

Integration and political participation

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The separation between the international community and the local political community, which Part J described, is a long-term risk for the canton. The canton can reduce it by strengthening the incentives and opportunities for international residents to learn German and to take part in local life. It can create consultative bodies for foreign residents at the cantonal level and support such bodies in the municipalities. It could consider, as Geneva and several other cantons have done, voting rights for long-term foreign residents at the municipal level, although this would require a constitutional amendment and the approval of the voters.

The international companies can contribute by encouraging their employees to learn German, by supporting local associations and events and by engaging with the local community. International residents themselves can contribute by taking an interest in the canton beyond their work. The integration of the international community requires effort from the canton, the companies and the residents, since it will not happen by itself. Its success would strengthen the political support for the canton's international orientation, which is the foundation of its prosperity.

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