



# Language and Integration

Integration

Integration Programmes

Language

Learning German

## **Integration**

If you live in Canton Basel-Stadt, you have certain rights. It does not matter whether you are a man or woman, where you are from, what language you speak, what religion you believe or which disability you may have. But you must also follow the laws. Moreover, it is important to support yourself economically and to learn German. You can find information about this here.

### **Important Principles**

If you live in Switzerland, you need to follow the Swiss constitution and the laws. This means, for example, treating everyone with respect. Everybody is treated equally and no-one is discriminated against. If you live in Basel, you should learn German. You should also support yourself financially.

However, integration can only succeed if everyone works together. Basel residents should be open to you. They should inform and support you.

### **Independence**

Have you recently moved to Basel? The confederation, cantons and communes provide you with fair access to economic, social and cultural life. But you must also make efforts to become integrated. We expect that you make use of the available offers for integration.

### **Taking Part in the Social Life**

How to become integrated: You can easily get to know new people in clubs. Or you can attend festivals and events in your residential community.

It may be a little difficult at the beginning. Some people are not open to people from other countries. But given a while, most people become less reserved. So, keep trying and do not give up.

## **Advice / Support**

Have you just moved to Basel and need help or information? There are a number of places in Basel-Stadt that you can turn to. You can obtain information from the departments of Canton Basel-Stadt and your residential commune. However, there are also special contacts for migrants.

Information on life in Switzerland and other topics:

- GGG Migration

Information on the right of asylum and laws applicable to foreign nationals:

- Beratungsstelle für Asylsuchende BAS
- Freiplatzaktion

Do you not speak any German yet? In that case, you can bring someone along with you to translate for you. You can also ask for an interpreter.

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

[www.hallo-baselstadt.ch/en/language-and-integration/integration](http://www.hallo-baselstadt.ch/en/language-and-integration/integration)

## **Integration Programmes**

You can best integrate yourself at school, in training and at work. Perhaps you do not yet work or attend training, nor do you go to school? In that case, you can use a range of integration programmes.

### **Specific Programmes**

There are numerous programmes aimed at people who have just moved to Basel. These include discussion groups, leisure offers, presentations or courses. The programmes help you settle in and get to know people. The "GGG Migration" advice centre can provide you with information on the programmes available. The canton and communities organise events for welcoming new residents. Here, you can get important information as well as a first impression.

### **Clubs**

Many Swiss people are members of a club (Verein). There are clubs for a wide range of interests, such as athletic or cultural clubs. When you join a club, you can get to know other people. Most clubs are open to everybody.

### **Migration Organisations**

There are also clubs established by migrants. The members of the clubs usually speak the same language, come from the same country or share the same religion. These clubs often have programmes for people who are new to Switzerland and Canton Basel-Stadt. They can help you integrate.

### **Offers for Young People**

Young people can make use of many offers in their free time that give them the opportunity to meet others their age. You can get involved in a project and put forward your own ideas. Specialists supervise and support the young people (Jugendarbeit). The offers are usually free of charge.

### **Community Centres**

Community centres (Quartiertreffpunkte) are open to everybody. They have offers for families, older people and those who do not yet speak German well. Some community centres are family centres. These offer open meet-ups for mothers and fathers with their children. Community centres can provide you with advice and support in everyday life. You can rent spaces in the community centre for family occasions and other events.



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

[www.hallo-baselstadt.ch/en/language-and-integration/integration-programmes](http://www.hallo-baselstadt.ch/en/language-and-integration/integration-programmes)

## Language

Have you just moved to Basel-Stadt 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.

### Standard German / Swiss German

Switzerland has four official languages: German, French, Italian and Rhaeto-Romance. German is the official language in Canton Basel-Stadt. 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.

Does your child not speak German yet or only very little? In that case, your child will need to learn German no later than one year before nursery. We will inform you about this in a letter 18 months prior to nursery. These programmes are available, for example:

- Play group with support in German
- Day-care centre (Kita) where German is spoken
- Day-care family

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:

- Translation service from GGG Migration

## **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:

- Migration Office (Migrationsamt)

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

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## Learning German

You can learn German well in a German class. There are many different courses for German.

### Offers

There are many different courses for German. For example:

- If you have young children, you can attend a course with child care.
- Perhaps, you cannot read latin letters yet or you have difficulties reading and writing. In that case, you can participate in a literacy course (Alphabetisierungskurs).

Here, you can find out which courses are available and how much the courses cost:

- Adult education centre (Fachstelle Erwachsenenbildung)
- GGG Migration

### 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

Have you recently moved to Basel and are expecting to receive a residence permit (B)? In that case, you will receive a voucher for a German course. You can attend 80 classes free of charge. You can redeem the voucher at a language school recognised by the canton. The voucher is valid for up to 12 months after your arrival.

Do you want to attend another German course afterwards? You will then need to pay. The prices of the courses vary. It is a good idea to compare the prices. Canton Basel-Stadt supports some courses with a financial subsidy. You pay less for these courses.





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