

Language and Integration

Integration

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Language

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Integration

Foreigners are expected to integrate into society. This involves abiding by the law, being economically independent, and learning German.

Important Principles

All Swiss residents must abide by the Swiss constitution (e.g. equality of men and women) and abide by the law. It is expected that one is, as far as possible, economically independent. In addition, foreigners are expected to learn the language spoken in their place of residence as quickly as possible. Integration depends on efforts from both sides. An openness towards foreigners is expected of the local population.

Independence

The confederation, cantons, and communities provide foreigners with fair access to economic, social, and cultural life. In return foreigners must make independent efforts to integrate themselves. It is expected that they make use of available programmes.

Taking Part in the Social Life

A good way of integrating oneself into Swiss society is joining a club. Attending festivities and events held by the community of residence is also a good way of meeting people. It may not be easy at first. Not all Swiss residents are equally open towards other cultures. Sometimes patience and perseverance is necessary.

Advice / Support

In Canton Basel-Landschaft, advice and support is available for new residents. The community of residence is always a good first contact. There are also specific information centres for immigrants. The Baselland foreigner advice centre (Ausländerdienst Baselland) provides information about life in Switzerland and answers specific questions on various subjects. The Baselland contact centre (Anlaufstelle Baselland) provides information on matters related to legislation concerning asylum and foreign nationals. People who do not yet speak German may be accompanied by someone to translate for them or may request an interpreter. There are programmes that specialise in certain language groups.

**Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets,
brochures)**

www.hallo-baselland.ch/en/language-and-integration/integration

Integration Programmes

Integration takes place first and foremost at school, in training, and at work. For people who do not (yet) have access to school, training or work, there are various integration programmes.

Specific Programmes

Numerous programmes for foreigners aid them in making contacts and becoming a part of Swiss society. These programmes include discussion groups, leisure time activities, talks, or classes. The Ausländerdienst Baselland (ald) or the community of residence provide information regarding the various offers. Many communities hold an event that welcomes new residents – a good way of gaining a first overview.

Clubs

Many residents in Canton Basel-Landschaft are members of a club (Verein). There are clubs for a wide range of interests. Even small communities have athletic, cultural, and other clubs which are an excellent way of meeting people. Most clubs are open for everyone. Information regarding clubs can be found on the community websites.

Migration Organisations

Various clubs have been established by immigrants based on a common language group, country of origin, or religion. Many of these clubs have integrational or advisory offers aimed at supporting their members upon their arrival in Switzerland and in Canton Basel-Landschaft.

Offers for Young People

For young people in Canton Basel-Landschaft, there are many recreational offers that give them a chance to meet their peers. Many communities have meeting points and various recreational activities. The young people are supervised, can contribute ideas, and realise projects (Jugendarbeit). Most offers are free. Youth clubs are an opportunity to take part in outdoor activities with peers. The offers are provided by clubs, communities, or regional churches and are open for all young people. The community of residence provides further information.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-baselland.ch/en/language-and-integration/integration-programmes

Language

Have you just moved to Basel-Landschaft and do not speak any German yet? In that case, you should learn German as soon as you can. Speaking the language will mean you can get to know the country and people better. And you will find work more easily.

High German / Swiss German

Switzerland has four official languages: German, French, Italian and Rhaeto-Romance. German is the official language in Canton Basel-Landschaft. There is High or Standard German and Swiss German.

- Standard German (Standarddeutsch)
People in German-speaking Switzerland write in Standard German. Plus, they speak Standard German in school and sometimes on the radio and television.
- Swiss German (Schweizerdeutsch)
Swiss German is a dialect of the German language. People usually speak Swiss German in everyday situations. Swiss German may be difficult for you to understand, even if you can already speak German very well. If you do not understand something, you can ask people to speak with you in Standard German. You do not have to speak Swiss German yourself. But it is important that you can understand it after some time.

German and Children

Does your child speak a different language to German? In that case, your child should learn to speak German as soon as possible. This will help your child to learn more quickly. For example, your child can go to a play group. There are also special programmes for parents and children.

You can also help your child's language development. Talk to your child a lot, listen to your child and tell stories. Speak the language that you are best at and which you most prefer to speak.

Translations / Interpreting Services

Have you just moved to Basel and do not yet speak German well? In that case, you may sometimes need someone to interpret for you. You may be able to ask relatives or acquaintances.

However, some conversations are difficult or very personal. For example, an appointment at hospital or a public authority. You may then prefer an intercultural interpreter. This is an expert who specialises in helping people from other cultures. The experts know your culture and can interpret in a way that you understand everything. Have you received some letters from an authority and cannot understand them? Or do you need to complete a form or write a letter? You can get help here:

- Ausländerdienst ald
- Schreibstube Liestal

Language levels in immigration and civil law

Do you want to apply for a residence permit (B) or a settlement permit (C)? Or do you wish to become naturalised? Is German not your mother tongue? In that case, you will need to provide evidence that you can speak German well.

Here, you can find information you need for these applications:

- Office for Migration and Citizenship (Amt für Migration und Bürgerrecht)

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-baselland.ch/en/language-and-integration/language

Learning German

In order to learn German properly, a German class is recommended. There are many offers in the Basel region that cater to different living situations.

Offers

Many offers aimed at different groups of people are available in the Basel region. Some providers are commercial enterprises, some are charitable or public institutions. Persons who are not familiar with the Latin alphabet or have difficulties reading or writing may take a literacy class (Alphabetisierungskurs). Before enrolling in a German class, you should take note of the different types of classes and their costs. Special courses are available with child care for parents and their children. The Ausländerdienst Baselland (ald) or the community of residence provide information regarding the various offers.

Language Levels

How well someone can speak German can be measured using the "Common European Framework of Reference". This is abbreviated to CEFR. CEFR is the standard for languages and has six levels: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2. If you meet Level A1 or A2, you have a foundational knowledge of German. If you have achieved Level C1 or C2, you are well advanced.

- Do you want to undergo professional training recognised in Switzerland? In that case, you will need Level B1 or B2.
- If you wish to study at a university, you will need to meet Level C1 or C2.

Funding

Generally German classes must be paid for by the participant. Costs vary and it is recommended to compare the offers (cost per lesson). Some classes receive financial aid from Canton Basel-Landschaft or communities, enabling lower costs for the participants.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-baselland.ch/en/language-and-integration/learning-german