

How well do municipalities cope with immigration? – Evidence from a country with a high rate of immigrants

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Abstract

Switzerland is a country with a relatively high rate of immigration. This puts the municipalities under considerable pressure when it comes to measures to integrate the non-Swiss residents. In between 20 and 35 percent of the municipalities top level officials claim that their municipality encounters difficulties to cope with integration problems. On the grounds of our regular surveys among all Swiss municipalities, we are not only able to show which types of municipalities are more successful in integrating residents from other countries, but also whether this depends on the size and on the financial situation of the municipality (system capacity, Dahl and Tufte 1973), and to what extent this depends on cultural and political differences between the municipalities. We can also show how the perceived difficulties to integrate foreigners changed over time and to what extent the countries the immigrants come from render integration more difficult. We expected problems to integrate foreigners to be bigger in larger municipalities especially if they are short of financial resources, we believed that municipalities with a more liberal and more left wing oriented voting behavior encounter less problems, and finally it is the percentage of immigrants and their cultural distance which was also supposed to play an important role. The results only partly meet our expectations.

1. Introduction

Switzerland has, in comparative terms, a very high percentage of non-Swiss residents living and working in the country. Since 1983, there has been a constant growth of foreigners from less than 15 percent up to 23.3 percent by the end of 2012. The main reasons for immigrating into the country are Switzerland's relative wealth and the needs of the economy for labor since unemployment is comparatively low. Responsible for the high rate of non-Swiss residents living in the country are additionally a restrictive naturalization policy and a higher birth rate of non-Swiss residents.

Considering the high percentage of non-Swiss residents and their constant growth in recent years, questions of immigration and the integration of non-Swiss residents are a continuous topic of heated political debates. These debates are not about immigration as such – since like many other countries Switzerland has a negative net reproduction rate of the domestic population and needs immigration to maintain economic growth and the social welfare system – but rather about the extent of immigration the country can cope with and the kind of immigrants that should come to the country. Actually, the net immigration rate per year has grown to about one percent of the population. The

needs to provide infrastructure and facilities have grown accordingly, and the difficulties to integrate non-Swiss residents, and social problems which are supposed to have something to do with immigrants seem to have increased if we follow published opinions.

Integration policy touches upon a large number of policies including fields such as education, professional training and occupation, health, social security, security, etc. In a federalist country like Switzerland, these fields are predominantly in the realm of the lower political units, the main actors being the cantons and the municipalities. This leads to considerable differences in the way integration policies are implemented. Whether this is beneficial or detrimental for integration policies is subject to debate (Manatschal 2011: 337). Following the tradition of subnational comparative research (see Lijphart in Vatter 2002: 14) such a setting is almost ideal to analyze integration policies.

More recently, it has been argued that an active integration policy is especially needed in larger cities and agglomerations. Following the recommendations of a study (Niederberger/Cattacin 2002), integration has thus become one of the key domains of the newly founded tripartite conference of agglomerations (TCA). Declared aim of this conference is, to bring the federal state, the cantons, and the agglomerations (municipal level) together and to bring forward more coordinated policy solutions in order to minimize inequality and discrimination. Such a form of multilevel policy making is relatively new in federalist Switzerland and it will be interesting to see whether these coordination efforts have been successful.

Policy arrangements is one thing, another thing is the number and the composition of immigrants which have to be controlled for. They depend on domestic legislation but also on the role and position of a country in the international community. With the bilateral agreements Switzerland concluded with the EU immigration from EU countries has been eased and it has become more difficult for persons from outside the EU. This has changed the immigrant population in Switzerland considerably. As for asylum seekers, the country is one of the target countries in Europe which has led up to almost 50'000 demands (about 0.7 percent of the population) for political asylum in the late 1990s. Since then, legislation has become more restrictive and the number of demands has decreased.¹

To analyze what is done in terms of integration is doubtlessly crucial. Fortunately, there have been some remarkable efforts in this respect both on international level (MIPEX², Helbling 2013) and on subnational level as far as Switzerland is concerned (Manatschal 2013, Cattacin/Kaya 2005). Another question is, to which extent countries and subnational units are successful when it comes to integrating foreigners and whether they are facing problems. This is even more difficult to establish since the different actors involved are likely to have different perceptions of the issues at stake.

In this paper we shall – on the basis of what has been said so far – analyze to what extent municipalities pretend to have problems when it comes to integration matters. In our periodic monitoring of the Swiss municipalities since 1994 we ask our respondents in which policy domains they encounter difficulties to fulfill their tasks. The integration of foreigners is one out of 25 policy

¹ In 2005, Switzerland decided to join the Schengen/Dublin agreement of the European Union.

² MIPEX is led by the British Council and the Migration Policy Group and covers a large number of countries (see: <http://www.mipex.eu>, accessed: 27.6.2014).

domains we are interested in. The data allow for depicting changes of over time and differences between different regions and different types of municipalities.

Additionally, we will – taking advantage of a special feature of the Swiss political system – have a look at the citizens position towards immigration and integration. Swiss citizens have the possibility to influence immigration policies directly by the means of direct democracy. There has been a series of initiatives launched by right wing parties to make integration and asylum legislation more severe and to lower the number of non-Swiss residents in the country. Some of them have been successful, others not. We can therefore ask to what extent integration problems in a municipality influences the citizens' position in respect to immigration.

In a first step, we will present the most important changes in terms of legislation, the number of foreign residents in the country, the composition of the non-Swiss residents, and differences in terms of non-Swiss residents between the language areas and the different types of municipalities. In section 3, we ask which municipalities have particular difficulties to cope with the integration. In section 4, we test a number of hypotheses and try to isolate the most important variables accounting for the municipalities' difficulties to cope with integration. The final analytical section asks whether the number of immigrants and the perceived difficulties have an impact on the citizens political positions towards immigration when it comes to voting decisions in the course of referendums and initiatives. The paper ends with some concluding remarks and a discussion of the results.

2. Immigration, legislation, and non-Swiss residents in Switzerland

Number and origin of immigrants and the challenges integration policies face depend to a large extent on legal regulations which are a result of the countries general position towards immigration and the positions of the different actors involved. With more than one third of the Swiss population having a history of immigration and one fourth being born abroad Switzerland can be compared to classic immigration countries such as Australia, Canada and the US (Lavenex 2007: 62). Switzerland differs from these settings, however, when it comes to the national self-understanding and the policies designed to deal with immigration. Naturalization policies are far more restrictive and the doctrine is not multiculturalism. Non-Swiss residents are supposed to assimilate to the prevailing cultural values.³

The economic growth following World War II led to an important recruitment of “guest workers” mainly from Italy and Spain which were given only temporary work permits as seasonal workers not allowing them to bring their families with them. The Oil Crisis in the 1970s led to a more restrictive immigration policy and the first to be affected by the recession were the seasonal workers not being able to stay in Switzerland (Lavenex 2007: 626). A second wave of immigration started in the early 1980s. The main country of recruitment was Portugal and some years later countries from former Yugoslavia. Immigration policy was based on a system of quota and the status of immigrants from Italy, Spain and Portugal was improved (faster application for permanent work permits, reunification

³ In order to get the Swiss nationality, non-Swiss residents have to live for about ten years in the country and they have to prove, for example, that they are sufficiently fluent in one of the national languages (i.e. German, French or Italian).

of families). During the recession in the 1990s, it became clear that immigrant workers who lost their jobs were – unlike in the 1970s – going to stay, and so were their families.

The increasing number of foreigners – to a large extent from countries from ex-Yugoslavia – together with economic problems led again to a more restrictive immigration policy. In 1998 and based on ordinances (Verordnungen) from which the Parliament is excluded, the government enforced four basic changes (Lavenex 2004: 626): People from non-EU and non-EFTA States were limited to a certain number of highly-qualified or specialized workers. They only receive a work permit if no suitable employees from EU/EFTA countries are found. The status of foreign nationals with legal and permanent residence in Switzerland is improved. Change of employment, residence and family reunification become easier. Efforts promoting integration are reinforced. Measures against the abuse of the Foreign National Act are enhanced.

Starting from June 1, 2002, immigration of citizens from EU and EFTA became regulated by the Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons concluded with the 15 “old” member States. This became necessary because Switzerland rejected to join the European Economic Area and remained outside the European Union in 1992. The relation with the European Union has since then to be settled on the basis of bilateral agreements. The free movement of persons is part of these bilateral agreements with the European Union, concluded in 1999, and gives citizens of the European Union free access to the Swiss labor market. This has led to an increase of immigrants, especially from neighboring countries.

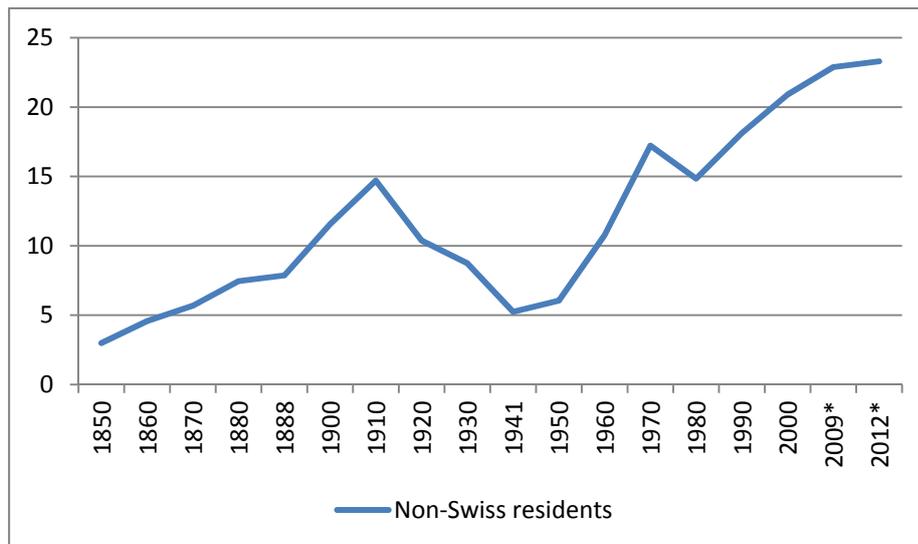
In 2006, a new law on foreigners (Ausländergesetz) was accepted by the 68 percent of the citizens. It basically takes up the changes which have already been implemented through the ordinances. The status of “season worker” is abolished and replaced through a short term permit of one year renewable for one additional year. The efforts to integrate foreigners will be financially supported but foreigners are also demanded to integrate themselves more actively.

On February 9, 2014, a popular initiative against mass immigration was accepted by the citizens and the cantons. Within three years Switzerland must take measures to limit immigration from EU countries (which has risen to some 80'000 in recent years). This, however, is against the Agreement of Free Movement of Persons which is part of the bilateral agreements. At the moment it remains to be seen whether the other bilateral agreements concluded will have to be resigned and whether Switzerland finds an agreement with the European Union on how to limit immigration from EU-countries.

The following figures show the impact of the different legislations and agreements on the number and the composition of non-Swiss residents in the country:

Figure 1 illustrates the above mentioned rapid growth of non-Swiss residents since the 1980s from less than 15 percent to more than 23 percent in 2012. This, however, is by no means the first time Switzerland experiences an increase in the foreign population. Since its very beginning, the country's foreign population increased from a few percent to about 15 percent prior the World War I. After World War II (period of economic growth) it started to rise from a bit more than five percent to about 17 in 1970. This upward trend was stopped in the 1970s (economic crisis), when an important number of immigrant workers, especially those having seasonal contracts, had to leave the country, bringing the number of the foreign population down to less than 15 percent again.

Figure 1: Non-Swiss residents 1850 – 2012



Source: www.bfs.admin.ch

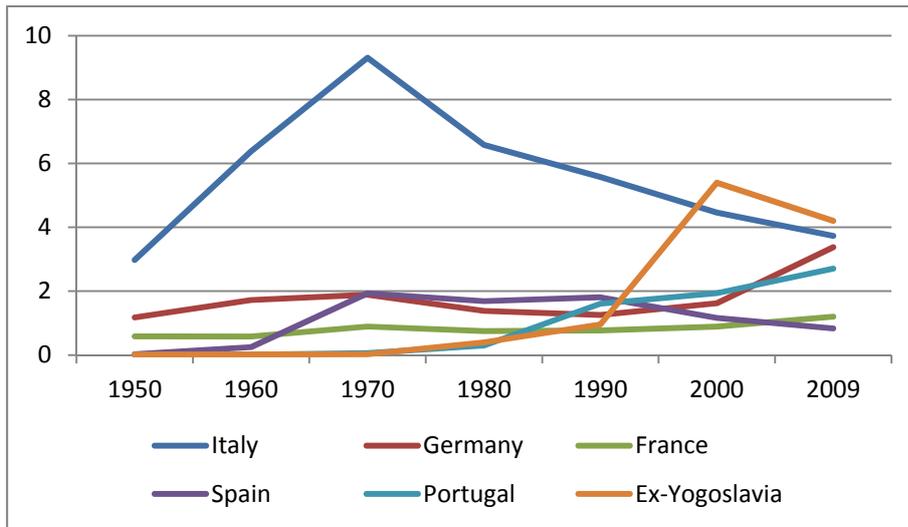
But it is not only the number of immigrants which has changed over time; it is also the origin of immigrants that has changed (see Figure 2). Immigrants coming to Switzerland in the 1960 mainly came from Italy (reaching almost 10 percent of the total population in 1970). In the second half of the 1990s there was a particularly strong immigration from people from ex-Yugoslavia. Their percentage of the total population rose from less than one percent prior to 1990 to more than 5 percent in 2000. The most recent increase consists – due to the Agreement on the Free Movement Persons – of people from EU-Countries, especially from Germany, but also from France, Spain and Portugal.

In April 2014, there were 1.9 million non-Swiss residents living in the country.⁴ Most of them are from an EU-28/EFTA-Country (68 percent). People from Italy are the largest group of immigrants (15.9%) followed by Germans (15.5%), Portuguese (13.5%) and French (5.9%). About 100000 people (5.2%) stem from Kosovo. In 2014, the largest increase in terms of numbers stems from Kosovo, followed by Portugal and Germany. The numbers of people from Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Turkey and Sri Lanka have decreased.⁵

⁴ See <https://www.bfm.admin.ch/content/bfm/de/home/dokumentation/medienmitteilungen/2014/2014-06-18.html> (accessed on June 30, 2014).

⁵ The increase of people from Kosovo is strongly related to the decrease of people from Serbia. Since 2008, Kosovo is considered an independent state and many people from Serbia claimed the citizenship of Kosovo. In this respect no emigration respectively immigration took place.

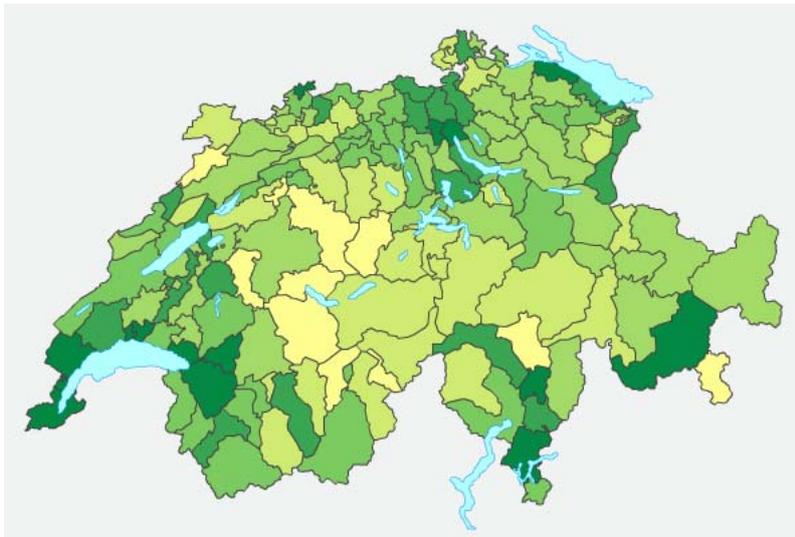
Figure 2: Nationality of non-Swiss residents 1950-2009 (in %)



Source: www.bfs.admin.ch

The foreign population is unevenly spread over the country (see Figure 3). There are higher percentages of non-Swiss residents in the border areas towards France (Genève, Lausanne), Italy (Tessin) and Germany (Basel, Schaffhausen, Konstanz) as well as in Zurich, and in some areas in the Jura and in the Alps. In some areas (dark gray) the percentage is above 30 percent and sometimes even considerably higher, whereas in the brighter areas the percentage is lower than 10 percent.

Figure 3: Percentage of non-Swiss residents in different areas of the country



Source: www.bfs.admin.ch

3. Municipalities encountering difficulties with the integration of foreigners

Whether municipalities encounter difficulties to integrate non-Swiss residents or not, is not easy to establish. There are commonly accepted indicators which are produced by the Federal Office of Statistics⁶ which align with the indicators suggested by the European Union adopted in the Malmö document «Indicators and monitoring of the outcome of integration policies » in 2009. Unfortunately, only very few of these indicators are available on municipal level and taken alone or only partially, they draw a rather imperfect picture of the situation in the municipality. In this paper, we shall rely on somehow different data.

The indicator we suggest to look at can be called “*the perceived difficulties of a municipality to cope with integration matters*”. It stems from our periodic monitoring of Swiss municipalities.⁷ Since 1994 we conduct surveys among all Swiss municipalities asking the Chief Administrative/Executive Officers of the municipalities⁸ whether they (their municipality) encounter difficulties to fulfil their tasks and to provide services in a wide range of local activities.⁹ One of these activities is “matters dealing with the integration of foreigners”. Our respondents are asked to reply to the following question: „There are problems municipalities find it difficult to cope with in an adequate manner due to the workload or a lack of competences needed. In which of the following domains do such performance limits become visible in your municipalities?” Among the domains listed were: “assistance to asylum seekers” and “integration of foreigners”. The answer categories given were: “no performance limits visible”, “performance limits visible”, “performance limits reached”, “performance limits exceeded”, and “don’t know”.

Table 1 shows the answers to this question in the four surveys conducted in 1994, 1998, 2005 and 2009. Interesting to note: A huge majority of the municipalities do not have problems coping with integration matters, this, at least, is the way the Chief Administrative Officers conceive it. Depending on the year, in between 65.5 and 79.4 percent of the municipalities, there are no performance limits visible. Between 13.4 and 17.8 percent claim that such limits are visible, between 5.4 and 12 percent of the municipalities have reached such limits and between 1.7 and 4.7 percent have exceeded them.

If we compare problems with the integration of foreigners to other policy domains, we realize that they are comparatively seldom. Most important problems municipalities are confronted with are welfare, unemployment, land use planning, construction permits. Integration is only found among the top ten problems in 2009, ranking on ten. These figures, however, show the results for the totality of municipalities. In some municipalities, integration problems may be more salient.

Figure 4 presents the figures of Table 1 in a more lisible manner. The category “limits visible” stands for all municipalities in which performance limits are at least visible or even reached or exceeded, the category “limits reached” stands for municipalities in which performance limits are reached and

⁶ <http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/de/index/themen/01/07/blank/ind43.html>

⁷ The first survey took place in 1988 but no such question was asked. In 1994, 69.1 percent of 3017 municipalities participated in our survey, in 1998, it was 84.5 percent of 2914 municipalities, in 2005, the participation rate was 79.2 percent out of 2771 and in 2009, 57.7 percent out of 2596 municipalities.

⁸ Of course, it can be argued that the municipalities’ difficulties cannot be measured through a survey by asking a single person per municipality. The municipal secretaries, however, proved to be very reliable informants. Being placed between the politicians (government) and the different services they are well aware in which domains the municipality faces difficulties. The accurateness of their responses has been proven in many other studies.

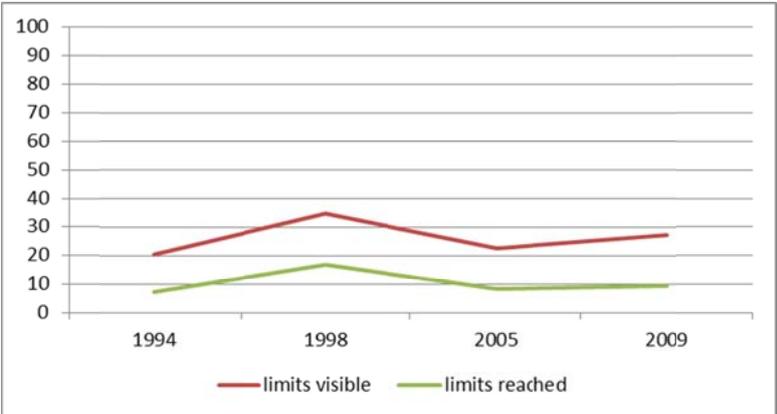
⁹ For an example of the question in German see Appendix 1.

exceeded. The figure shows that the pressure increased towards the end of the 1990s, it then dropped and increased again slightly in 2009. On the grounds of what has been shown in the previous section, the increase in the late 1990s seems to be due to immigration from ex-Yugoslavian countries, whereas 10 years later it is likely to be immigrants from EU-countries which led to increased limits of performance. Corresponding causalities, however, are difficult to prove.

Table 1: Limits of performance

Integration of foreigners	1994	1998	2005	2009
No limits of performance visible	79.4	65.5	77.6	72.8
Limits of performance visible	13.4	17.8	14.1	17.7
Limites of performance reached	5.4	12.0	6.1	6.3
Limitits of performance exceeded	1.7	4.7	2.2	3.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N ¹⁰ =	1965	2432	2135	1403

Figure 4: Percentage of municipalities with difficulties when it comes to the Integration of foreigners



N= 1965; 2432; 2135; 1403

¹⁰ The N used for the calculation of the percentages is the number of municipalities having responded to at least one item of the question. This increases the N and lowers the percentage of municipalities having problems since it is assumed that those not responding to this item do not have any problems.

Size of municipalities

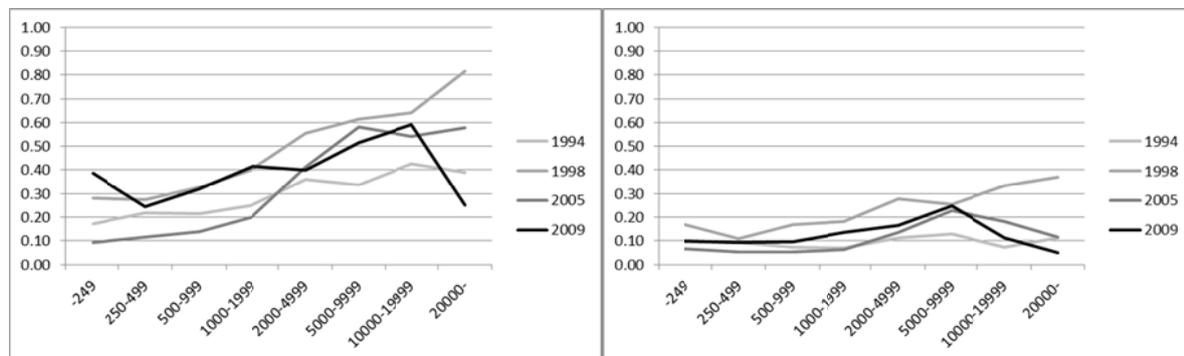
Figure 5 shows an interesting pattern with respect to the size of the municipalities. As far as the visibility (taken together with reached and exceeded) of performance limits is concerned, there is an increase whilst moving from smaller to medium size municipalities at least for the years 1994, 1998 and 2005. Interesting to note is the difference in 1998 compared to 1994 and 2005. In 1998, the largest municipalities (20'000 and more) seemed to have much more difficulties to cope with immigration matters compared to the medium size municipalities. This, however, has completely changed when we look at the latest figures from 2009. The difficulties in the largest municipalities have almost disappeared. They have fewer difficulties than the medium size municipalities. If we look at the somehow stronger measure “performance limits reached” (combined with exceed), the downwards trend starts already at 10'000 inhabitants and already in 2005.

Further research will have to show to what extent the new cooperative integration policy jointly set up by the cities, the cantons and the federal state which is supposed to provide local authorities with strategic support and financial resources (see above) is responsible for this ease in larger municipalities. This being the case would be a strong argument in favor of such new forms of multilevel governance.

Figure 5: Performance limits visible and reached according to municipal size

Visible

Reached



N= 1532; 2097; 1956; 984

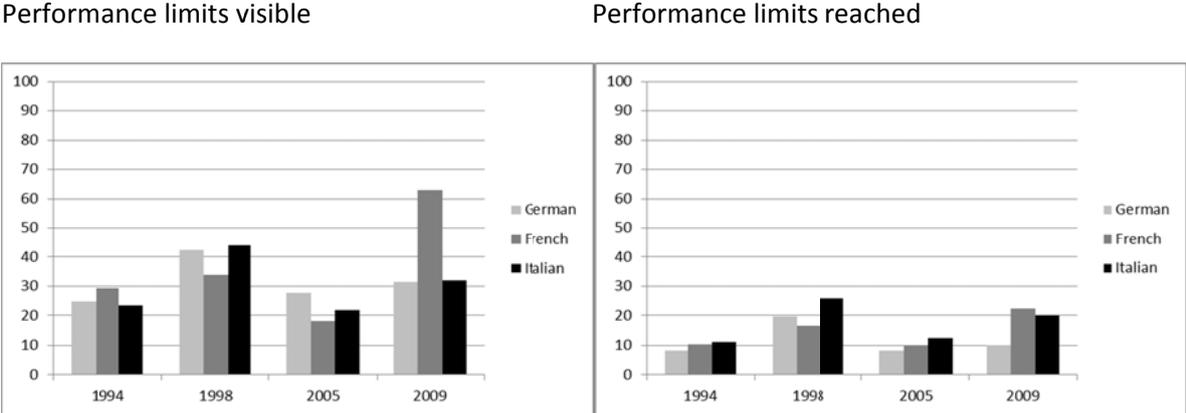
Language Areas

Familiar to observers of Swiss politics and frequently referred to in the specific literature are the differences between the language areas. The German speaking part upholds the Germanic tradition of the jus-sanguinis principle, where citizenship is transmitted by inheritance (the “blood”), whereas in the French speaking part the jus-soli principle adhered to in France is supposed to be more popular. Whether these principles are well suited to account for the success of integration policies can be discussed, it can, however, be argued that the first principle focuses on assimilation whereas the latter is rather based on multiculturalism (see Manatschal 2011: 338 f.). In any case, in the French speaking part non-Swiss residents find it easier to obtain Swiss citizenship. Quite often they also

dispose of political rights and the Swiss people from the French speaking part tend to be more open-minded when it comes to matters of immigration.

Figure 6 shows the perceived performance limits in the different language areas. The overarching pattern remains the same for the three language areas. The problems increase from 1994 to 1998, followed by a drop in 2005, and a new increase in 2009. Obviously, the increase in the German speaking part was stronger towards the end of the 1990s whereas in the French speaking part the increase is particularly strong in 2009. The question, of course, will be whether it is the higher number of immigrants or the different types of immigrants which leads to this large number of French speaking municipalities reporting difficulties when it comes to integrating non-Swiss residents. In any case, a less restrictive integration policy does not necessarily mean that there are no problems to deal with. The following paragraphs give a first idea whether the problems are related to the sheer number or to the origin.

Figure 6: Performance limits and language areas

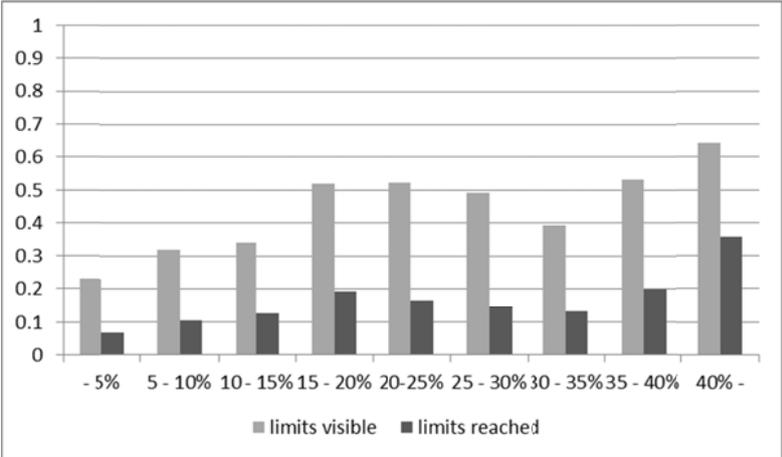


N= 1558; 2082; 1896; 947

Percentage and origin of non-Swiss residents

As we have seen, immigrants are not equally spread over the country. Regarding the problems municipalities may encounter when it comes to integrating non-Swiss residents, one might expect a strong correlation between the percentage of immigrants and the difficulties. The more foreigners living in a municipality, the more likely is this municipality to encounter problems. This is in fact the case but it is interesting to note that this regularity exists first of all until a percentage of between 15 and 25 percent foreigners in the municipality (Figure 7). In such municipalities, there is one out of two stating that at least some limits become visible. Then, there is a decrease until 35 percent, and in municipalities with more than 35 percent the problems increase again. Or, to put it differently: The frequently uttered observation that a high percentage of foreigners does not necessarily lead to integration problems seems to be correct, but there is also a limit. If the percentage gets too high, than difficulties become visible again.

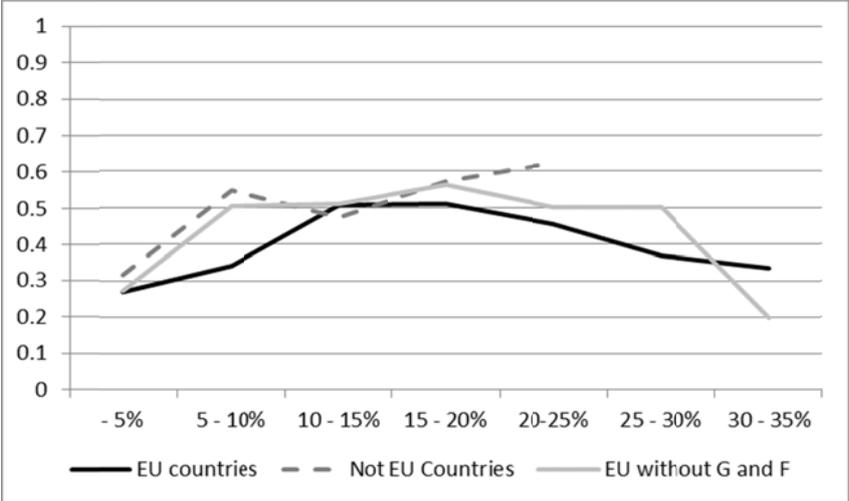
Figure 7: Percentage of immigrants and difficulties with integration (2009)



N = 916

Measuring the percentage of foreigners is most probably a too simple way to explain difficulties with their integration. More important is, most probably, the cultural background of these immigrants. The larger the cultural differences between the immigrants and the local population are, the more difficult is integration likely to be. Figure 7 distinguishes between immigrants from EU-countries, immigrants from non-EU-countries, and immigrants from EU-countries without counting people from Germany and France. The differences are smaller as they might have been expected. It is mainly in the category 5-10% where the integration problems are clearly more pronounced if the foreign population is culturally more different, then this seems to level out. There are different ways to explain these results. If the percentages of the different groups of immigrants get higher, the number of municipalities having to cope with such a situation is considerably smaller and the results are not as robust any more, and the foreign population in these municipalities might also be very specific as it might be the municipality itself.

Figure 7: Origin of immigrants and difficulties with integration (2009)



N= 916

4. Difficulties with integration additional explanatory factors

The look at different groups of municipalities and the way they cope with integration revealed that municipal size, language area and the percentage and origin of foreigners seem to be important. The descriptive presentation in the previous section, however, fails to give an idea whether each of these variables really explains the differences when it comes to coping with integration. Is it the fact that a municipality is located in the French speaking part of the country or is the higher number of immigrants which lead to the reported difficulties? In order to answer this question we have to isolate the impact of the variable we are interested in by controlling for the impact of all other important variables. The method to apply here is a multivariate regression.

Additionally, there might be a number of other variables which account for the difficulties or the success when it comes to questions of integration. These variables can be related to the municipality's resources, the composition of its population, or the political preferences of its citizens. In a first step, we shall look at the independent impact of the variables presented so far and then we shall add additional variables to our model.

The results of the binary logistic regression in Table 2 show that for 2009 it is the fact that a municipality is located in the French speaking part which most importantly accounts for difficulties with integration matters. Municipal size also points into this direction but the result just fails to be significant at the 95%-level. In 1998, the situation was somewhat different. Here, we find a significant impact of the municipal size whereas language did not have any influence. The two regression models thus confirm the findings from the descriptive part, where we have seen that the larger municipalities do no longer report much difficulty in 2009 compared to 1998, and that there was a strong increase of difficulties in the French speaking part in 2009. The percentage of immigrants as such does not account for difficulties; it is the percentage of immigrants from non-EU countries which matters.¹¹ This is a hint that the cultural distance matters.

There are, however, an important number of other variables which are likely to influence the way a municipality copes with integration matters. It is only by looking at these variables that we can have a fair understanding of what makes the differences between municipalities facing problems with integration and such without any problems.

First of all, it is the municipalities' resources which are likely to play an important role. This is not only the case when it comes to the integration of foreigners but also for many other tasks. And, if non-Swiss residents are particularly costly because they depend on social welfare, municipalities are particularly likely to express problems with integration. Unfortunately, there are no variables available on municipal level that convincingly show the wealth of a municipality and to what extent their budget is under pressure due to non-Swiss residents claiming social security benefits. As a proxy we use the debt rate of the municipality and the rate of social assistance knowing that non-Swiss residents depend to a larger extent on social assistance. The results for model 1 in Table 3 show that the "welfare burden" is positively related to perceived problems with integration whereas the general financial situation seems to be without any influence.

¹¹ For the percentage of immigrants and the percentage of immigrants from non-EU countries we had to rely on figures from 2011 for both cases, due to the lack of data.

Table 2: Binary logistic regressions for municipal size, language area, and percentages of immigrants (2009, 1998)

	2009			1998		
	B	Exp (B)	sig.	B	Exp (B)	sig.
Municipal size (log), 2009, 1997	.143	1.153	.052	.285	1.330	.000
French speaking municipalities, 2009, 2000	1.643	5.172	.000	-.117	0.889	.359
Percentage of non-Swiss residents (2011)	-.006	0.994	.612	-.016	0.984	.086
Percentage of non-Swiss residents from non-EU countries (2011)	.096	1.101	.000	.099	1.105	.000
Constant	-2.253	0.105	.000	-2.536	0.079	.000
Nagelkerke's R-square	0.167			0.117		
N=	962			1732		

As for specific characteristics of a municipality, we might expect that the occupational structure of the municipality has an influence not only on the kind of foreigners they attract but also on the problems related to immigration. Model 2 shows that the percentages of jobs in the first and second sector have a significant impact. More jobs in the agricultural sector lead to less, more jobs in the industry lead to more problems. The influence of these two variables, however, seems to be rather small. As for the other variables, the pattern remains the same.

In model 3 we add two socio-demographic variables, the percentage of elderly people and the percentage of people with higher education. For the former variable, one might expect to find a negative, for the latter a positive impact on integration. The results, however, contradict our expectations. There is no significant impact to be found and additionally, the social welfare burden loses its significance.

Our last model (4) tries to capture the prevailing political preferences in the municipalities. Here, we integrate the percentage of left-green votes in the last national elections of 2011 as well as the votes for the right-wing Swiss People's Party. Against our expectations that a strong left fosters integration and a strong right leads to problems there are no significant impacts to be found.

Taken all together, the additional variables tested in the four models hardly help to explain whether a municipality has problems integrating non-Swiss residents. The strongest impact factor remains the language area. If a municipality belongs to the French speaking part of the country, the chances it perceives problems with integration is about five times higher. Whether the non-Swiss residents come from a non-EU country also has an influence, but this influence is rather small. Thus, the cultural distance still matters, but not that much.

Table 3: Binary logistic regressions for additional variables (2009)

	Regression Coefficients B				Odd ratios			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Municipal size (log)	.123	.031	.050	.023	1.131	1.031	1.051	1.023
French speaking municipalities	1.560***	1.662***	1.747***	1.624***	4.761	5.268	5.739	5.075
Non-Swiss residents (%)	-.010	-.018	-.011	-.011	0.990	0.983	0.989	0.989
Non-Swiss residents from non EU Countries (%)	0.089***	0.088***	0.091***	0.093***	1.093	1.093	1.095	1.097
Decrease of the municipalities debt rate	-.023	-.024	-.021	-.020	0.977	0.976	0.979	0.980
Welfare burden	0.118**	0.114**	.084	.059	1.126	1.120	1.087	1.061
Jobs 1st sector (%)		-0.010*	-.010	-.010		0.990	0.990	0.990
Jobs 2nd sector (%)		0.008*	.008	0.009*		1.008	1.008	1.009
Inhabitants over 64 (%)			.032	.033			1.033	1.034
Inhabitants with higher education (%)			-.040	-.046			0.961	0.955
Votes for left-green parties (%)				.010				1.011
Votes for Swiss People's Party (%)				-.002				0.998
Constant	-2.14***	-1.406*	-2.023**	-1.974*	0.117	.245	.132	0.139
Nagelkerke's R-square	.173	0.184	0.185	0.194				
N=	885	885	868	843				

5. Integration problems and voting behavior

In this last section, the perceived performance limits become an independent variable. Now, we are interested in whether municipalities in which the integration of non-Swiss residents is a problem are generally more critical when it comes to immigration. In order to test this, we take advantage of a rather unique feature of the Swiss political system. The far reaching means of direct democracy allow Swiss citizens to influence immigration policies. And since the votes of the citizens are counted at municipal level, we are able to establish each municipality's stance on immigration and integration.

Since the late 1960s, initiatives haven been launched to limit immigration and votes were held on new legislations and constitutional amendments. In the 1970 Swiss citizens decided on four occasions (1970, 1974, 2 x 1977) against more restrictive immigration laws. Similar decisions had to be taken in the 1980s (1984, 1987, 1988) and in the 1990s and beyond (1996, 1997, 2000), and there were several attempts to tighten the legal restrictions for asylum seekers (1987, 1999, 2002, 2006, 1012). In 2010, Swiss citizens accepted an initiative to send non-Swiss residents committing a crime

back to their countries, and in 2014 the free immigration of citizens from the EU was turned down by a popular vote.¹²

To test whether a direct link between the perceived problems of a municipality with matters of integration and the citizens' position towards immigration and integration can be found we look at the vote on the new law on foreigners ("Ausländergesetz") of 2006 and the vote against mass immigration ("Masseneinwanderungsinitiative") of 2014. The new law on foreigners, voted on September 24, 2006, has been accepted by 68 percent of the citizens. On the one hand, the law tightens the possibilities from non-EU citizens to immigrate the country and takes a more repressive stance when it comes to violation of laws by immigrants. On the other hand, it improves integration efforts provided immigrants show an interest when it comes to integration. As for the mass immigration, a constitutional amendment supposed to limit immigration was accepted on February 9, 2014 by 50.3 percent of the citizens. This article is clearly against the bilateral agreements with the European Union which grant the free movement of persons from EU-countries to Switzerland.

A first look at the correlations between the results of the two popular votes and the perceived performance limits when it comes to the integration of foreigners reveals significant results but not in the direction that might have been expected. In municipalities where integration problems are in sight, there are less people voting in favor of more restrictive immigration policies.¹³ These correlations, however, might be due to other variables. We shall therefore test these correlations using the variables from the previous section.

Table 4 clearly shows that in both cases problems which are felt to exist within the municipality when it comes to integration foreigners are not directly linked to the way citizen vote on immigration issues. The negative correlation disappears while controlling for all the other variables and there is no significant effect to be found. The two models, by the way, are quite good in explaining the results in the municipalities, but this is another story.

¹² See also <http://origin.swissinfo.ch/ger/ueberfremdungsimpulsen-haben-lange-tradition/37891112> (accessed on June 30, 2014).

¹³ The respective Pearson's correlation coefficients are -.176 for the law on foreigners and -.184 for the mass integration initiative (sig. = .000 in both cases and N = 892).

Table 4: Linear regressions models to test the impact of perceived performance limits on anti-immigration voting

	New law on foreigners		Against mass immigration	
	Regression Coefficiente B	Sig.	Regression Coefficiente B	Sig.
Constant	76.076	.000	58.569	.000
Performance limits	0.111	.765	-0.791	.121
French speaking municipalities	-9.251	.000	-7.386	.000
Municipal size (log)	-0.227	.300	-0.457	.135
Non-Swiss residents (%)	-0.065	.054	0.225	.000
Non-Swiss residents from non EU Countries (%)	0.263	.000	-0.326	.001
Decrease of the municipalities debt rate	0.303	.057	-0.246	.260
Welfare burden	0.071	.615	0.525	.007
Jobs 1st sector (%)	-0.047	.001	0.033	.095
Jobs 2nd sector (%)	0.019	.111	0.040	.015
Inhabitants over 64 (%)	-0.147	.002	0.045	.496
Inhabitants wiht higher educations (%)	-0.029	.674	-1.144	.000
Votes for left-green parties (%)	-0.311	.000	-0.259	.000
Votes for Swiss People's Party (%)	0.263	.000	0.301	.000
adj. Rsquare	.734		.640	
N=	844		825	

6. Discussion and outlook

In this paper we tried to find out which particular municipalities encounter problems when it comes to integrating non-Swiss residents. There are, of course, a number of difficulties related to such an endeavor. What exactly means problems with integration or more precisely “performance limits when it comes to integrating foreigners” as we framed it more cautiously? For some, the expectations might be very high, and they aim at offering immigrants socially, economically and politically the same chances and possibilities whereas for others the absence of conflicts is already sufficient. There are also difficulties to measure problems with integration on municipal level, especially if you want to cover the totality of municipalities in a country. The approach chosen might look rather unusual. To establish whether a municipality encounters problems was delegate to the

local secretary, the chief administration officer of the municipality. However, we are convinced, based on our experiences that these persons located between politicians and the executing part of the administration, are able to give a more or less “objective” impression of what is happening in their municipality.

The surveys conducted over a time span of twenty years yield a number of interesting results:

- Integration of foreigners is almost never among the top ten problems municipalities are confronted with.
- The difficulties to integrate non-Swiss residents can change over time. The problems were more prominent at the end of the 1990s.
- Integration problems rather depend on the origin than on the number of immigrants.
- More recently, cities face less often performance limits when it comes to integration.
- In the French speaking part, integration problems become increasing salient in 2009.
- And finally, whether a municipality faces problems with integration or not does not influence the citizens’ position (voting behavior) on immigration.

More generally, there are two important conclusions which can be drawn from the analyses presented above:

First: There is hardly a consistent pattern separating municipalities with integration problems from those without such problems. The weak and most of the time missing influence of structural and socio-demographic variables shows that problems are almost randomly spread around the country. It rather depends on the municipality and the way they offer and organize their services, or, there are specific cases and situations which might cause problems. This goes hand in hand with the observation that integration is not seen as an important problem and is probably working quite well. The only exception, at the moment, might be some French speaking municipalities, where integration problems seem to have become more important recently.

The second conclusion is: Policies matter. For cities and large municipalities integration problems have eased despite the continuing increase of the immigrant population. This might be partly due to the shift of immigrants from ex-Yugoslavian countries to immigrants from EU-countries. But it is very likely that also the new (and more severe) legislation together with the joint efforts of the cities, the cantons and the federal state to design and execute integration policies has contributed to the reduction of the problems.

Results and conclusions, of course, have to be taken with caution. Causal links are difficult to establish with data on aggregate level. The effects found and the conclusion taken should now be tested in qualitative studies. And, in this paper we only looked at the side of the authorities. In order to know whether integration policies are successful or not you also have to take into account the perception of the immigrants.

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Appendix 1

Question to establish performance limits in different policy domains (survey 2009)

KOMMUNALE AUFGABEN

1. Es kann Probleme geben, welche die Gemeinden aufgrund zu hoher Arbeitsbelastung oder mangelnder Fachkompetenz kaum in angemessener Weise bewältigen können. Sind in Ihrer Gemeinde solche Leistungsgrenzen (LG) sichtbar?

Bitte beantworten Sie diese Frage für alle genannten Aufgaben

	keine LG sichtbar	LG in Sicht	LG erreicht	LG überschritten	keine Gemeindeaufgabe	weiss nicht
Unterstützung und Betreuung älterer Personen ...	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Jugendfragen	<input type="checkbox"/>					
familienergänzende Kinderbetreuung	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Unterstützung und Betreuung von Arbeitslosen ...	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Neue Armut/Fürsorgefälle/Vormundschaftsfälle ..	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Betreuung von Asylsuchenden	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Betreuung von Drogenabhängigen	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Integration von Ausländern	<input type="checkbox"/>					
medizinische Versorgung (Spitex/Hauspflege)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Schulfragen	<input type="checkbox"/>					
kulturelle Veranstaltungen/Kulturfragen.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Sport/Sportanlagen.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Bewilligung von Baugesuchen.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Raum- und Zonenplanung.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Landschafts- und Ortsbildschutz.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
öffentliche Bauten	<input type="checkbox"/>					
öffentlicher Verkehr.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
privater Verkehr (Strassenbau/Verkehrsberuhigung).....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Wirtschaftsförderung.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Wasserversorgung	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Abwasser/Kanalisation.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Abfall/Entsorgung	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Energieversorgung	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Umweltschutz	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Feuerwehr.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Gemeindepolizeiliche Aufgaben	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Gemeindeverwaltung: Informatik.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Gemeindeverwaltung: Personalmanagement	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Gemeindeverwaltung: Finanzverwaltung	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Gemeindeverwaltung: Einwohnerdienste	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Gemeindeexekutive.....	<input type="checkbox"/>					