you use your freedom responsibly?

Practical examples:

- Practice your religion freely, without attempting to convert or harassing others.
- Have celebrations, but consider the neighbourhood in the evening.
- Use social media without spreading hatred or incitement.
- Respect fasting periods without forcing others to participate.

03

Women and men are equal – no ifs or buts

In Austria, women and men decide how to live their lives independently – regardless of where they come from, what they believe in or how they live. Anyone who lives here must support this claim to equality – not only on paper, but in everyday life. This also means that women can move freely and safely without fear of harassment or violence – in public spaces, at work, on their way home, on public transport, in community life, but also at home. Women are to be accepted and respected as equal – without exceptions. This applies to all areas of public life, whether they work a police officer, teacher or in any other role. Physical and mental integrity is not negotiable. Culturally or religiously based ideas that restrict women in their way of life – whether this is in partner choice, education, professional practice, independent mobility or participation in public life – are incompatible with our values. Equality has long been lived in many families and groups – of course, based on cooperation. At the same time, there are still attitudes that want to devalue, control, or push women back from public life – often under the guise of honour, religion, or tradition. We are clearly opposed to this.

We appreciate families and communities where equality is a matter of course, regardless of origin or religion.

We set clear boundaries: There is no place for violence, paternalism and oppression. Every woman – whether she is a teacher, a police officer or in any other position – deserves respect.

Questions to consider:

- Do you know of situations in which girls or women have been treated unfairly?
 - Why is equality important?
 - What are the consequences of women being disadvantaged?
 - How can you support gender equality in everyday life?
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Practical examples:

- Respect women as teachers, doctors or police officers.
- Girls may take part in swimming lessons or excursions.
- Women are allowed to drive, travel and decide on their own occupation or clothing.
- Men also take on household and childcare tasks.

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04

There is no room for hate and extremism – from any side

We live in a free and democratic society - this is not to be taken for granted, it is a responsibility for us all. Anyone who lives in Upper Austria must respect the democratic rules. This includes: no room for hate or extremism - regardless of whether this is religiously, politically, ideologically or ethnically motivated. Because hatred, intimidation, threat of violence and extremism, regardless of the form, are a threat to peaceful-democratic coexistence. This becomes particularly dangerous when groups retreat into parallel worlds, reject democratic institutions or socialise children with conspiracy stories, hate images or authoritarian views of the world. Anyone who denies others the right to belong, who devalues or incites them, is opposed to coexistence. Religious radicalisation – such as through Islamist or right-wing or left-wing extremist networks – also endangers our society. Nor is it acceptable for certain groups to share anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim or anti-Western attitudes.

We appreciate the vast majority who live together in a respectful, constitutional and peaceful way.

We set clear boundaries to fanaticism and hatred – whether based on political, religious or cultural reasons. Anyone who excludes, intimidates or questions our democratic rules has no place here.

Questions to consider:

- Where have you encountered hatred or incitement – online or in everyday life?
- What distinguishes criticism from hatred?
- Why is extremism – whether political, religious or ideological – dangerous?
- How can we take action against hate and extremism in everyday life?

Practical examples:

- No anti-Semitic or anti-Muslim slogans.
- Do not spread conspiracy stories or incitement.
- No threats or violence during demonstrations.
- Object if people speak in an inhumane manner.

05

German and education open doors – they are mandatory, not optional

Anyone who wants to belong must be able to communicate. In Austria, German is the common language – at nursery, at school, at work, in offices, in the community. Commitment and personal responsibility are the top priorities. Those who stay here longer are obliged to learn German. Because language creates understanding, because a lack of language skills isolates. At the same time, education empowers people to become independent, to rise socially and to become democratically involved. Parents have a duty to provide education and support for their children. Anyone who refuses education for themselves or their children is blocking the future – primarily their own, and that of society as a whole. In low-education environments, school learning is underestimated – partly because of overburdening, partly because of ignorance or lack of awareness. That needs to change. This requires initiative and needs-based support, but also clear expectations. We know: We don't all start with the same prerequisites. So we help where necessary. At the same time, we expect initiative. Anyone who wants to build a future here is expected to make an effort based on the possibilities available to them. Language and education are compulsory and not optional, because they are an essential prerequisite for good understanding and advancement in our society.

We appreciate all those who make every effort to learn German, and take up education and further training – for themselves and for their children.

We set clear boundaries to indifference, conscious denial, and contempt for education and effort – which obstruct their own or their children's future opportunities and inhibit their social progress.

Questions to consider:

- Why is education important?
- What opportunities have language or education given you?
- What opportunities, possibilities and obstacles exist?
- How can parents support their children?

Practical examples:

- Attend German courses and participate actively.
- Support children in their education.
- Participate in parents' evenings, help with homework.
- Use continuing education to advance professionally.

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06

Securing the future and prosperity – through performance and community spirit

Upper Austria is strong and united. But this hasn't happened by itself. It is based on the fact that everyone contributes according to their own possibilities, whether they are an immigrant or born here. Self-responsibility is not just an individual virtue – it is economically necessary. Especially in times of a shortage of skilled workers and demographic change, every hand, every talent, every willingness to participate counts. Anyone who can work should work. Performance, diligence and energy are the basics for personal advancement and well-being. Self-responsibility means not expecting everything from the State or from others, but actively shaping one's own life and work for economic self-preservation. The common good means thinking beyond your own progress and considering the well-being of society as a whole. Only if commitment, personal responsibility and solidarity combine effectively will Upper Austria remain somewhere prosperity is developed, the future is secured and opportunities for future generations are created.

We appreciate everyone who contributes to our prosperity through dedication, diligence and community spirit and who make it fit for the future.

We set clear boundaries with those who refuse effort, responsibility and community spirit or want to permanently live at the expense of the community.

Questions to consider:

- When did you last experience the recognition of this commitment or diligence?
- What can solidarity look like without it becoming a one-way street?
- Where do you experience people expecting too much from the State or others?
- What does it take to ensure that even those who find things more difficult have fair opportunities?

Practical examples:

- Self-initiative to work or attend further education.
- Take responsibility – for example in a team, in a voluntary position or in a family environment.
- As a company, offer internships or apprenticeships in order to give young people opportunities.
- Recognise the achievements of others – even if they are not visible or prestigious.

07

Help for anyone who really needs it – not to be exploited

Our welfare state is a great asset – it protects, supports and provides security in emergencies. Anyone who needs help should get it – but also try to get out of this situation if possible. However, solidarity must not be a one-way street. Our welfare state can only remain effective if support is targeted at those who really need it. Those who receive support should actively strive for work, qualification or integration within the scope of their possibilities. We don't all start with the same prerequisites. But it is reasonable to expect people to strive for work, language, qualification, or social participation – within the scope of their possibilities. Those who only take permanently without giving ultimately destroy trust in solidarity as a whole.

We appreciate all those who do not give up despite difficult living conditions, but who make serious efforts towards work, education, language and integration.

We set clear boundaries to the use of the system and to the sense of entitlement without willingness to cooperate – regardless of origin or status.

Questions to consider:

- When did you need help yourself?
- When is help justified – and when is it not?
- Why does abuse harm solidarity?
- What does personal responsibility mean in this context?

Practical examples:

- Accept work if possible.
- Actively use language and integration courses.
- In the event of an emergency, accept offers of support and work to become independent.
- No undeclared work or social fraud.

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08

Disputes are resolved through discussions – not with violence

In an open society, different opinions come together – this is a big part of it. In a diverse region like Upper Austria, disagreements are not a state of emergency, but part of everyday life. Conflicts cannot be avoided – the decisive factor is how we manage them. Constructive disputes are not a problem, but part of the solution: They make differences visible, open up new perspectives and strengthen our democracy. But for this to succeed, rules are needed: Fairness, respect and the willingness to communicate. Democratic discourse thrives on reasoning, not aggression. Anyone who gets loud, wants to insult or silence others has not understood the principle. What we do not accept: Hate, intimidation and violence – whether physical, verbal or online. Even the offending of nationalist or religious feelings, injured honour or hurt images of masculinity never justifies violence or self-justice. In our rule of law, the monopoly on violence lies with the State – not with individuals or groups. Disputes are ultimately decided by independent courts.

We appreciate the vast majority who deal with conflicts with respect, allow criticism and seek solutions – even on sensitive issues.

We set clear boundaries to any form of violence, threat, or contempt for those who think differently, whether they are politically, religiously, or culturally motivated.

Questions to consider:

- Why are disputes sometimes necessary – and when does it fall into the negative or into violence?
- What consequences does violence have for victims and perpetrators?
- What roles do honour, religion or images of masculinity play in violence?
- How can you resolve conflicts fairly and constructively?

Practical examples:

- Solve disagreements at school through discussion.
- Play fair on the football pitch.
- Resolve family arguments through discussion.
- Share criticism online without using insults.

09

Shared spaces require mutual consideration

Parks, playgrounds, schools, housing estates, health facilities, shopping centres or public transport are all places that we share with each other. They belong to all of us – regardless of origin, religion or way of life. But shared spaces only work when mutual consideration is the rule – not the exception. Public spaces are not places that are free of standards and laws: Anyone who uses them must behave in such a way that others can feel just as comfortable – this includes order, cleanliness, appropriate behaviour, respectful interaction and consideration for volume, language and personal limits. When individuals or groups speak loudly, disregard rules, or intimidate others, there is no sense of community, but fear, frustration, or anger. It is crucial that everyone learns to take a step back where appropriate – out of respect for the other person, especially in a diverse society, Because freedom does not mean: I'll do what I want. But: I know there are others to consider.

We appreciate behaviour, mindfulness, and respectful interactions – especially in everyday situations where many people come together.

We set clear boundaries to excessive volume, aggressive behaviour, dominance, littering and the neglect of public spaces.

Questions to consider:

- Where have you experienced a lack of consideration?
- Why is it annoying when rules are disregarded?
- What is each individual's responsibility in shared spaces?
- How can you show consideration in everyday life?

Practical examples:

- Dispose of rubbish properly when in the park or playground.
- Be quiet at night in residential complexes.
- Consider elderly people or prams on the bus.
- No aggressive or dominant behaviour in groups.

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10

Protect diversity – clear boundaries to prevent negative developments

Upper Austria has become diverse. People of different origins, religions and lifestyles meet in everyday life – in the neighbourhood, at work, at school. Many key values – such as honesty, helpfulness or hospitality – are widespread worldwide and connect people no matter where they come from. At the same time, it is clear: Cultural diversity is not self-evident. It can enrich – but it can also overwhelm, irritate or create tension. Not every attitude, practice or norm that we bring with us fits in with what constitutes our coexistence in a democratic and constitutional society: for example, the devaluation of women, patriarchal dominance, religious isolation or intolerance to those who think differently. These downsides must be clearly identified and addressed decisively – without generalisation, but also without trivialisation. Diversity is not a blank cheque. In order for our coexistence to work, we need a common foundation: respect for our values, respect for human dignity, recognition of the rule of law and a willingness to commit to equality and freedom. Anyone demanding tolerance for themselves must also offer it to others – even those who live, believe or think differently. And those who permanently refuse, shut themselves off or establish parallel structures jeopardise social cohesion.

We appreciate cultural diversity that is lived with openness, respect and in accordance with the fundamental principles of our democratic and constitutional society.

We set clear boundaries to any form of religious or cultural intolerance, social isolation and the refusal to share common rules.

Questions to consider:

- What do you find enriching in terms of cultural diversity?
- Where is diversity problematic?
- Why is tolerance not a choice?
- How can we experience diversity without violating fundamental values?

Practical examples:

- Have celebrations together.
- Discover new food and music cultures.
- Stay open to new things, while clearly stating where lines are being crossed.
- Respect for people of other religions or ways of life.

11

Preserve and shape our home together

Home is more than a geographic location or a question of background. It is not an asset or a static tradition, but a living history which is grown over generations, characterised by experiences, relationships, connectedness and responsibility. Home is not defined. It is changing – through education, mobility, technology, demographic change and also through immigration. Those who live here and take responsibility for their surroundings – as parents, neighbours, in their profession, in associations or in the community – contribute to maintaining and developing their home. Because home is the place where the familiar is preserved and lived without being closed off to the new. Participation is not a self-evident process – it also requires personal readiness. Migrants are invited to actively participate in our society – by engaging in our values, traditions and customs and by helping to shape community life. It is clear: Anyone who wants to be part of it must be willing to take responsibility, adapt and actively participate – without having to give up their own cultural identity. However, those who refuse to do so deprive themselves of the chance to form a common „we“. Home is not a one-way street. It thrives on mutual respect: from the openness of the locals to enable immigrants to get involved – and from the willingness of immigrants to take responsibility for themselves and the community. Home is created where people feel like they belong and take responsibility.

We appreciate all those who take responsibility and strengthen our community through engagement in the community and volunteering.

We set clear boundaries to those who exploit the idea of home to exclude or behave disrespectfully or indifferently towards others.

Questions to consider:

- What does home mean to you?
- Can you have several homes or just one?
- What roles do language, tradition and participation play in the idea of home?
- How can immigrants actively help shape their home?

Practical examples:

- Show social commitment, participate in the community.
- Help with village festivals or neighbourhood actions.
- Take on voluntary work.
- Share your own customs, but show respect for the existing ones.

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Religion provides support and guidance – but no religion is above the law

Religion can make an important contribution to personal development and social development – but only if it is based on voluntary conviction. In Austria, freedom of religion is a great asset: Everyone has the right to believe – or not to believe. This freedom finds its limits where religious regulations, family expectations or group-related pressure restrict the rights and freedoms of the individual or question the State order. No religion, no worldview, no family or community are above the law or above the individual. The fundamental rights of individuals take precedence over cultural or religious group interests. No-one should be pressured to obey religious precepts or to wear certain religious clothing. Women and young people in particular must be able to make their decisions freely – without control, fear of exclusion or even violence. Religious beliefs must not infringe the right to education, physical or mental integrity. Joint teaching in public schools applies to everyone, regardless of religious background. Anyone who keeps girls away from school trips or swimming lessons for religious reasons or sends them specifically to isolated educational institutions hinders integration and equality. Religion-based taboos – for example on sexual self-determination, gender roles or contact with people who think differently or believe differently – are also unacceptable. Religious influence must not turn into paternalism, coercion or moral pressure.

We appreciate everyone who follows their faith peacefully, respectfully and in accordance with fundamental democratic values.

We set clear boundaries to religious dominance, any form of oppression, and any attempt to relativise State law through religious norms.

Questions to consider:

- What does freedom of religion mean to you?
- Where do tensions arise between religion and law, where do they not?
- How can religious rules restrict the lives of others?
- How can you follow your one faith – without patronising others?

Practical examples:

- No-one must be forced to wear religious clothing.
- Girls take part in swimming lessons, even if religious rules contradict it.
- Celebrate religious holidays – but general school rules remain.
- No religious courts instead of State justice.

13

Our culture deserves respect – anyone who lives here must act as such

Our way of life in Upper Austria has developed over many generations. It is rooted in Christian-Western values, in the Enlightenment, in the idea of education, self-responsibility and community spirit. Many things that we take for granted in everyday life – language, festivals, manners or family and social rituals – provide support, create identity and create community. Anyone who comes to join us can contribute with their own perspectives – but with respect for what has grown here and makes our lives worth living. No-one has to take on everything. However, immigrants are expected to be willing to engage with our society – with respect for the country, language, way of life and cultural foundations. This means adapting without having to deny your own identity, roots or customs. Anyone who isolates themselves, rejects the existing or even makes this contemptuous, harms togetherness. Preserving and developing are not mutually exclusive. Change is part of life – but it needs direction and measure. Not everything new brings progress, not everything old must remain. What is decisive is what helps us to live together in harmony. For this, we need a sense of proportion, an attitude – and a willingness to strengthen what connects us.

We appreciate people who respect our cultural values, contribute and who are open to change in a measured manner.

We set clear boundaries to disrespect, devaluation and indifference to our society.

Questions to consider:

- What Austrian and other customs do you know?
- Why is it important to respect the local culture?
- How can mutual respect be lived?
- How can you adapt without giving up your own identity?

Practical examples:

- Respect Austrian festivals (Christmas, maypole).
- Participate freely without feeling forced.
- Celebrate your own festivals in harmony with your neighbours – and invite each other.
- No devaluation of Austrian and other traditions and lifestyles.



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