

# Do Integration Policies Affect Immigrants' Voluntary Engagement? An Exploration at Switzerland's Subnational Level

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*This paper investigates whether integration policies influence immigrants' propensity to volunteer, the latter being an important element of immigrants' integration into the host society. By distinguishing different categories of integration policies at Switzerland's subnational level and applying a Bayesian multilevel approach, our results suggest varying policy effects: while policies fostering socio-structural rights enhance immigrants' propensity to volunteer, we observe a negative curvilinear relationship between cultural rights and obligations and immigrants' volunteerism implying that a combination of cultural entitlements and obligations is most conducive to immigrants' civic engagement.*

*Keywords: Integration Policy; Immigrant Rights and Obligations; Immigrant Volunteering; Social Capital; Subnational Comparison*

## Introduction

Studies assessing the impact of integration policies on immigrants' integration focus predominantly on structural indicators such as immigrants' performance in schools (Levels, Dronkers, and Kraaykamp 2008), employment or their socio-economic integration in general (Koopmans 2010). Comparatively, non-structural areas such as immigrants' volunteerism received less attention so far (Handy and Greenspan 2009). This is particularly true for immigrants volunteering at the individual level. But why should we care for immigrants' volunteering, and what is the relationship between volunteering and integration? The importance of voluntary associations and voluntary engagement has been clear ever since Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti's (1993) influential work on social capital in Italy. Volunteering, thereby, means 'any

activity in which time is given freely to benefit another person, group or organization' (Wilson 2000, 215). According to the migration literature, which took up the social capital concept, volunteering contributes to immigrants' integration by fostering their stock of social capital (Ager and Strang 2008; Handy and Greenspan 2009).

Integration is not only a complex concept, but also bears strong normative connotations which further complicate a unified and generally accepted definition of the term (Castles et al. 2002). At the same time, it is commonly assumed that integration is a multidimensional concept covering different areas of everyday life (cf. Ager and Strang 2008). Switzerland's official discourse, for instance, distinguishes between structural (school, work), political, social and cultural aspects of integration (Cattacin and Kaya 2005). Obviously, volunteering is related to all these aspects of immigrant integration: following Granovetter (1983), the personal 'ties' an individual establishes by participating in organisations and associations facilitate job search and thus, enhance immigrants' structural integration through employment. Moreover, voluntary activities typically take place at the local level, in organisations or with/for personal acquaintances. In this sense, volunteering contributes to immigrants' social integration. Volunteering in political organisations and associations can often be seen as political engagement and should be of crucial importance to immigrants' political integration (cf. Eggert and Giugni 2010). Finally, personal interactions within voluntary organisations impart common values and norms of reciprocity, which are crucial elements of cultural integration (Ager and Strang 2008). As Handy and Greenspan (2009) summarise it, the benefits of volunteering include the enhancement of social and human capital, which in turn provides a stepping stone for the integration of immigrants into the host society.

Considering that volunteerism has the potential to promote immigrants' integration, while it is a generally rather scarce resource among immigrants (Nannestad, Svendsen, and Svendsen 2008, 623; Putnam 2007, 152), any proposal how to raise the level of immigrant volunteerism through the policy channel should be very welcome to politicians. Thus, the central question addressed in this paper is whether various aspects of integration policies affect immigrants' propensity to volunteer, and if so, how.

This view is in accordance with a neo-institutionalist perspective, which assumes that the political and institutional context tends to mould individual preferences and stimulates, or limits, behavioural options by means of certain incentive mechanisms (Hall and Taylor 1996; Immergut 1998). Neo-institutional approaches are equally applied in the social capital literature (cf. Paraskevopoulos 2010) as in studies on integration policy, where different integration policy regimes are conceptualised as opportunity structures which influence immigrants' behaviour (Giugni and Passy 2003; Koopmans et al. 2005).

We intend to surpass the institutional perspective applied in previous studies (cf. Fennema and Tillie 2004; Giugni and Passy 2003; Ireland 2006; Koopmans et al. 2005) by addressing two important research gaps. First, focusing on the outcome of integration policy, and similarly to Koopmans' (2010) recent work, we want to move

closer to the question of immigrants' effective integration into host societies. As outlined above, literature on migrant integration ascribes volunteerism, due to its beneficial impact on immigrants' social capital, central importance when it comes to the question of how to foster immigrants' integration. Surprisingly, the topic has received very little attention in the literature so far, why we address it explicitly. Second, another neglected aspect is subnational variations of integration policies, although they are a quite common characteristic of federal states (Tränhardt 2001), and they are particularly pronounced in strongly federally organised Switzerland (Cattacin and Kaya 2005). This neglect of subnational variety is even more astonishing considering the benefits it provides regarding research design: cantons constitute subnational entities within the same political system, while simultaneously greatly differing regarding the factors of central interest. A similar degree of comparability is barely reachable at the cross-national comparative level, where more often than not the vast amount of control variables poses a serious methodological challenge (Fennema and Tillie 2001). By adopting a subnational, regional comparative approach, our study complements existing research on integration regimes, which focuses predominantly on the national policy level (e.g. Koopmans, Michalowski, and Waibel 2012; Waldrauch and Hofinger 1997) and occasionally also on the local city level (e.g. Fennema and Tillie 2004; Ireland 1994; Morales and Giugni 2011).<sup>1</sup>

In line with international studies (Koopmans 2010; Koopmans et al. 2005; Niessen et al. 2007), the theoretical conceptualisation of cantonal integration policy used in this paper is based on the idea of immigrants' rights and obligations in areas considered relevant for integration. According to this definition, integration policies are captured in terms of ease or difficulty of immigrants' access to civic-political, socio-structural and cultural rights and obligations.

Methodologically, we employ a Bayesian multilevel analysis. This approach goes beyond previous studies as it allows for the simultaneous investigation of both individual and contextual effects on immigrants' volunteering.

### **A Neo-institutionalist Perspective on Integration Policy**

Over the last 15 years, research on immigration and related policies witnessed an increasing use of institutional approaches. Ireland's (1994) comparative investigation on immigrant politics in France and Switzerland may be considered as one of the first systematic studies applying an institutional perspective. Based on differing patterns of immigrants' political participation in the two countries, Ireland concluded that the national or local institutional framework has a stronger impact on immigrants' activism than their own ethnic or socio-economic background.

A more refined application of the institutional approach can be found in the studies of Koopmans et al. (2005). Their line of research stems from the social movement tradition (cf. Kriesi et al. 1995) and focuses on political claims making or mobilisation of collective groups such as immigrants. The respective studies reveal a

stronger homeland orientation of immigrants' political claims making in more restrictive and closed settings versus a stronger host land orientation in more open political opportunity structures (Giugni and Passy 2003; Koopmans et al. 2005). More recently, Koopmans (2010) applied his institutional framework to the question of structural integration, focusing on areas such as immigrants' labour market integration, residential segregation and crime levels.

The common conclusion of these studies is that institutions like national citizenship and integration policies matter for immigrant behaviour. More broadly speaking, such approaches correspond to a neo-institutionalist perspective assuming that the political and institutional context, which needs not necessarily be formal or permanent, but consistent, stimulates or limits behavioural options by means of certain incentive mechanisms (Fennema and Tillie 2004; Hall and Taylor 1996).

We, furthermore, assume that integration policy regimes are more than just legal regulations. By defining who belongs to a specific community and who does not, these regimes embody collective concepts of inclusion, representing thereby common cultural and historically rooted understandings of immigrant rights and obligations (Giugni and Passy 2003). This is particularly true for the Swiss case, where it has been shown that cantonal integration policies embody regional cultural notions of belonging (Manatschal 2012). Thus, it seems plausible that the philosophies of integration expressed through cantonal integration policies permeate all areas of daily life, including civil society, constituting thereby incentive or disincentive structures for immigrant's individual behaviour.

We do of course not deny that cultural factors such as the ethnic background may influence immigrants' willingness to volunteer. While such ethnic approaches have been in the focus of the classical migration literature, institutionalist scholars relativise the impact of the ethnic background in the light of the institutional setting of the host land, which they consider to be more influential (Fennema and Tillie 2004; Ireland 2006; Koopmans et al. 2005, 17f). Fennema and Tillie (2001) paved the way for a network of scholars investigating immigrants' political participation in the light of institutional and discursive opportunity structures. At the same time, empirical evidence on the determinants of immigrant volunteering remains scarce. By showing that acculturation explains only partially formal volunteering and does so differently among distinct ethnic groups, Sundeen, Garcia, and Raskoff (2009) point to the relevance of ethnicity as determining factor of immigrants' volunteering in the USA. Yet, the authors do not take into account the potential impact of the institutional setting created by different integration policies.

Accordingly, we are primarily interested in testing Fennema and Tillie's assumption that minority policies such as integration policies do matter besides individual level determinants when it comes to immigrant volunteering. Eventually, our results might tell us whether we can subscribe to the notion that 'such policies are likely to foster the social cohesion in multicultural societies' (Fennema and Tillie 2004, 105).

## Hypotheses—Varying Effects of Integration Policy on Immigrant Volunteering

Following the discussion above, the central underlying assumption of this paper suggests that the institutional setting which is defined by more or less restrictive integration policies, impacts on immigrants' propensity to volunteer. This idea reflects in our first hypothesis:

*H1: Integration policies do matter when it comes to immigrants' propensity to volunteer.*

This general assumption, however, needs further specification. Like integration itself, integration policy is a complex and multidimensional concept bearing normative connotations. In his compilation of migration policy indices, Helbling (2011) observes that there are almost as many concepts of citizenship, immigration or integration policy, as there are large N-studies. At the same time, the author reveals that different policy indicators are clearly correlated (cf. Koopmans 2010), implying that it is not so much the complexity but the inclusion of relevant indicators which matters for the validity of a concept for integration policy. The international framework developed by Koopmans et al. (2005; Koopmans 2010), which serves as our main frame of reference, distinguishes two dimensions of integration policy: policies offering immigrants equal access at the individual level, such as civic-political or socio-structural rights, and policies addressing the immigrant group level, such as cultural minority group rights and obligations (Koopmans et al. 2005, 7–16). We chose this reference framework as it comprises several aspects considered relevant for integration policy (cf. Castles and Davidson 2000; Penninx 2005), while it is neither too complex nor too simple.<sup>2</sup> As the preceding comments show, integration policy comprises very distinct instruments which may affect immigrants' volunteering in different ways. We can even expect that there are trade-offs between the various dimensions of integration policy.

On the one hand, policies operating on the individual equality dimension include regulations regarding access to nationality and political participation rights. Besides access to these civic and political rights, we also consider access to the labour market a crucial category of individual immigrant rights. Accordingly and similar to the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX; Niessen et al. 2007) as well as Koopmans' recent research (Koopmans 2010), we add access to the labour market—denoting socio-structural rights—to our concept of integration policy. As we want to emphasise the impact of these policies rather than the level on which they operate we prefer to call them *participatory* policies, considering namely civic-political rights and socio-structural rights.

Policies from the group-level dimension, on the other hand, basically refer to cultural obligations and specific religious or cultural rights, respectively. When referring to these policies, we use the expression *differential* policies, since these policy measures address the question to which extent religious difference is tolerated and supported, or conversely, cultural monism (assimilation according to Koopmans et al. 2005) is required. Admittedly, cultural rights and obligations might also be

conceived of as participatory policies, as, by assigning specific rights to religious or cultural groups, participation of these particular groups in the host society is facilitated. However, and as the elaboration of Hypothesis 3 below will show, we are more interested in the basic difference between cultural policies, which are group specific and participatory policies, which normally do not differentiate between groups but address all immigrants equally.

As volunteering constitutes a form of civic engagement, we generally assume that policies facilitating immigrants' participation in the host society (e.g. socio-structural and civic-political rights), foster civic engagement in terms of immigrants' volunteerism:

*H2: Participatory instruments of integration policy such as socio-structural rights and civic-political rights foster immigrant volunteerism.*

Regarding differential rights, a further specification of our hypotheses seems to be necessary. On the one hand, culturally pluralist policies with little or no requirements for cultural convergence can be seen as a characteristic of an open and liberal society, in which people's heterogeneity is accepted and reflected in accordingly multicultural norms and values. Following Larsen (2007, 87) such an open, non-selective policy environment is conducive to immigrant volunteering as equal treatment of different social groups reduces the perceived cultural distance between immigrants and locals.<sup>3</sup> In this direction points Wright and Bloemraad's (2012) study, showing that multiculturalism does not hinder immigrant engagement with society and government, but in many cases seems to foster it. In a similar vein, Helbling et al. (2010) observe that liberal and culturally pluralist policies, by removing important legal and institutional barriers to immigrant engagement and by transferring useful resources to immigrants, affect and enhance immigrants' political integration. More recently, however, culturally pluralist policies have also been criticised for their segregationist potential, since multiculturalism might nourish the most regressive aspects of minority cultures (Ireland 2006, 139; Koopmans 2010). Accordingly, we expect an exclusive focus on multicultural liberty and religious rights to impair immigrants' propensity to volunteer, if these rights generate no incentive to engage in and for the host society.

Culturally monistic policies, on the other hand, may also be seen as instruments to reduce the above mentioned cultural distance, as immigrants need to adapt in order to be accepted. Yet, culturally strictly monistic and prohibiting policies might again set the hurdle too high and have a discouraging effect. As such a policy context may fortify immigrants' feeling of being foreign and different to the host society, we do not consider it as conducive to voluntary engagement.

As these comments show, we find arguments for both culturally pluralist and monistic instruments supporting a positive relationship with immigrant volunteering. At the same time, the discussion also implies that strongly monistic or completely pluralist policies may not be conducive to immigrant volunteering. Taking these

arguments together, we conclude that a mix of certain minimal requirements to integrate into the host culture together with certain cultural and religious rights might set the highest incentive for immigrants' voluntary engagement. Accordingly, we expect an inverse u-shaped relationship between immigrants' volunteering and cultural rights and obligations.

Cinalli and Giugni (2011) report a similar curvilinear relationship between cultural rights and obligations and immigrants' political participation. While the authors are puzzled by this curvilinear outcome for the particular category of cultural rights, they mention early arguments in the social movement literature stressing a curvilinear relationship between opportunities and protest (cf. Eisinger 1973). Admittedly, the two contexts of early social protest movements and immigrants' volunteerism differ clearly in their internal logics, origins and purposes. However, both protest and volunteerism may be seen as a form of civic engagement which best prospers when selected aspects of the institutional setting (general political opportunity structures or cultural and religious rights and obligations) are neither fully closed or restrictive nor completely open or liberal, but somewhere in-between. Based on these theoretical considerations, we formulate Hypothesis 3:

*H3: A curvilinear relationship exists between differential rights and immigrants' voluntary engagement: the probability of immigrants' voluntary engagement is highest if a mix between monistic and pluralistic cultural and religious integration policies is present.*

## Data and Method

In the remainder of the paper, the hypotheses presented above will be empirically tested. The analyses on the individual level are based on data from the Swiss Volunteering Survey, merging the two waves from 2006 and 2009 (Stadelmann-Steffen, Freitag, and Bühlmann 2007; Stadelmann-Steffen et al. 2010). The final sample from the Swiss Volunteering Survey consists of 1736 immigrants in the 26 Swiss cantons.<sup>4</sup> The group of immigrants comprises thereby all respondents who indicated another nationality than Swiss.<sup>5</sup> For the measurement of individual civic engagement (i.e. the dependent variable), answers to the following question from the Swiss Volunteering Survey are considered:

We would now like to ask you about all the voluntary or honorary work you did for any associations, any types of organizations, or public institutions over the past four weeks. Have you carried out one or more activities of this type?

The associations, organisations and public institutions covered by the survey are sports clubs, cultural clubs, church or churchlike associations, interest groups, solidarity organisations, leisure organisations, civil service, human rights or environmental organisations, public office and political parties. The question is coded as binomial variable: immigrants indicating an unpaid voluntary work were assigned the

value 1; all others were allocated the value 0. While this kind of question is used in various international surveys to capture citizens' voluntary engagement, it is—like the survey as such—not particularly focused on immigrant volunteering. Even though immigrant-specific voluntary activities may, therefore, be underestimated (e.g. remittances, activities in religious or other associations of an ethnic community), this data still very well capture a broad range of voluntary activities which are relevant for migrants' integration into the host society.

As elaborated in the theoretical section, conceptualisation and measurement of our central independent variable, cantonal integration policy, draws on internationally established approaches which base on the idea of immigrants' access to civic-political and socio-structural rights, as well as cultural rights and obligations (Koopmans 2010; Koopmans et al. 2005). *Cultural rights and obligations* include, on the one hand, indicators measuring cultural obligations, and, on the other hand, specific religious rights. Cultural obligations are firstly captured by the degree of cultural integration required for naturalisation as it is defined by cantonal citizenship laws, and secondly by the cantonal implementation of integration agreements, which attach the condition of language skills to the issuance of residence permits. Religious rights, in turn, comprise the legal tendency towards recognition of minorities' religions in general (Christmann 2010), as well as a minority specific indicator on the cantonal dispositions regarding Islamic burials.<sup>6</sup> *Socio-structural rights* stand for the cantonal openness towards immigrants regarding jobs in the cantonal administration, teaching positions, the policy service or the cantonal judiciary. Finally, *civic-political rights* include the aspect of political participation rights captured by non-nationals' right to vote, the cantonal provision of an immigrant commission, and the civic aspect of immigrants' access to nationality. The time span covered by the three integration policy indices goes from 2005 to 2008 (for a more detailed discussion see Manatschal 2011).

In order to explain immigrant volunteering, we further build on former research on the determinants of individual civic engagement and integrate the following socio-demographic individual characteristics into the analysis (cf. Aleksynska 2008; Wilson 2000): previous research has shown that age, employment, education and gender are important predictors of immigrants' voluntary engagement. We add residential stability, i.e. for how long a person already lives in the actual place, since rootedness might be related to immigrant volunteering (Stadelmann-Steffen and Freitag 2011).

At the contextual level and in addition to the central policy variables, a canton's degree of urbanisation, as well as the language region, is integrated into the models, as these contextual factors have proven to be important in explaining volunteering in Switzerland (e.g., Stadelmann-Steffen and Freitag 2011). We use the values of the contextual factors measured prior to 2006 to assure that the potential cause precedes the effect. Finally, a dummy for the two surveys is integrated into the analysis in order to take possible time effects into account. More detailed information on the variables (operationalisation and sources) as well as descriptive statistics can be found in Table A1 in the appendix.

We apply random intercept models, implying that individual behaviour can vary between cantons. Such multilevel models are moreover very useful if the number of respondents is low (here: individual immigrants), as the level-1 estimators are not only rooted in the observations of a particular contextual unit, but ‘borrow strength’ from the other level-2 units (Steenbergen and Jones 2002). Additionally, these models allow for the modelling of macro-level characteristics (in the present case, the cantonal integration policy). As the dependent variable is dichotomous, individual volunteering of immigrants is transformed into a logit structure. A Bayesian estimation approach is used, which has shown to perform better than maximum likelihood, particularly when employing multilevel models faced with a small number of level-2 units (Browne and Draper 2006). For an easy interpretation of the Bayesian estimation results, the mean and the standard deviation of the posterior distribution are provided, which can be interpreted as in a standard regression situation; the mean is the average effect of an independent variable on the outcome variable, and the standard deviation gives a sense of the statistical reliability of this estimate. Moreover, for the main analysis the 90% credible intervals are presented, which are the Bayesian analogue to the confidence intervals in a standard regression context.

## **Empirical Results**

In this section, we present a two-stage procedure to examine the relationship between integration policy and immigrants’ propensity to volunteer. In the first analytical step, a basic model is analysed that contains only the individual variables in order to assess individual level predictors of immigrants’ volunteering as well as the variance between the Swiss subnational units (Table 1). In the second step, the policy indicators as well as the controlling variables are added to expand the model (Figure 1).

Initially, the following results can be concluded from Table 1. First, socio-economic factors are decisive for immigrant volunteering, the credible interval of these variables being clearly on either the positive or the negative side (i.e. not including zero). The likelihood that an individual will volunteer strongly increases with the level of education. In contrast, full-time employed immigrants tend to volunteer less than the part-time and unemployed. Furthermore, residential instability is negatively related to immigrant volunteering, or inversely, residential stability is conducive to immigrant volunteering. While these findings are consistent with earlier results on the determinants of individual voluntary engagement (e.g. Stadelmann-Steffen and Freitag 2011; Wilson 2000), the model also reveals important differences between volunteering in general and immigrant volunteering in particular. Age and gender, which proved to be important explanatory factors for volunteering in the studies mentioned above, are not related to the voluntary engagement of immigrants. While these results are in accordance with earlier studies on immigrant volunteering the reason for the differing findings are not clarified yet (e.g. Sundeen, Garcia, and Wang 2007, 268, 271).

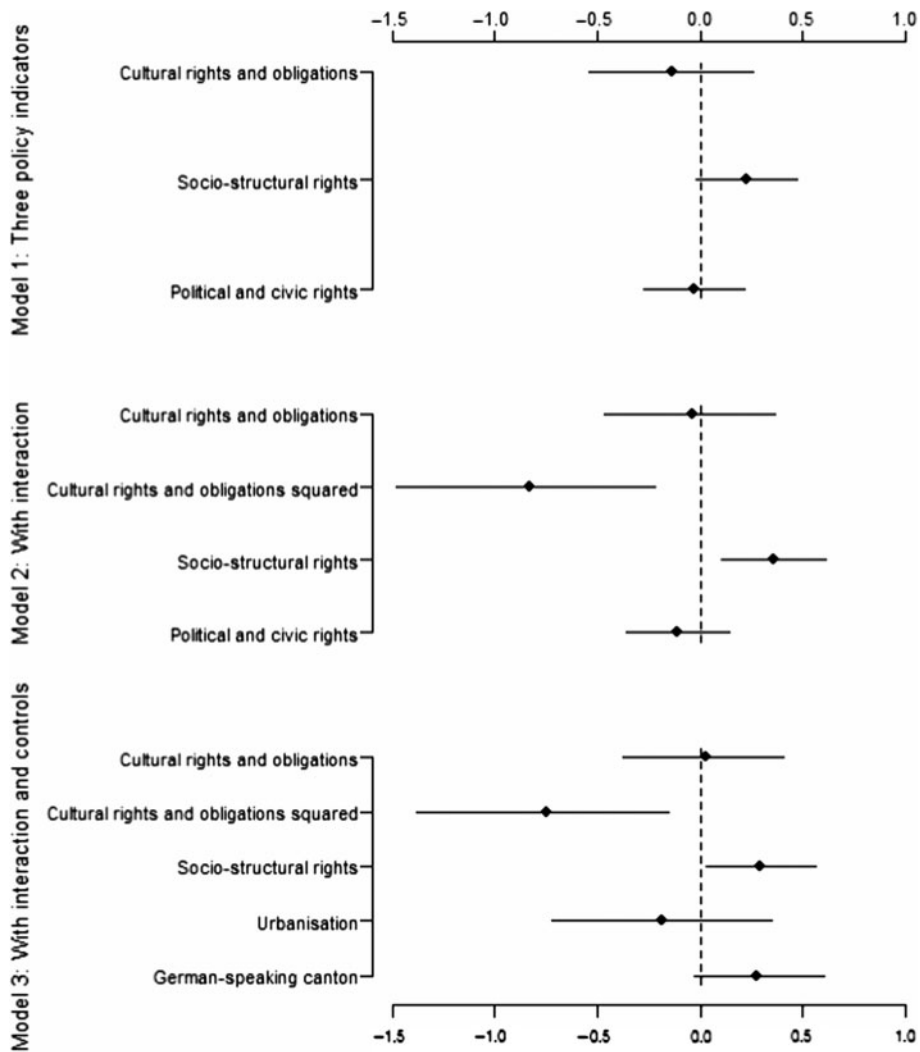
**Table 1.** Individual predictors of immigrant volunteering.

	Percentiles (SD)	Posterior mean	
		5%	95%
<b>Fixed effects</b>			
Constant	-1.79 (0.29)	-2.33	-1.32
<b>Individual level</b>			
Sex (ref.cat.: female)	0.09 (0.16)	-0.17	0.35
Age	-0.00 (0.01)	-0.01	0.01
<b>Education (ref.cat.: medium education)</b>			
Low education	-0.74 (0.22)	-1.05	-0.40
High education	0.62 (0.16)	0.36	0.88
<b>Employment (ref. cat.: part-time)</b>			
Full-time employment	-0.33 (0.20)	-0.66	-0.01
Not employed	-0.06 (0.20)	-0.40	0.28
Residential stability	-0.16 (0.06)	-0.26	-0.06
Year (ref.cat.: 2009)	0.40 (0.15)	0.15	0.64
<b>Random effects</b>			
Contextual-level variance	0.05 (0.06)	0.00	0.17
N	1736 (26)		
DIC	1345		

*Notes:* Posterior distributions of log-odds (mean, standard deviation in brackets, and 90% credible interval); all models were calculated in MlwiN using MCMC estimation (70,000 iterations [burn-in 50,000], diffuse [gamma] priors); no signs of non-convergence.

It must be mentioned that the standard deviation of the contextual variance is quite large, meaning that in statistical terms cantonal differences in immigrant volunteering are not significant. This may be due to the low number of respondents in some cantons. As conceptually a hierarchical model is the most suitable design, the multilevel model will, however, still be the more accurate model given even a small amount of contextual variance.

In our next step and following our Hypotheses 1–3, we examine the extent to which integration policy in a canton influences immigrants' propensity to volunteer. We present a graphical illustration of the estimated effects of the contextual variables (mean and credible interval) in Figure 1. For the sake of clarity and because the posterior means and credible intervals are highly consistent with those presented above, the individual-level variables—although included in the model—are not shown.



**Figure 1.** Integration policy and immigrant volunteering (log-odds).

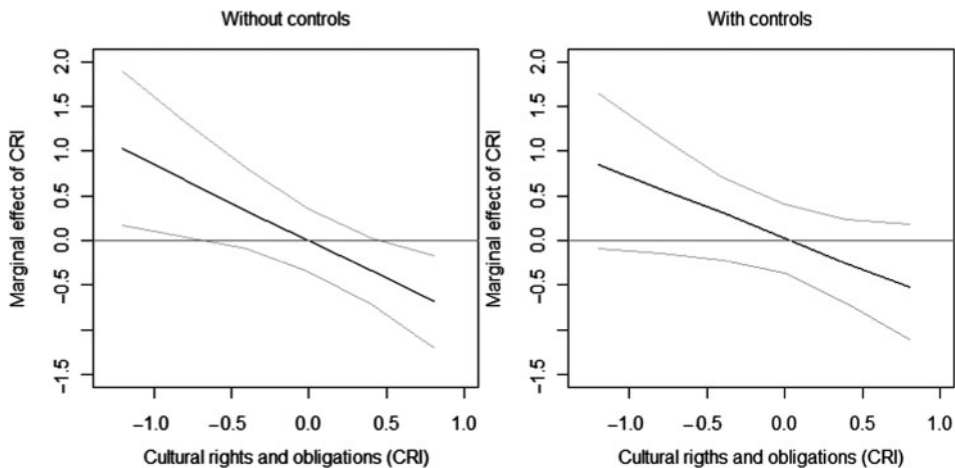
*Note:* Posterior distributions of log-odds (mean and 90% credible interval, last 1000 iterations); all models were calculated in MlwiN using MCMC estimation (100,000 iterations [burn-in 50,000], diffuse [gamma] priors); no signs of non-convergence.

Model 1 includes the three indicators of cantonal integration policy. Initially and in accordance with Hypothesis 1, there is some empirical evidence for a policy effect on immigrants' propensity to volunteer. A look at Model 1, however, shows that the estimated coefficients vary among the policy dimensions both in direction and strength. This confirms our expectations that there is no uniform relationship between the policy variables and the likelihood that an immigrant will volunteer, but rather the various dimensions of integration policy affect immigrant volunteering

differently. For socio-structural rights, the probability of a significant relationship between those policies and immigrant volunteering amounts to roughly 90% (the credible interval for this variable just includes zero). Thus, extensive socio-structural rights, i.e., a relatively easy access to cantonal administration, teaching positions, police service and the judiciary, are accompanied by a higher likelihood of immigrant volunteering than more closed cantonal institutions. Regarding the two remaining categories, cultural rights and obligations as well as political and civic rights, the credible intervals clearly contain zero. In what concerns the cultural rights and obligations category, for which we expect a curvilinear relationship (Hypothesis 3), Model 1 shows that we can reject the assumption of a simple relationship for this category. Finally, we find no effect regarding the civic-political category. This non-finding may be the result of a compensatory effect, i.e. the fact that participatory structures may enhance and limit civic engagement at the same time. On the one hand, and in line with our Hypothesis 2, political behaviour research often argues that facilitative, participatory contexts increase citizens' involvement as they are used and able to participate (Boehmke 2002; Freitag 2006). On the other hand, the social capital literature provides the argument that social networks arising from civic engagement are compensatory, meaning that individuals tend to either engage in one type of engagement or in another, but not in several at a time (Franzen and Pojntner 2007). In a similar vein, civic-political participation rights are assumed to satisfy immigrants' need for participation to an extent that they do not seek further types of civic participation such as volunteering (Cinalli and Giugni 2011). In combination, the two mechanisms outlined above are likely to neutralise each other, resulting in a zero effect.

In a next step, Model 2 tests a curvilinear specification of the cultural rights and obligations category. The predicted probabilities reveal that the relationship is a reversed u-shaped one as suggested by Hypothesis 3: the likelihood that an immigrant engages in volunteering first increases and then decreases with more liberal or less restrictive cultural policies (figure available from the authors upon request). In order to see for which values of the policy variable this effect is statistically reliable, the left graph in Figure 2 presents the mean marginal effect and the credible interval (see Brambor, Clark, and Golder 2006). The left graph clearly confirms the curvilinear relationship between cultural policies and immigrant volunteering. There is a systematic marginal effect of this policy category for both ends of the indicator, i.e. for very pluralist as well as for very monistic cultural policies. It is worth mentioning that, while the relationship between socio-structural integration and volunteering remains positive in Model 2, the credible interval does not include zero anymore. The quadratic modelling of cultural rights and obligations, thus, also helps to disentangle the socio-structural and cultural dimensions of integration policy.

In order to test the robustness of our findings, Model 3 additionally controls for the degree of urbanisation as well as language region, which proved to be important predictors of voluntary engagement in earlier studies.<sup>7</sup> As Figure 1 demonstrates, the policy effects mentioned above are quite robust against the integration of these



**Figure 2.** Curvilinear effect of cultural rights category.

*Note:* Marginal effect plots based on Models 2 and 3; mean marginal effects and 90% credible interval.

controlling variables, the credible intervals for the policy variables move just slightly towards zero, but we still find a systematic relationship regarding the socio-structural rights. In contrast, the marginal effect for cultural rights and obligation now slightly contains zero (see Figure 2). It must, however, be stated that integration policy is considerably related to linguistic culture in Switzerland. We, therefore, argue that Model 3 still clearly supports our hypothesis. First, even in this model that is severely affected by multicollinearity, the policy variables are among the strongest while the credible intervals of urbanisation and language region clearly include zero. Another indicator that speaks for the relevance of the policy variables is that the explanatory power of the model does not increase when language region and urbanisation is included in the model.<sup>8</sup>

## Discussion

There is increasing acknowledgement of the beneficial impact immigrants' voluntary engagement yields on their social capital and ultimately their integration into the host society. As immigrant volunteerism is a rather scarce resource, the central purpose of this paper was to test whether the institutional setting produced by differing integration policies affects immigrants' propensity to volunteer. New data-sets on immigrants' voluntary activities as well as on cantonal integration policies allowed us for a systematic comparative test of the respective assumption at Switzerland's cantonal level.

The central findings of the Bayesian multilevel models clearly corroborate our hypothesis whereby cantonal integration policy is related to immigrants' civic engagement. Firstly, policies fostering immigrant participation in terms of

socio-structural rights, which offer immigrants relatively easy access to cantonal employment, are associated with significantly higher levels of immigrant volunteerism than contexts that are less open in this respect. Moreover, the inversed u-curve relationship between the differential rights category of cultural rights and obligations and volunteerism corroborates, secondly, our assumption that a mixture between a not too demanding degree of required cultural adaptation and certain cultural entitlements involves the highest level of immigrant volunteerism. Thirdly, however, the probability that immigrants do volunteer is not systematically related to a canton's civic-political rights. We suggested that this non-finding might be a consequence of contrasting effects, since civic-political rights may equally foster or dampen civic engagement. This hypothesis deserves further scrutiny by future research.

The small sample size restricted further differentiation of the volunteering immigrant group, be it between different ethnic groups or regarding the composition of the voluntary association itself as ethnically homogeneous (bonding social capital) or heterogeneous (bridging social capital). However, the classical distinction between 'good bridging' and 'bad bonding social capital' has been questioned in recent research (Putnam 2007, 143), which increasingly discusses the integrative potential of ethnically homogeneous 'bonding' groups (cf. Portes, Escobar, and Arana 2008; Vasilev, forthcoming). An observation that fits this argumentation is the 'increasing activism' of local and state governments to promote and support immigrant associations (Moya 2005, 856). Moreover, empirical evidence from Denmark presented by Nannestad, Svendsen, and Svendsen (2008) shows that immigrant membership in intra-ethnic voluntary associations may even represent a kind of positive bonding with a positive spillover into bridging social capital. Similar conclusions are drawn for migrant associations in Switzerland: as Kriesi and Baglioni (2003) show, Swiss migrant associations are even more connected locally than autochthonous associations, creating thereby bridging social capital.

Another limitation of our data is that our measurement of immigrant status, captured as non-naturalised migrants, is rather crude. Further research based on larger or more encompassing migrant samples could provide more nuanced evidence on a potentially moderating effect of ethnicity on the relationship between integration policies and immigrants' volunteerism. In the same vein, it would be relevant to know more on whether first- and second-generation foreigners or naturalised migrants differ in their propensity to volunteer.

Taking a broader perspective, the empirical evidence arising from this paper can be put in a more general context regarding the relationship between institutional structures, ethnic diversity and integration in Switzerland. The country is often mentioned as a prime example of successful integration in a multicultural society. A 'paradigmatic case of political integration' (Deutsch 1976) referring mainly to its consensual and participatory institutional setting that was fundamental in uniting a very heterogeneous people, i.e. with four languages, two religions and different regional cultures (Linder 2010, 5). While this system undoubtedly worked well for traditional minorities, the integration of new, non-territorial minorities in recent

years proved to be much more difficult. Given a series of very controversial public and political debates on immigration issues, even Putnam's (2007) famous, though not unchallenged assumption (cf. Hooghe et al. 2009; Portes and Vickstrom 2011) that diversity hampers social capital in the short run, cannot be totally negated. In this context, the results of this paper are rather encouraging regarding policy impact. By fostering immigrants' propensity to volunteer, integration policies might have the potential to enhance immigrants' social capital and integration. To put it bluntly, we can conclude that institutions matter for societal integration: what the classic political institutions were for the 'old' ethnic minorities in Switzerland, is integration policy for the 'new' immigrant groups.

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## Notes

- [1] Big cities in Switzerland often formulate their own integration strategies. Yet, cantonal law prevails when it comes to define the competences of municipalities and thus, cities, in this policy field (TAK 2005, 26). The considerable autonomy of Swiss cantons in Swiss integration policy, which rests on Switzerland's political principles of executive federalism and subsidiarity, has been further corroborated in article 57 of the new aliens' law.
- [2] For a detailed discussion of our theoretical conceptualisation of cantonal integration policy based on the international framework (Koopmans et al., 2005; Koopmans 2010), as well as our empirical measurement see Manatschal (2011).
- [3] Volunteering can of course take place in many different organisations, whereby some of these organisations (e.g. immigrant associations) may flourish as a result of 'cultural distance' and therefore result in an increase of such organisations and eventually in immigrant volunteering. Based on our data, we cannot explicitly know how many immigrants actually engage in this kind of organisations. But most recent data from the Swiss Volunteering Survey show that only 5% of all (native and immigrant) respondents indicate that they are members in an immigrant association.
- [4] Of the 1814 immigrants interviewed, 78 show missing values for the dependent and/or independent variables and are therefore excluded from the analysis. The number of immigrant respondents per canton are as follows: Zurich (285), Bern (104), Lucerne (49), Uri (10), Schwyz (35), Obwalden (13), Nidwalden (9), Glarus (30), Zug (25), Fribourg (47), Solothurn (45), Basel-Town (64), Basel-Country (63), Schaffhausen (34), Appenzell Outer Rhodes (13), Appenzell Inner Rhodes (17), St. Gall (82), Grisons (27), Argovia (100), Thurgau (58), Ticino (114), Vaud (207), Valais (47), Neuchâtel (56), Geneva (184) and Jura (18).
- [5] We should note here that our migrant sample is not representative: immigrants account for ca. 13% of all respondents in the survey, whereas their share amounts to ca. 23% of Switzerland's overall population. Furthermore, the survey includes only immigrant respondents who know one of the Swiss languages (German, French or Italian), meaning that our immigrant sample is rather specific. However, the sample of immigrant respondents included in the Swiss Volunteering Survey represents fairly well the socio-demographic characteristics of migrants in Switzerland (Stadelmann-Steffen et al. 2010, 140f). As the aim

of our analysis is to estimate relationships and not representative shares of immigrant volunteers, we accept this lack of representativity in this context.

- [6] The focus on Islam is justified by the fact that it is currently the largest religion in Switzerland besides the two Christian confessions (see census data 2010 on <http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/de/index/news/04/01.html>, last accessed: September 20 2012). A similar focus on Islam is applied by Koopmans et al. (2005, 52) who argues that Muslims are a relevant religious minority, which is furthermore most affected by contemporary controversies on cultural differences.
- [7] We refrain from further integrating the size of the foreign population into the models. First and foremost, it is theoretically not clear whether a large share of foreigners would hinder or rather promote the likelihood of immigrant volunteering. Further analyses not presented here also suggest that a large immigrant population is not correlated with the probability of immigrant volunteering, nor does this variable influence the estimation of other parameters.
- [8] The Bayesian Deviance Information Criterion (DIC) amounts to 1344 for Model 2 and to 1343 for Model 3. In order to speak of a significant improvement, the DIC should decrease by approximately five when adding two additional variables.

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### Appendix Table 1A. Hypotheses, operationalization and sources.

Variable	Summary statistics	Operationalization/source <sup>a</sup>
<i>Dependent variable</i>		
Individual voluntary engagement	Shares: Volunteer: 13.8% Non-volunteer: 86.2%	Dummy: 1 = Individual performs unpaid work for an organisation or association; 0 = Individual does not perform unpaid work for an organisation, association or institution.
<i>Independent variables—individual level</i>		
Sex	Shares: Male: 42.1% Female: 57.9%	Dummy: 0 = women; 1 = men.
Age	Mean: 43.9 SD: 16.7 Min.: 15 Max.: 96	Age (in years) of the persons interviewed, standardised on a scale of 0–1.

**Table A1.** (Continued)

Variable	Summary statistics	Operationalization/source <sup>a</sup>
Educational level	Shares: Low education: 26.2% Medium education: 43.4% High education: 30.4%	Highest completed level of education, 3 categories: (i) no education higher than obligatory school or low educational achievements, (ii) secondary education and (iii) tertiary education.
Employment	Shares: Full-time: 45.6% Part-time: 19.7% Not employed: 34.7%	Three categories: (i) Full-time employed, (ii) Part-time employed and (iii) not employed.
Residential stability	Mean: 2.8 SD: 0.9 Min.: 1 Max.: 5	Number of years spent living in same place, 5 categories, whereby high values correspond to a low residential stability; standardised on a scale of 0–1.
<i>Independent variables—contextual level</i>		
<i>Cantonal integration policy variables<sup>b</sup></i>		
Cultural rights and obligations	Mean: 0.0 SD: 0.5 Min.: –1.16 Max.: 0.73	Additive index based on the components cultural requirements (for naturalisation and residence permit) and religious rights.
Socio-structural rights	Mean: 0.0 SD: 0.6 Min.: –1.7 Max.: 1.2	Additive index based on immigrants' access to cantonal employment in administration, teaching positions, police service and judiciary.
Political and civic rights	Mean: 0.0 SD: 0.6 Min.: –1.4 Max.: 1.0	Additive index based on the components non-nationals' right to vote, cantonal provision of immigrants' commission and access to nationality.
<i>Controls</i>		
Urbanisation	Mean: 0.44 SD: 0.34 Min.: 0 Max.: 1	Share of inhabitants in urban regions (between 0 and 1); Source: Federal Statistical Office: population census, 2000.
Linguistic region	Shares: German-speaking: 73.1% Latin canton: 26.9%	Dummy: 1 = German-speaking canton; 0 = Latin canton; Source: based on Federal Statistical Office: population census 2000.

<sup>a</sup>All individual variables are taken from the Swiss Volunteering Survey 2006 and 2009.<sup>b</sup>For more details on our measurement of cantonal integration policy indices see Manatschal (2011).