

The cantonal administration and English

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The cantonal administration of Zug has taken steps to serve English-speaking residents and companies. The economic promotion office works in English with companies considering a move to the canton. The cantonal and municipal websites offer basic information in English. The migration office provides information on permits in English, and new residents can obtain help in English with registration, schooling, health insurance and taxes.¹ These services are practical and do not change the official language of the administration. Decisions, rulings and formal correspondence remain in German.

The limits are clearest in the democratic institutions. The cantonal parliament debates in German and Swiss German and publishes its laws in German. Referendum materials are distributed in German. Foreign residents do not have the right to vote in cantonal or municipal matters in Zug, and naturalisation requires knowledge of German.² English-speaking residents who do not learn German therefore remain outside the political life of the canton. The consequences of this situation for the canton's society are discussed in Chapter III.

1 Notes

1. Canton of Zug, Economic Promotion, brochure "Welcome Zug: small world – big business" (Business Location Zug), in English, cdn.zg.ch: free one-stop-shop service for companies (setting up, permits, office space, relocation); Economic Promotion, "International community – local culture", economy.zg.ch (in English); Canton of Zug, "Language and Integration", zg.ch/en (English information for newcomers, including residence permits); Direktion des Innern, "Welcome to the canton of Zug – Information for new arrivals" (2019), cdn.zg.ch: Fachstelle Migration Zug offers a free initial information session and advice in 12 languages; stadtzug.ch/en offers an English version of the

town's website. Help with health insurance and taxes is not specifically covered by these sources. ↩

2. Federal Act of 20 June 2014 on Swiss Citizenship (BüG), Art. 12 para. 1 lit. c and para. 3, text on droit-bilingue.ch (ability to communicate in a national language in everyday situations, orally and in writing; cantons may add integration criteria); Ordinance of 17 June 2016 on Swiss Citizenship (BüV, SR 141.01), Art. 6 para. 1 (oral B1, written A2) and Art. 32 (in force 1 January 2018), consolidated text on data.globalcit.eu. SRF, "Debatte um Ausländerstimmrecht – In diesen Gemeinden dürfen Ausländer abstimmen", 18 July 2019, srf.ch, and humanrights.ch, "Politische Rechte für Ausländer/-innen in der Schweiz": the cantons granting foreign nationals voting rights are Jura, Neuchâtel, Vaud, Fribourg, Geneva and, at communal option, Appenzell Ausserrhoden, Graubünden and Basel-Stadt; Zug is not among them. ↩

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