

## The growth of the foreign population

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The growth of the international economy brought a growth of the foreign population. In 1950, the canton of Zug had about 42,000 inhabitants, and foreigners made up a small share. By 2024, the population had grown to about 134,000, and about 30 per cent of the residents were foreign nationals.<sup>1</sup> The largest groups of foreign nationals were Germans, Italians and British. Other groups included Portuguese, nationals of the former Yugoslavia and American, Dutch, Indian and other nationals, many of whom reflected the international companies of the canton.<sup>2</sup>

Not all foreigners speak English as their first language while many of them speak German well. The German nationals, the largest group, share the standard written language of the canton. Italian and Portuguese residents often came as workers in construction, industry and services, learning German or Swiss German in their daily lives. The English-speaking community in the narrow sense, consisting of native speakers from Britain, Ireland, North America, Australia, South Africa and India, is smaller. Its importance lies in its concentration in the international companies and in the fact that English serves as the common language for foreigners of many nationalities who do not speak German.

### 1 Notes

1. Canton of Zug, Fachstelle für Statistik, "Bevölkerungsstand", zg.ch: 135,018 residents at the end of 2025, an increase of 1,279 on 2024 (hence about 133,700 in 2024); 41,347 foreign nationals, 30.6 per cent of the population, 0.1 percentage point more than a year earlier. The 1950 figure of about 42,000 is not covered by this source. ↩

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2. Canton of Zug, Fachstelle für Statistik, "Bevölkerungsstand", zg.ch: at the end of 2025, 83 per cent of the foreign population were European nationals; the largest groups were Germans (16.7 per cent), Italians (9.3 per cent) and British (5.3 per cent). The ranking of the smaller groups is not given in this source. ↩

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