

Exchange in Switzerland - 2014 Internet Edition

A Guide for Exchange Students in Switzerland

www.esn.ch



SCHWEIZ



INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE
ERASMUS STUDENT NETWORK

SUISSE SVIZZERA SVIZRA



Editorial



Are you planning to go on exchange in Switzerland? Or perhaps you are already here, in the country of watches, chocolate, cheese, and money. In the name of the Swiss Erasmus Student Network (ESN), I warmly welcome you to this unique and unforgettable experience! According to my own record of more than two years overseas, I am sure you will also have a good time abroad with unexpected impressions of your new home for a term, a year - or even for good! The mission of ESN is to foster student mobility in Higher Education under the principle of "Students Helping Students". The organisation is one of the biggest interdisciplinary student associations in Europe and is based mainly on voluntary work. It is divided into more than 440 local sections in 36 countries and offers its services to 160,000 students. In Switzerland itself, there are currently 15 ESN sections with dozens of volunteers supporting you during your stay. With this booklet we inform you about our country, our customs and values, and show you that Switzerland has a lot going for itself besides the stereotypes mentioned above. I would like to thank all the Swiss ESN Sections for supporting us with the corresponding texts. I would also like to thank our partners, who are providing us with useful information, and our advertisers, who allow us to provide you with a printed version of this booklet. Last but not least, I wish you an unforgettable time abroad!

Remo Weber, January 2014

Contact and Publishing Information

ESN Switzerland
CH-8400 Winterthur

Bank Name: Postfinance, Nordring 8, CH-3030 Bern
IBAN: CH26 0900 0000 6059 0794 7
SWIFT/BIC: POFICHBEXXX

Version: 7.0 / January 2014
ISSN: 2296-2719
Print Run: 4,000

Cover Photo: *Stonearch Sisyphusarch* (Matterhorn | Stellisee | VS)
Photo taken by Ivo Mooberger
info@naturschauspiele.ch | www.naturschauspiele.ch

Project/Author: Remo Weber, Winterthur, Switzerland
booklet@remo-weber.ch | www.remo-weber.ch

Layout: Karin Weber, Zurich, Switzerland

Copyright: Remo Weber, ESN Switzerland
booklet@esn.ch | booklet.esn.ch

All rights reserved. No reproduction without permission of the owners. If any damage occurs – directly or indirectly - by the use of information presented here, neither the author nor ESN Switzerland is liable.



Please have a look at page 35 for more details

Communication Partner



Cooperation Partner



Printing Partner



DRUCK UND MEDIEN
www.ilg.ch

Welcome to Switzerland	2
Switzerland's History	3
Switzerland's Cantons	4
Language Regions	5
Switzerland's Political System	6
Landsgemeinde	8
Swiss Values	9
Swiss Tradition	10
Planning a Trip in / to Switzerland	12
Geography and Environment	14
How to Organise your Exchange	16
Go Abroad	18
Public Transport	20
Health, Accident and Liability Insurance	22
News Portals / Internet	24
Financial Matters	25
Supermarkets	26
Swiss Food & Beverages	27
Things to do & Going Out	32
Mobile Phone and Postal Services (get your CHF 5 yallo SIM Card Voucher here)	33
Disabled Students in Switzerland	35
Working in Switzerland	36
Erasmus Student Network (ESN)	38
ESN Structure	39
Buddy System, SocialErasmus, ESNSurvey, Tandem, PRIME, ESNcard	42
Join the ESN Team	44
Swiss ESN Sections	45
Basel/BS • Berne/BE • Chur/GR • Fribourg/FR • Geneva/GE • Lausanne/VD • Lugano/TI • Neuchâtel/NE • Olten/SO • St. Gallen/SG • Wädenswil/ZH • Winterthur/ZH • Zurich/ZH	
Switzerland in a Nutshell	58
Higher Education in Switzerland	60
Emergency Phone Numbers, Useful Background Information and Links	64



Willkommä, Bienvenue, Benvenuto, Bainvegni, Welcome to Switzerland

You are about to experience an exciting term or year abroad. This booklet, which is already in its seventh edition, will spare you precious time looking for information and will prepare you for some typically Swiss quirks. In here, you will find answers to all the key questions that may arise before and during your stay in Switzerland. Please feel free to contact the author at booklet@esn.ch in case you are missing some information or in case of errors. As space is limited in here, we added a lot of additional links. Please also visit www.esn.ch and/or your local ESN section's page to get the latest news about activities!

Content of the Booklet

The first chapter is dedicated to general information about Switzerland. You will find historical facts and useful information that will help you discover your host country. The second part includes survival tips, for example how to find a job in Switzerland, where to buy the cheapest food, the dos and don'ts, and much more. On page 33 you will find a CHF 5 yallo SIM Card voucher. The booklet's third part focuses on general information about the Erasmus Student Network. The Swiss ESN sections present themselves and their town in the fourth part. This might give you some useful information for your city trips. Last but not least the fifth part gives you a brief summary about your host country, some information about the Swiss Higher Education System, and also some useful links and hints.

Erasmus Student Network (ESN)

The aim of *ESN Switzerland* is to make your stay an unforgettable experience. ESN activities take place all year long. These events offer you the best opportunity to meet locals and other incoming students and to get to know new places as well as Swiss traditions and, of course, to have lots of fun!

...Exchange your life!

Switzerland's History

1 August 1291: According to a legend, representatives of the three cantons of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden unite on the *Rütli* (a meadow above Lake Lucerne) and swear the *Rütli Oath*. They agree to act jointly against surrounding aggressors. Nowadays, the Swiss National Day is celebrated on that day.

1353: Eight cantons build up the *Swiss Federation* after accession of Lucerne, Zurich, Glarus, Zug and Berne.

1513: Thirteen cantons build up the Swiss Federation after accession of Fribourg, Solothurn, Basel, Schaffhausen and Appenzell.

1803: End of the *Helvetic Republic* (1798 - 1803) and accession of St. Gallen, Grisons, Argovia, Thurgovia, Ticino and Vaud.

1815: Switzerland establishes its final boundaries as Valais, Neuchâtel and Geneva join the Swiss Federation.

1848: The Swiss Federation changes from a union of States to a Confederation. Its first federal constitution is set up.

1939 – 1945: During *World War II*, Switzerland remains neutral and is not invaded by the Nazi regime.

1971: Implementation of women's suffrage on federal level after a national (men) plebiscite. Last implementation on local level in Appenzell Inner-Rhodes is in 1991.

1979: The canton of Jura separates from Berne.

1992: In an emotional plebiscite, Switzerland's entry to the *European Economic Area* (EEA) is overruled by 50.3% of votes.

1999: The *first bilateral treaty* between Switzerland and the European Union is signed. The second follows in 2004.

2001: In a national plebiscite the start of accession talks to the *European Union* (EU) are overruled by 76.8% of votes.

2002: Switzerland joins the *United Nations*.

2010: Switzerland is headed by women only for the first time in history.

Rütli / Grütli



Helvetic Republic



Swiss Confederation





Switzerland's Cantons (States)

Swiss cantons (states) are relatively independent. All 26 states together build up the Swiss Federation:

Canton (Abbreviation)	Capital (Entry)	Language(s)
Appenzell Inner-Rhodes (AI)	Appenzell (1513)	GER
Appenzell Outer-Rhodes (AR)	Herisau (1513)	GER
Argovia (AG)	Aarau (1803)	GER
Basel-Landschaft (BL)	Liestal (1501)	GER
Basel-Stadt (BS)	Basel (1501)	GER
Berne (BE)	Berne (1353)	GER / FRE
Fribourg (FR)	Fribourg (1481)	FRE / GER
Geneva (GE)	Geneva (1815)	FRE
Glarus (GL)	Glarus (1352)	GER
Grisons (GR)	Chur (1803)	GER / ITA / ROH
Jura (JU)	Delémont (1979)	FRE
Lucerne (LU)	Lucerne (1332)	GER
Neuchâtel (NE)	Neuchâtel (1815)	FRE
Nidwalden (NW)	Stans (1291)	GER
Obwalden (OW)	Sarnen (1291)	GER
Schaffhausen (SH)	Schaffhausen (1501)	GER
Schwyz (SZ)	Schwyz (1291)	GER
Solothurn (SO)	Solothurn (1481)	GER
St. Gallen (SG)	St. Gallen (1803)	GER
Thurgovia (TG)	Frauenfeld (1803)	GER
Ticino (TI)	Bellinzona (1803)	ITA
Uri (UR)	Altdorf (1291)	GER
Valais (VS)	Sion (1815)	FRE / GER
Vaud (VD)	Lausanne (1803)	FRE
Zug (ZG)	Zug (1352)	GER
Zurich (ZH)	Zurich (1351)	GER

The cantons of Obwalden and Nidwalden, Basel-Stadt (city) and Basel-Landschaft (country), Appenzell Outer-Rhodes and Appenzell Inner-Rhodes are counted as half cantons. They have separate administrations but are linked closely. The total number of states to be considered on national plebiscites is therefore 23. De jure, Switzerland has no capital. Nevertheless, Berne is called "Federal Town" (German: Bundesstadt / French: ville fédérale / Italian: città federale / Rumansh: citad federala) and therefore de facto the Swiss capital.

Federal Authorities
www.admin.ch

Federal Assembly
www.parlament.ch

Federal Court of Justice
www.bger.ch

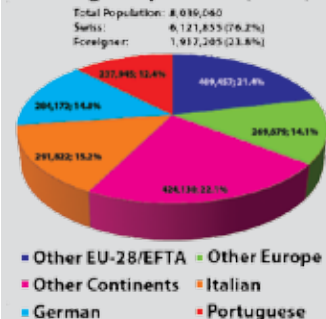
Language Regions

Switzerland is divided into four language regions. Therefore not all of the four official languages are spoken (nor understood) everywhere within the country! **English** is taught at school and is therefore widely spoken; even though it is not an official language of Switzerland. In 2011, 65.3% of people living in Switzerland spoke (**Swiss-**) **German** as a main language (up to 3 main languages per person). In the German-speaking part of Switzerland, people usually speak Swiss-German (Schwiizerdütsch, an Alemannic dialect) unless they are talking to foreigners. Then, they tend to switch to Standard German (if not, just kindly ask them to do so). 22.4% of all Swiss speak **French** as a main language. It is mostly spoken in the Western cantons of Switzerland. In the Southern canton (Ticino) **Italian** is the most common language (8.4%). Even though Romansh is only spoken by 0.5% of all Swiss, it is one of the four national languages. There are only a few regions in Grisons (the only canton with 3 official languages) where **Romansh** is spoken as a native language. English was spoken as main language by 4.4% of the Swiss population, Portuguese by 3.2%, Albanian and Serbo-Croatian by 2.6% each, and other languages by 8.2%.

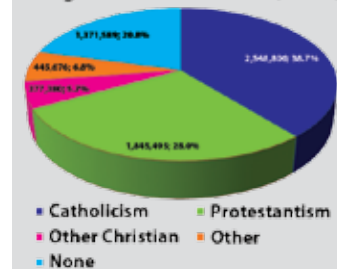
Geographical Distribution of Switzerland's Languages (2010)



Foreign Population (2012)



Religion in Switzerland (2011)



Federal Statistical Office
www.bfs.admin.ch



© Parlamentsdienste 3003 Bern



© Parlamentsdienste 3003 Bern

Switzerland's Political System

Democracy

Switzerland has a strong direct democracy. Swiss citizens have quite a lot of influence in the daily political business: they are entitled to vote on *referenda* (50,000 citizens or parliament to initiate) and *initiatives* (100,000 citizens to initiate) during the legislature period, to elect the parliament (two chambers) directly every 4 years and to vote on the four regular national voting dates per year. Often the cantonal and municipal voting is on the same date, sometimes resulting in more than ten tabling at the same date. As Switzerland is not governed by one ruling party, there is also no opposition as known from other countries.

Political Structure of the Swiss Government

The structure was copied to a great extent from the US, when modern Switzerland was founded in 1848:

Executive: *Federal Council*

The Federal Council consists of 7 equal members, elected by the parliament. Its chairman ("primus inter pares", the "President") rotates every year.

Legislative: *National Council* (Big Chamber)

The National Council consists of 200 members, representing the Swiss people. The canton's population is represented proportionally. Each canton has at least one seat.

Legislative: *Council of States* (Small Chamber)

The Council of States consists of 46 members, representing the cantons. Every canton has 2 seats; half cantons have one seat (on a voting, cantons are counted as one vote, half cantons as half votes; the total number of votes is therefore 23).

Judiciary: *Federal Court of Justice* (Mr Gilbert Kolly as president)

Since 2014 Switzerland is led by Mr Didier Burkhalter (FDP) as chairman of the Federal Council, Mr Ruedi Lustenberger (CVP) as the chairman of the National Council and Mr Hannes Germann (SVP) as the chairman of the Council of States.

Federal Authorities
www.admin.ch

Federal Assembly
www.parlament.ch

Federal Court of Justice
www.bger.ch

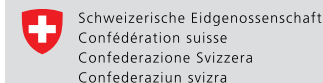
Switzerland's Political System

Political Parties

Since the 2011 election there have been seven main political parties, counting for 97 per cent of all National Council's seats:

Council of States (46 seats)		
Party	Seats	%
CVP	13	28.3%
FDP	11	23.9%
SPS	11	23.9%
SVP	5	10.9%
GLP	2	4.3%
GPS	2	4.3%
BDP	1	2.2%
Indep.	1	2.2%

National Council (200 seats)		
Party	Seats	%
SVP	54	27.0%
SPS	46	23.0%
FDP	30	15.0%
CVP	28	14.0%
GPS	15	7.5%
GLP	12	6.0%
BDP	9	4.5%
Other	6	3.0%



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Swiss Political Parties - cull

- Christian Democratic People's Party (CVP)
- Christian Social Party (CSP)
- Conservative Democratic Party (BDP)
- Evangelical People's Party (EVP)
- FDP: The Liberals (FDP)
- Geneva Citizens' Movement (MCG)
- Green Liberal Party (GLP)
- Green Party (GPS)
- Social Democratic Party (SPS)
- Swiss People's Party (SVP)
- Ticino League (Lega)

advertisement:

ilg
DRUCK UND MEDIEN

Sustainability is at our core.

ILG AG WIMMIS
Herrenmattstr. 37
3752 Wimmis
T 033 657 87 87
www.ilg.ch



© State Chancellery of Glarus



Appenzell 2013



Appenzell 2013



Appenzell 2013

Appenzell Inner-Rhodes
www.ai.ch/en/politik/sitzung

Glarus
www.landsgemeinde.gl.ch

Landsgemeinde

The *Landsgemeinde* is one of the oldest and purest forms of Swiss democracy and is still in use in the cantons of Appenzell Inner-Rhodes and Glarus. On a certain day, all eligible citizens of the canton gather in the open air to decide on laws and expenditures. They have the right to debate questions or submit an individual initiative.

Glarus (GL)

Since 2005, the citizens of Glarus vote by raising their *Stimmrechtsausweis*, a document which entitles them to vote. The votes are not counted. The *Landammann*, the president of the cantonal executive, decides by eye.

Appenzell Inner-Rhodes (AI)

In Appenzell Inner-Rhodes, the citizens additionally elect the Governing Council and their member of the Council of States during the Landsgemeinde. Voting is accomplished by those in favour of a motion raising their hand or the Swiss military sidearm, in which case the votes are only counted if the result is tight.

Challenges

The main problem of the Landsgemeinde is the fact that the votes are not anonymous as stipulated by the European Convention of Human Rights. An exception clause was therefore included for this Swiss tradition. The Swiss Federal Court additionally protected this kind of voting procedure.

The biggest challenge is the logistics, since this procedure requires a location where ten thousands of people can gather for this annual event.

A further problem is people who vote without being entitled to do so or people who are eligible to vote, but who raise both hands. It can be addressed by carrying out admission controls and by using *Stimmrechtsausweise*.

Swiss Values

There are probably two pictures of Swiss values in the world: one is inspired by the books "*Heidi*" by Johanna Spyri and "*William Tell*" by Hans Schriber which show the Swiss citizens as traditional farmers in the mountains. The other might have been influenced by the *James Bond* movies where Swiss people are shown as punctual, precise and reliable workers at a bank. The truth probably lies somewhere in-between.

- **Individualism:** In Switzerland, many different people, cultures and religions live peacefully next to each other / together. Most Swiss people follow a principle of "Live and let live"; the individual's freedom ends where the others' freedom begins to be affected.
- **Sovereignty:** Swiss people have always been committed to staying politically independent. This is probably the reason why Switzerland will not join the EU in the near future and waited until the year 2002 to become a full member of the United Nations.
- **Neutrality:** Since the *Congress of Vienna* in 1815, Switzerland is a neutral country. It therefore hosts many international institutions and organisations (*Red Cross*, *WTO*, *UN*, etc.).
- **Humanitarian Tradition:** As a neutral country, Switzerland has acted as mediator in international disputes on many occasions.
- **Punctuality:** You are required to be on time for meetings and classes and it is also highly recommended for all other appointments.
- **Innovation & Quality:** In particular with respect to corporate spending on R&D and on innovation as well as the number of patents per one million citizens, Switzerland is among the top countries in Europe. Furthermore the label "*Swiss Made*" stands for high quality.





© swissworld.org



Yodelling
www.ejv.ch

Hornussen / Hornuss
www.ehv.ch

Swiss Gymnastics Club
www.stv-fsg.ch

Swiss Wrestling
www.esv.ch

Swiss Tradition - Entertainment

Sports / Games

- *Hiking* is one of the most popular sports activities for young and old. It allows you to take a break from your usual routine and you can enjoy the beautiful nature of Switzerland.
- *Jass* is the name of a very popular card game and sometimes considered the national game in Switzerland.
- *Swiss Wrestling* is the Swiss variant of folk wrestling and considered a Swiss national sport.
- *Hornussen* is a truly Swiss sport and is like a mixture of baseball and golf.
- *Stone Put* is a competition that consists of throwing a heavy stone and it has been practiced among the alpine population since prehistoric times.
- *Cow fighting* is a traditional, usually bloodless event which determines the herd's leader.

Music

- *Yodelling* (the voice rapidly and repeatedly changes from the vocal chest register to the head register) was probably developed in the Swiss Alps as a means of communication between mountain peaks and became later part of the region's traditional music.
- *Choral Singing* has a long tradition and is still popular with young people in the countryside.
- The *Schwyzrörgeli* is a type of diatonic button accordion used in Swiss folk music. It has a unique tuning called *Schwyzerton*.
- The *Alphorn* is a wind instrument, consisting of a natural wooden horn of conical bore, having a cup-shaped mouthpiece. Similar horns can also be found in other mountainous regions.

Swiss Tradition - Festivals

National Day (1st August)

On 1st August 1291, the three ancient cantons of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden signed the Federal Charter (according to a legend on the Rütli Meadow above Lake Lucerne) and pledged alliance. This day became the National Holiday and it is celebrated with fireworks, paper lanterns and bonfires in the mountains, which remind of the liberation from the Habsburgs in 1291.

Carnival of Basel

The *Carnival of Basel* is the biggest one in Switzerland and the only Protestant one in the world. It begins on Monday after Ash Wednesday with the "*Morgestraich*" at 4 am and lasts exactly 72 hours. Tens of thousands of people attend this big event every year.

Chalandamarz

The "*Chalandamarz*" (1st March) is an old and famous rite of the Rhaeto-Romanic part of Switzerland and dates back to the time of the Romans. Back then, the 1st March was the first day in the new year and the rite was an attempt to banish the evil spirits. Nowadays it is used to drive out the spirits of winter and it is practised by young people cracking whips, singing and ringing cow bells.

Escalade

On 11th December 1602, the Duke of Savoy attacked Geneva by trying to climb over the town wall (French: "*escalade*") which failed, thanks to the heroic defenders. Nowadays, Europe's biggest historic deployment is celebrated annually, the weekend after December 11th, to commemorate this feat.

Rabadan

The *Rabadan* (Piedmont for "noise") is a more than 150 year old carnival festival that takes place during six days in the town of Bellinzona (capital of canton of Ticino). It is a very lively festival and attracts tens of thousands of people.

Federal Charter of 1291



© admin.ch



© swissworld.org



© swissworld.org



© swissworld.org

Rütli / Grütli
www.ruetli.ch

Holidays
www.feiertagskalender.ch



Open-Airs
www.openairguide.net

Accommodation
www.couchsurfing.org
www.hostelworld.com
www.youthhostel.ch

Planning a Trip in / to Switzerland

Please do not hesitate to contact the local ESN section if you are planning a trip to another city. They will gladly provide you with information or even plan an event.

Social Integration

Swiss people are normally helpful but introvert, which could be interpreted as unfriendly, close-mouthed or sometimes even as arrogant by an outsider. But not only outsiders are facing this problem, Swiss people have trouble meeting other individuals too. The best way to get in contact with the local population is to join an association and to follow the local way of life. An association could be a sports club, gymnastics club, student organisation - like ESN - or a choral. It is often hard to make friends but once you have a Swiss friend you can confide in them.



Cultural Activities

Many Swiss are crazy about open air festivals. That is why there are lots of festivals being held during summer. There is also a wide range of cultural activities to enjoy, such as museum nights, open air theatres and historical trips. In the cities, you will find a versatile nightlife and lots of shopping possibilities. Besides the modern activities there are many traditional ones. The contrast in Switzerland between towns and the countryside is really big. Whereas livery processions, yodel, folk music and cattle exhibitions are still popular in the countryside - even with young people, they are often perceived as old-fashioned in urban areas. Townsfolk often go into clubs and bars with friends to have a good time.

Spring and Summer

After a day of studies, a long night or a hiking trip, it is wonderful to have a refreshing bath in one of the many Swiss lakes or rivers. Besides, you can go rollerblading or biking on trails

Planning a Trip in / to Switzerland

around the lakes. In the middle of high mountains you find deep blue natural pools (up to 4,600 m). If you like "adrenaline rushes" you can go bungee jumping down the wall of one



of the highest dams of Europe - at the same spot James Bond jumped in *Golden Eye*. Apart from that, there are glaciers, where you can ski throughout the summer (Saas Fee, Zermatt). If you like nature, explore our beautiful countryside

on a hiking tour. The *Swiss Alpine Club (SAC)* offers simple accommodation in huts for reasonable prices in the Alps.

Autumn

Enjoy a train or bus ride through Switzerland's colourful autumn landscape. The golden, shining vineyards in Valais or in the Lavaux are especially recommended. There are also plenty of museums waiting for you. Probably most famous are the *Swiss Museum of Transport (Verkehrshaus)* in Lucerne and the *Swiss Technical Museum and Science Centre (Technorama)* in Winterthur.



Winter

Switzerland is an Eldorado for winter sports lovers. As the country is quite small, you can get to many resorts for skiing or snowboarding pretty quickly from anywhere. Winter sports are quite expensive, especially in big resorts. Possible alternatives are to go on snowshoe hikes or eat fondue with friends in a lonely cottage in the Alps enjoying the spectacular mountain scenery.



Swiss National Tourist Office
www.myswitzerland.com

Swiss Alpine Club (SAC)
www.sac-cas.ch

Geography and Environment

Rivers & Lakes

The Rhine is Switzerland's biggest river and drains almost 68% of all water into the North Sea. Second comes the Rhône River, which drains 18% into the Mediterranean Sea. There are many other smaller rivers, ideal for taking a swim or doing a white-water rafting trip. Besides the rivers there are also about 1,500 lakes, which form Switzerland's characteristic landscape. The biggest lake is *Lake Geneva* (with a French part), followed by *Lake Constance* (with a German and Austrian part). The probably most well-known and most beautiful lake is situated in central Switzerland; *Lake Lucerne* which is surrounded by imposing mountains and was used as scenery in Hans Schriber's famous saga of *William Tell*, written around 1477.

Glaciers

With an area of 1,143 sq km, Swiss glaciers cover around 2.8% of the country's total surface. The largest and also one of the most well-known glaciers is the Aletsch, with a length of 22.7 km. Due to global warming the glaciers melt rapidly - more than 50% since the middle of the 19th century! The melting water often flows into the mountain lakes and is then used to produce eco-friendly electricity.

Potable Water

Switzerland is often called the *water tower of Europe* and is known for its high water quality. In 2012 the average daily water consumption per capita was 316 litres. 42% of all water intake points used groundwater, 39% used source water and 19% used lake water.

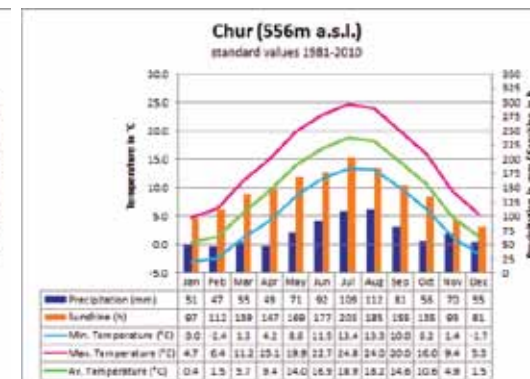
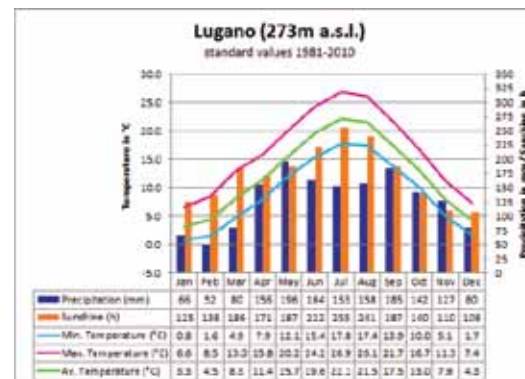
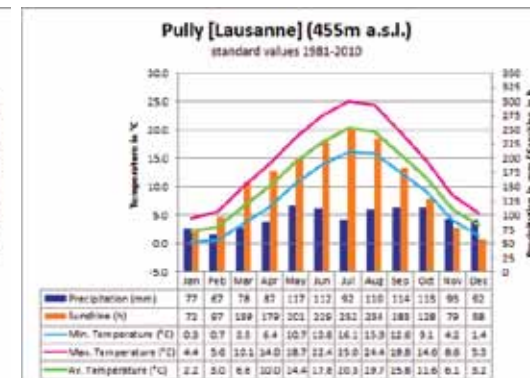
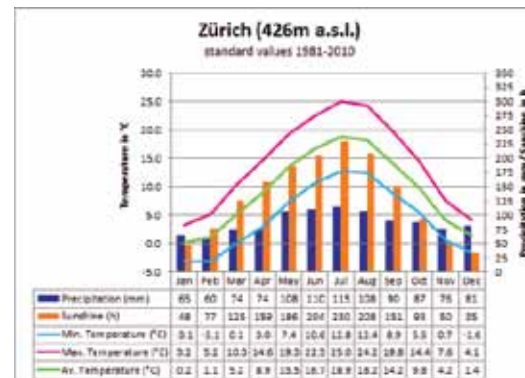
Municipal Waste

In 2012 the average annually waste per capita was 694kg which can be equally divided into burned waste and recycled waste (347kg each). The most recycled goods were paper and carton, vegetable materials and glass (48%, 31% respectively 13% of all recycled material).

Geography and Environment

Weather

The weather in Switzerland is variable. In winter the temperature stays around the frost point and there might be snow even in the lowland. In summer the temperature can rise up to 30°C or even higher. In this season, thunderstorms are quite common. Because of the Alps, the climate in Switzerland is different in the North and the South. The average temperature in the South (*Ticino*) is 3°C higher than in Zurich (North), which also leads to different vegetation: in Ticino you can grow palm trees and kiwi fruits. This region is also called the *Swiss Sun Parlour* as one can annually enjoy the sun almost more than 500 hours compared to Zurich. On the other side, the precipitation in the South is almost double the amount of Chur (East), and still half the amount more than Zurich (North).





How to Organise your Exchange

Preparation

An exchange gives you the unique opportunity to explore another country and another culture. In order to be well prepared and not to be negatively surprised by cultural changes and different behaviours, we strongly recommend you to get well informed about the place you will go to (not only the university but also the culture and the local situation). Be open to everything might be different from home (food, language, newspapers, way of life, public transport, timetables, shop opening hours, and so on).

Sources of Information about Partner Universities

- Home and Partner Mobility/International Office
- Former Exchange Students at your Home University
- Erasmus Student Network at the Partner University
- Internet

Swiss Partner Booklets

COHEP: www.cohep.ch/en/publications/documents/

CRUS: www.crus.ch/information-programme/studying-in-switzerland.html?L=2

KFH: www.kfh.ch/index.cfm?nav=1&pg=27&CFID=12088180&CFTOKEN=26678974&lang=e

Application

Discuss your intention to study abroad with your local university's responsible person. If there is a *mobility office (international office)* at your university ask them for the necessary documentation. Do not forget to check if your favoured university abroad provides its own application documents (take care with deadlines)!

Selection

The decision about your exchange is up to the local and host university. If several students are interested in studying at the same university abroad, it is possible that you will have to go through a selection procedure.

How to Organise your Exchange

Immigration Formalities

When you have received confirmation of acceptance by a host university, please check the embassy's homepage in the designated country for information on entry formalities. You might need to apply for a visa, you might have to show proof that you have adequate financial means to support yourself during your studies abroad or you also might need an additional health insurance for your host country. Consider that some bureaucratic processes might take some time, especially in case you need to apply for a visa.

Timetable / Course Scheme

Together with the mobility office and your department you will prepare a *degree course scheme* according to the courses offered at the host university (so called *learning agreement*). It should contain as many similar courses as possible to the ones you miss at your home university while you are studying abroad. As offered courses at your host university might change or not to be on an adequate level for you, it might be good already to have some alternative courses discussed with your home university.

Final Application

The mobility office sends your complete *application documentation* to the host university. You will be contacted by the host university a few weeks later. Usually within 4-6 weeks they will send you a *letter of acceptance* and information about the university and possible lecture materials.

Accommodation and Travel

Check if your host university is assisting you in finding an accommodation and organising a transfer or if you have to do that on your own. If you do not get any support, contact the local ESN section for further information. You are welcome to ask them further questions about your stay, the local life and daily business.



Accommodation - cull
www.belodged.com
www.clicklodge.ch
www.comparis.ch/immobilien
www.housingforstudents.ch
www.students.ch/wohnen
www.wgzimmer.ch

Hostels - cull
www.couchsurfing.org
www.hostelworld.com
www.sac-cas.ch
www.youthhostel.ch

Maps - cull
map.baidu.com
maps.google.ch
www.here.com
map.search.ch

Public Transport
www.postauto.ch
www.sbb.ch

Airports
www.zurich-airport.com (Zurich)
www.euroairport.com (Basel)
www.gva.ch (Geneva)



© business-knigge.info



Go Abroad: Explore a New World!

Staying in a foreign country is wonderful! You will have the chance to taste different kinds of food, to make friends, to get to know a foreign culture, in short, to explore a new way of life. In order to gain this experience you need to be open-minded. The best will be to abandon everything you think you know about Switzerland before you arrive!

Switzerland, a Nation of Consensus

In contrast to many other countries Switzerland is not a homogenous ethnic group but a nation of consensus. It consists of four main ethnic groups; each group dominates a specific part of Switzerland. Therefore not every official language is spoken (nor understood) in all parts of Switzerland and also the culture is very different from the South (Italian) to the North (German) and from the West (French) to the East (Rumantschs). As the different cultures have been living together in the same country for centuries, they are not in their pure form anymore!

Small Dictionary

Some French and German words used in Switzerland are different than their roots (albeit Swiss still understand the original word). Another Swiss peculiarity is the fact that the German *Eszett* ("ß") is always officially replaced by a double "s" ("ss").

	French (CH)	German (CH)
bicycle	le vélo	<i>das Velo</i>
wallet	le porte-monnaie	<i>das Portemonnaie</i>
footpath	le trottoir	<i>das Trottoir</i>
ticket	le billet	<i>das Billett</i>
croissant	le croissant	<i>das Gipfeli</i>
to pull in	garer qc.	<i>parkieren</i>
to barbecue sth.	griller qc.	<i>etw. grillieren</i>
seventy	<i>septante</i>	siebzig
eighth	<i>huitante</i>	achtzig
ninty	<i>nonante</i>	neunzig

Go Abroad: Swiss Dos and Don'ts

In Switzerland (as everywhere) there are dos and don'ts. The following hints should help you to get easily along.

Do not...

- ... speak loudly in public (especially between 10 pm and 6 am).
- ... start the meal until the host's first toast.
- ... put your hands in pockets or chew gum while talking to people.
- ... ask personal questions, such as salary, age, or religion, unless you know the person very well.
- ... address someone by their first name unless invited to do so (business: senior invites junior | private: elder invites younger).
- ... give expensive or extravagant gifts. Good gifts are wine (for men), high quality chocolates (both genders), or flowers (women; avoid white chrysanthemums and white lilies which are for funerals).
- ... smack, burp or fart loudly in public (especially not in a restaurant). Also do not spit on the ground and always use a tissue for blowing quietly your nose.

Do...

- ... respect the Swiss greeting with three kisses on the (left-right-left) cheek (man-woman / woman-woman) respectively a strong handshake (man-man).
- ... separate rubbish, help to recycle and use the many waste bins.
- ... bring either a small gift to your host or do ask them to bring the dessert (probably you need to insist on bringing a dessert if you really want to bring one).
- ... tip waiters, hair dressers and cab drivers (5-10%).
- ... always be punctual (exactly on time).
- ... keep both hands on the table during a meal. Moreover it is polite to keep elbows off the table, eat everything off your plate, and use a fork, knife and spoon.
- ... stop drinking and eating as you think best.



Book of Interest
Knigge (ISBN 978-3-86647-585-4)



© SGV (Lake Lucerne)

Public Transport

Overview

Public Transportation in Switzerland is generally considered to be good - you can get almost everywhere in the country without a car. Bigger towns are connected at least half-hourly, smaller localities at least hourly by train or bus. Even villages in the mountains are connected (several times) daily. Before you take a trip to the mountains, please check the timetable carefully!

Railways

Most of the rail infrastructure is maintained and operated by the state-owned *SBB* (in French: *CFF*; in Italian: *FFS*). Every medium-size town has a railway station. Apart from the *SBB*, there are several private train operators (*SBB* ticket is also valid). You also still have the possibility to book a journey with an old steam engine and the original rail cars (3rd class).

Buses / Tramways

Most communities offer some bus connections. A major state-owned provider of interurban bus transportation is the "Postauto", a bus operated by the Swiss Post. They also connect some tourist spots in the mountains. The cities of Zurich, Basel, Geneva and Berne have their own tramway system.

Ships / Navigation

There are fleets on all big Swiss lakes. Most of the fleets are used for tourism. Many smaller lakes also have boats for the public. Ask if your train ticket is also valid there.

Tickets / Railpasses

For trains, buses and tramways you need to buy your ticket in advance; otherwise you have to pay at least a CHF 90 penalty for the first time, a CHF 130 penalty for the second time, and a CHF 160 penalty from the third time on.

In case of sparse usage, tickets are usually expensive. Depending on your needs, you might want to buy one of the following passes which are issued by the national wide operating *Verband öffentlicher Verkehr* (VÖV / UTP).

Public Transport

Half-Fare Travelcard

Halbtax • *Demi-tarif* • *Metà-prezzo*

With this card, you only pay half-price on most of the public transportation systems. If you are staying in Switzerland for several months and plan to travel longer distances by train from time to time, we highly recommend to buy this card - it pays off very quickly (available as a 1, 2 or 3 year card).

Track 7

Gleis 7 • *Voie 7* • *Binario 7*

This one year valid card (add-on to the Half-Fare Travelcard) allows you to travel for free in trains departing between 7 pm and 5 am (night fares have to be paid separately!). You can buy this card up until one day before your 25th birthday. With this pass you can travel very inexpensively, if you time your trips accordingly.

1-day Travelpass

Tageskarte • *Carte journalière* • *Carta giornaliera*

The 1-day Travelpass (add-on to the Half-Fare Travelcard) provides you with unlimited travel for one day on railway, (most) boats and postbus lines, as well as on tram and bus networks in most Swiss cities and agglomerations. Mountain railways are often with a discount.

GA Travelcard

Generalabonnement • *Abonnement Général* • *Abbonamento Generale*

With this card you can use Switzerland's whole public transportation network (including lake boats, private railways etcetera) for free, with a few minor exceptions. You have to buy it for a time period of at least four months. There is a special price for students younger than 30.

Point-to-Point Travelpass

Streckenabo • *Abonnement de parcours* • *Abbonamento di percorso*

If you regularly make the same journey by train, then a point-to-point travelpass might be your choice (within the same regional authority transport network you need a local sub).

Other Offers

There are a lot more offers, like RailAway – check out the *SBB* website regularly to find out about them.



© Verband öffentlicher Verkehr



© Verband öffentlicher Verkehr



© Verband öffentlicher Verkehr

Verband öffentlicher Verkehr
- www.voev.ch (German)
- www.utp.ch (French)

Railway & Bus - cull
- www.sbb.ch
- www.postauto.ch



© Novartis

Health, Accident and Liability Insurance

In Switzerland, it is mandatory to have a valid health insurance. In general, exchange students can fulfil this requirement by presenting confirmation of coverage from their health insurance at home. If you are from an EU country, you can present your *European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)*. Your card has to be valid for the entire extent of your stay. If you are from a Non-EU country, you must have your insurer fill in the *Foreign Insurers Confirmation (Form B: students)*. Students from so-called "third-countries" must submit proof of insurance with their visa application, or proof of access to a sum of CHF 21,000 per year (a bank account statement, for example) to demonstrate that they can cover potential costs they may incur due to disease. Students who are unable to provide proof of health insurance coverage have to take out basic health insurance at their own expense from a Swiss insurer; their health insurance must cover the entire duration of their stay. The cost is about CHF 100 per month. The insurance covers many treatments. However, unlike some other countries, dental care is not covered. Beyond this, ESN recommends that you check if your accident insurance is also valid in Switzerland (especially the "*Student Worldwide Cover*" from *TradiConsult*).



Liability insurance covers damages to other persons and property caused by the policy holder. Liability insurance is not legally required. However, it is recommended that exchange students are insured for such incidents. Before departure from your home country, you should check with your insurer whether the insurance covers liability during stays abroad. Students wishing to take out liability insurance coverage in Switzerland can do so for CHF 100 to CHF 150 a year.

Federal Office of Public Health:
www.bag.admin.ch/themen/krankenversicherung/06377/10007/index.html?lang=en

Source: www.zhaw.ch/en/zhaw/international/mobilitaet/incoming.html
 (Brochure "*Studying at the ZHAW? Everything you need to know*")

Federal Office of Public Health
www.foph.admin.ch

Comparison Service
www.comparis.ch/krankenkasse
www.priminfo.ch
www.swupp.ch

Insurance Association
www.santesuisse.ch

Assurances - cull
www.assura.ch
www.atupri.ch
www.concordia.ch
www.css.ch
www.egk.ch
www.groupemutuel.ch
www.helsana.ch
www.intras.ch
www.kpt.ch
www.oekk.ch
www.sanitas.com
www.swica.ch
www.swisscare.ch
www.visana.ch

advertisement:



Zurich University
of Applied Sciences



Join us!

26 Bachelor's degree programmes, 14 Master's degree programmes and over 40 Master of Advanced Studies programmes: at the ZHAW Zurich University of Applied Sciences you can choose from degree programmes in Architecture, Design and Civil Engineering, Health, Applied Linguistics, Life Sciences and Facility Management, Applied Psychology, Social Work, Engineering as well as Management and Law.

.....
 ZHAW Zurich University of Applied Sciences
 Contact: phone +41 58 934 71 71, www.zhaw.ch, info@zhaw.ch

Zurich Universities of Applied Sciences and Arts

Newspapers - cull
www.20min.ch (GER/FRE/ITA)
www.24heures.ch (FRE)
www.giornaledelticino.ch (ITA)
www.lecourrier.ch (FRE)
www.letemps.ch (FRE)
www.nzz.ch (GER)
www.tagblatt.ch (GER)
www.tagesanzeiger.ch (GER)

Public Radio & TV
www.rsi.ch (ITA)
www.rtr.ch (ROH)
www.rts.ch (FRE)
www.srf.ch (GER)

Private TV (German) - cull
www.3plus.tv
www.4plus.tv
www.telebaern.ch
www.telebasel.ch
www.telebielingue.ch
www.telem1.ch
www.telezueri.ch
www.toonline.ch
www.tv-online.ch
www.zueriplus.ch

Private TV (French) - cull
www.canal9.ch
www.canalalpha.ch
www.maxtv.ch
www.telebielingue.ch

Private TV (Italian) - cull
www.teleticino.ch

DigitalTV - cull
www.green.ch
www.swisscom.ch
www.upc-cablecom.ch

Internet Providers - cull
www.citycable.ch (Lausanne)
www.green.ch
www.swisscom.ch
www.upc-cablecom.ch

Swiss Portals - cull
www.ch.ch
www.swissinfo.ch
www.swissworld.org

News Portals / Internet

News Portal

Swiss news portals offer a wide range of information about Switzerland in several languages. They can be useful to train your language skills or just to inform you about the most relevant topics in your host country.

Newspaper

There are many different newspapers in Switzerland in various languages. The *Neue Zürcher Zeitung (NZZ)* is one of the most famous in the German-speaking part of the country; mostly objective information and accurate investigations. *Tagesanzeiger* is another well-known paper of that region. *24heures* is very popular in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. *Le temps* and the *courrier* are also well-known in that part of Switzerland.

Television

National television is largely public - and digital; the channels from *SRF* ((Swiss-) German; parts in Romansh), *RTS* (French) and *RSI* (Italian; parts in Romansh) belong to the government. There are some other private local and regional channels. In the German-speaking part of Switzerland, they are normally in Swiss-German. News is usually well investigated. Depending on your subscription, you also receive foreign TV channels like *TVE* or *Rai*, or even channels from overseas, like *CNN* or *CCTV*.

Radio

The radio market is not as restricted as the TV market; there are many different, private radio channels. Just explore them! In the German-speaking part of Switzerland, they are normally in Swiss-German.

Internet

Access through ADSL is mostly provided by the state owned *Swisscom*, TV-Internet through *upc-cablecom* (usually the cheapest provider). Costs range between CHF 39 (10 Mbit/s) and CHF 79 (150 Mbit/s) per month, exclusive of a set-up fee.

Financial Matters

Currency

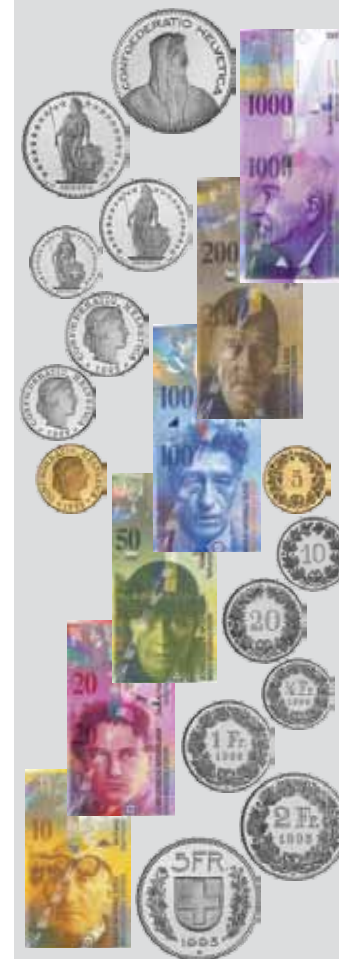
Switzerland's currency is the *Swiss franc*. The smaller denomination, which is worth a hundredth of a franc, is called "*Rappen*" (German), "*Centime*" (French) or "*Centesimo*" (Italian). It has been a very stable currency during times of (financial) crisis and is therefore called "*safe haven*". As the inflation always has been low, you still find coins from the early 20th century in circulation. To guarantee the protection against forgery, the bank notes have been replaced several times. Due to technical difficulties during the serial production's test run, the originally planned issue of new bank notes was put off to 2015 instead of 2010.

Banks

There are several options to open a bank account. You can choose between the two big leaders *UBS* and *CS* and the many smaller banks, like *Cantonal Banks*, *Migrosbank*, *Bank Coop*, *Raiffeisenbank* and many more. Another possibility is *Postfinance* of the *Swiss Post*. For exchange students, Postfinance is the easiest way to get a post account, because you do not need a *domicile confirmation* as with normal bank accounts. On the other hand, banks often offer special student conditions (like credit card for free or a bonus program). Banks usually are open from 9 am to 5 pm on working days, closed on Saturdays, Sundays, and Festivals. Automatic teller machines (ATMs) can be found almost everywhere.

Payment

Next to cash, *EC* and credit cards (*VISA / MASTER*) are widely accepted. Bills usually have to be paid within 30 days. Afterwards you often have to pay a 5% p.a. penalty. In Switzerland it is common to pay the bill by going to the post office and showing the payment slip you received. You have to calculate the total amount in advance; normally you are asked for it. Of course it is also possible to pay the bills via e-banking. You just have to copy the payment slip information into the electronic form.



Swiss National Bank
www.snb.ch

Banks - cull
www.bankcoop.ch
www.credit-suisse.ch
www.kantonalbank.ch
www.migrosbank.ch
www.postfinance.ch
www.raiffeisen.ch
www.ubs.ch

Payment
www.post.ch



Supermarkets - cull
www.aldi-suisse.ch
www.coop.ch
www.denner.ch
www.landi.ch
www.lidl.ch
www.migros.ch
www.spar.ch
www.volg.ch

Supermarkets

The best known supermarkets are listed below. In brackets you see the number of branches existing in Switzerland.

- Aldi (> 160)
- Coop (> 820)
- Denner (> 760) {belongs to Migros}
- Landi (> 300)
- Lidl (> 90)
- Migros (> 630)
- Spar (> 170)
- Volg (> 550)

Migros and *Coop* are the two big players in the Swiss supermarket scene, with a good environmental reputation. Have a look at the low-budget-lines in their assortments: “*M-Budget*” of Migros and “*Prix Garantie*” of Coop. *Aldi*, *Denner* and *Lidl* are discounters with a small product range (1,000 and 1,800 products respectively). *Landi* and *Volg* also have a small product range and are usually situated in rural areas. Migros and Coop on the other hand offer almost everything: from food and household articles over mobile phone and bank services to petrol stations. Both Coop and Migros are cooperatives. Every Swiss citizen can be part of Migros and Coop by a share certificate.



Opening Hours

There is no fixed rule in Switzerland regarding opening hours! There is even no general rule within the same town or village. In general we can say that smaller stores are open on weekdays from 8/9 am till 6/7 pm (often once a week until 8/9 pm) and on Saturdays until 5/6 pm. Bigger stores are usually open on weekdays from 8/9 am until 7/8 pm and on Saturdays from 8/9 am until 6/7 pm. Some gas stations sell products 7/24 (depending on the canton!). On Sundays, regular stores are closed. Only a few shops in bigger train stations and gas stations are open. On Monday mornings smaller stores are often closed. Banks are open only on weekdays, usually from 9 am until 5 pm. Bigger postal offices are also opened on Saturdays.

Swiss Beverages

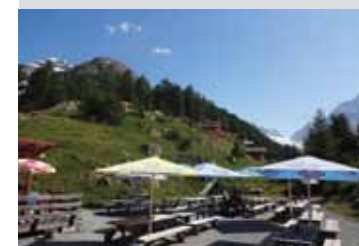
There are many beverages which you can try during your stay in Switzerland. Coffee and tea have a long tradition; just savour them in a cosy ambiance. Next to the coffee and tea tradition there is also a tradition of beer and wine. Beside these traditional beverages, there are many others, like *Ovomaltine*, *glogg* or the famous *Rivella* - do not miss trying them once in your life!

Non-Alcoholic

- *Rivella*, a well-known brand in Switzerland, is a milk serum soft drink (where red is the standard drink, blue the light one and green a green tea extract). Its name follows the Italian word “*Rivelazione*” which means revelation. 
- *Ovomaltine* is a healthy malt extract drink/product. It is supposed to provide you with strength and endurance. A famous and recently re-activated 2001 slogan says: “*With Ovomaltine you are not able to do it better - but longer!*” 

Alcoholic

- *Wine* is a popular beverage in Switzerland. There are vineyards all over the country.
- *Beer* has a long tradition in Switzerland. Popular brands are *Eichhof*, *Falken*, *Feldschlösschen*, *Haldengut*, *Schützengarten*, *Quöllfrisch* and many other ones found in all regions of Switzerland.
- *Spirits* are also firmly anchored in the Swiss culture. *Kirsch*, *Appenzeller Bitter*, *Bündner Röteli* and other fruit brandies are frequently enjoyed after a meal.
- *Xellent Vodka* is distilled in Switzerland with pure glacier water. It is one of the world’s finest vodkas.



Additional Info - cull
www.gastro.ch
www.gastrouisse.ch
www.getraenke.ch
www.swisscae.ch

Swiss Food - Cantonal Specialities

Appenzell

Boiled sausage Appenzell style (Appenzeller Siedwurst) with boiled potatoes and béchamel sauce is a typical local dish.

Basel

Flour soup (Mehlsuppe) is served during the famous carnival of Basel and consists of flour, fat, cheese and beef tea.

Bern

Bern dish (Berner Platte) is a solid meal and consists of different meats and sausages like beef, smoked ox tongue, smoked bacon and other ingredients. Mostly served with sauerkraut or green beans and boiled potatoes.

Fribourg

Meringue with double cream (Meringues à la crème de Gruyère) is a pastry made of sugar and egg white and usually served with thick cream.

Geneva

Gratin de cardon et Longeole is a gratin. "Cardon" is a type of artichoke baked in a gratin cream and cheese sauce. It is usually eaten with "Longeole", a type of unsmoked pork sausage.

Glarus

Schabziger (also *Sapsago*) is a traditional Swiss cheese of the Glarus' region, made out of the skimmed cow milk and a special kind of herb.

Grisons

Barley soup Grisons style (Bündner Gerstensuppe) is a solid soup with barley and potatoes.

Lucerne

Macaroni alp herder style (Älplermagronen) is a solid meal consisting of macaroni, potatoes, cheese, cream and roasted onions. It is often served with apple purée.



Flour soup



Bern dish



Meringue



Barley soup Grisons style

Swiss Food - Cantonal Specialities

Neuchâtel

Guts à la neuchâteloise (tripes à la neuchâteloise) is a dish of guts with an onion sauce, usually served with potatoes.

St. Gallen

The "Schübli" *St. Galler style* is a very well-known sausage from this region and is mostly served with potatoes or bread and mustard.

Ticino

Polenta is a dish made from boiled cornmeal. For centuries it was regarded as a meal for the poor.

Valais

Dried meat and Rye bread (Viande séchée et pain de seigle valaisan) is dry meat (pork or beef) and a type of very dense bread.

Vaud

Leek "Papet vaudois" and Cabbage sausage (Saucisse au chou et papet vaudois) is a pork sausage with bits of cabbage inside, and "papet vaudois" is a dish of potatoes and leeks mixed together.

Zug

The "*Zuger Kirschtorte*" (cherry torte from Zug) is a layer cake, consisting of nut-meringue, sponge cake and butter cream. It is flavoured with "*Kirsch*" (cherry brandy).

Zurich

Sliced veal Zurich style (Zürigschnätzlets / Zürcher Geschnetzeltes) is sliced veal in a creamy sauce with mushrooms. Usually Rösti is served with it.

As you can imagine, there are many other specialities within the Swiss Confederation.



Macaroni alp herder style



Polenta



Papet vaudois



Sliced veal Zurich style

Swiss Food - Specialities

Other Specialities

- *Birchermüesli*, invented by Mr Maximilian Bircher, is normally eaten with bread and butter, accompanied by a milk coffee. It consists of cereals, fruits and yoghurt.
- *Biscuits* have a long tradition. There are many different flavours, from natural to chocolate to fruits. Often they are served together with coffee or tea in the afternoon.
- *Bratwurst* (fried sausage) with onion sauce served with chips or *Rösti* is another typical dish in Switzerland.
- *Fish dishes* (mostly whitefish, perch and trout) are very common in lake regions.
- *Fondue* is a mixture of various Swiss types of cheese which is melted in a special pan over a cooker (*réchaud*). You can dip bread in the melted cheese and eat it that way. Fondue is usually eaten in wintertime as a communal meal and takes a long time to eat.
- *Metzgete* is a traditional event, where fresh butchered meat is served. Typically, black pudding, liver sausage, sliced liver or *Bratwurst* is served, together with bread or *Rösti* and apple purée or sauerkraut.
- *Raclette* is a special kind of cheese which is melted under an oven. This melted cheese is eaten with steamed potatoes and pickles.
- *Rösti* looks a little bit like a flat cake or omelette, but it is sliced potato roasted in butter. *Rösti* is a common side dish in Switzerland. If you have no time to cook a fresh *Rösti* yourself you can find ready-made *Rösti* in any grocery store.
- *Swiss chocolate* is world famous and really delicious. There are many local chocolatiers (chocolate makers) which offer a huge variety of specialities.

Of course, there are many other typically Swiss dishes that are not mentioned here. Explore them yourself!



Raclette



Fondue



Rösti

Swiss Food - Traditional Menu

Bread, Water and Cheese

A simple old Swiss meal consists of bread, water and cheese. We really recommend you to taste each of these ingredients!

Switzerland has more than 200 different kinds of bread. In the Italian- and French-speaking part they prefer white bread whereas in the German part of Switzerland healthier brown bread is eaten. There are many different forms and consistencies of bread. Supermarkets often have their own in-house bakery and a good product range, like normal bakeries. Swiss people normally eat different kinds of bread.

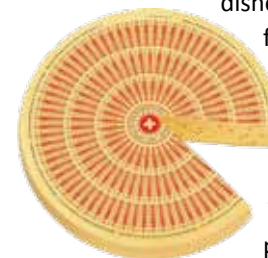
We really recommend you to do the same and explore the finest Swiss bread! Please note: For a good taste, Swiss bread should be eaten within a few days.

Swiss water has a high quality and a good taste; the protection of waterways is even inscribed in the Swiss Constitution. Tap water is as pure as bottled mineral water - just several hundred times cheaper.

Switzerland has more than 450 different kinds of cheese. Fondue and Raclette are some of the most famous Swiss dishes made with cheese, and you will find that Swiss people have their own

recipes for the fondue. *Sbrinz*, *Tête de moine*, *Tilsiter*, *Appenzeller*, *Emmentaler*, *Raclette*, *Vacherin Mont-d'or*, *Tomme vaudoise*, *Vacherin fribourgeois* and *Gruyère* are probably the most well-known cheese of Switzerland, but each region has its own

delicious local products which vary in taste, texture and type of milk (cow, sheep or goat milk). Also try the tasteful Alpine cheese!



Brot - Wasser - Käse
www.schweizerbrot.ch
www.trinkwasser.ch
www.schweizerkaese.ch

Pain - Eau - Fromage
www.painsuisse.ch
www.eaupotable.ch
www.fromagesuisse.ch

Pane - Acqua - Formaggio
www.panesvizzero.ch
www.acquapotabile.ch
www.formaggiosvizzero.ch



Things to do & Going Out

There is a wide range of cultural events: concerts, theatre, cinema, musicals and so on. Ask your local ESN section for the best places to go; they are happy to help you. Here is some general information:

Cinema

Going to see a movie costs you about CHF 18. Do not forget to bring your student card with you! Most cinemas offer a weekly reduced price and/or discounted multiple tickets for about CHF 13.

Concerts

Many clubs in Switzerland organise concerts before opening their doors for the night. On the clubs' websites you will usually find the programme. Have a look at your local town's cultural programme or check the national going out websites.

Bars

There are many bars where you can enjoy the evening by listening to music and chatting with your friends. Entrance is normally for free.

Night Clubs

Switzerland offers a wide range of clubs. Entrance fees are usually between CHF 10 and CHF 30, and sometimes include a drink. Most clubs open at 11 pm and close at 5 am. In bars and clubs, a beer costs between CHF 5 and CHF 10 and a long drink between CHF 10 and CHF 20.

Night Trains

There are night trains linking Swiss cities on Friday and Saturday nights. Enter departure and destination on the railway company's page www.sbb.ch and plan your trip. Please note: in some cities/states you have to buy an additional night ticket. The carriers usually check for this ticket. Penalty if you do not have a (night) ticket is at least CHF 90.

Cinema - cull
www.cine.ch (FRE)
www.cineman.ch (GER, FRE, ENG)
www.movies.ch (GER, FRE, ITA)

Going Out - cull
www.bewegungsmelder.ch
www.tillate.ch
www.usgang.ch

Tickets - cull
www.starticket.ch
www.ticketcorner.ch
www.ticketportal.ch

Open-Airs
www.openairguide.net

Services

Mobile Phones

There are three main operators in Switzerland which provide a nationwide coverage with their networks: *Swisscom* (56.8% held by the Swiss Confederation), *Orange* (held by the British private equity and venture capital firm *Apax Partners LLP*) and *Sunrise* (held by the private equity firm *CVC Capital Partners*). On 22 April 2010 the *Swiss Antitrust Authority* barred the planned merger between Orange and Sunrise. There are other providers that use the networks of the above mentioned operators, offering mobile prepaid offers at very good rates. Such providers include *M-Budget Mobile* or *Coop Mobile*. There are also cheap sub brands with special prepaid conditions. This includes *yallo*, *lebara mobile* or *ortelmobile*. ESN Switzerland works together with *yallo* and provides you with a CHF 5 SIM card for free - just cut out the voucher below and go get your SIM Card in the next sunrise centre! Do not forget to bring your ID with you.



Mobile Phone Providers - cull
www.aldi-mobile.ch
www.coop.ch/coopmobile
www.lebara.ch
www.lycamobile.ch
www.m-budget-mobile.ch
www.mobileverymucho.ch
www.orange.ch
www.ortelmobile.ch
www.redbullmobile.ch
www.sunrise.ch
www.swisscom.ch
www.talk-talk.ch
www.talkeasy.ch
www.tele4u.ch
www.triotel.ch
www.yallo.ch

advertisement: _____ ✂

www.yallo.ch

Voucher

for a yallo prepaid SIM card including CHF 5.- of calling credit

Exclusively
for ESN
members!







YALLOESNV1314

→ Transfer your yallo credit worldwide to friends and relatives.
 → Make phone calls within Switzerland from yallo to yallo for 5 cts/min.



Services

Mobile Phones

Before you choose a mobile phone or a contract, you should check a few offers to see which one is the right one for you – it really depends on how often/in which way you plan to use the phone. Have a look at the comparison service from [comparis](http://comparis.ch) to find out which mobile operator fits your needs best: www.comparis.ch/telecom/mobile.aspx.

Postal Services

Switzerland has a state-owned postal service, called “die Post” in German, “la Poste” in French or “la Posta” in Italian. There are many postal offices at central places. You also find many yellow mailboxes, where you can drop your letters. The market for parcels is already privatised; therefore, you can choose between different companies, like *DHL*, *DPD*, *FedEx*, *TNT* or *UPD* if you want to send a package.



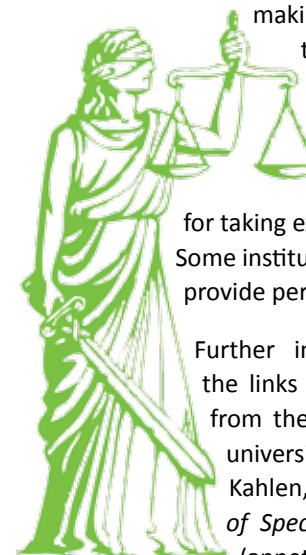
advertisement:

Disabled Students in Switzerland

Article 26 of the *UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights* states that „Everyone has the right to education [...]. Higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit”. The Swiss legislature has taken action to promote equal treatment and to prevent discrimination of disabled students. The prohibition of discrimination is included in Article 8 of the *Federal Constitution* (SR 101), and is codified in the *Federal Act on the Elimination of Discrimination against People with Disabilities* (SR 151.3).



Swiss higher education institutions are committed to making all reasonable efforts to ensure the integration of disabled students into the university environment with access to all courses and facilities. This includes technical aids and special arrangements for taking exams and completing assignments. Some institutions have special counsellors who provide personal advice.



Further information can be obtained at the links shown on the right of this page, from the international office of your host university or from Dr. Annette Schöpe-Kahlen, *University of Applied Sciences of Special Needs Education Zurich* (HfH) (annette.schoepe@hfh.ch).

A list of devices available for disabled students at the Special Needs office is published on www.inclusion-hfh.ch/faq-n13-sD.html.



Further Information
www.edi.admin.ch/ebgb
www.inclusion-hfh.ch
www.uniability.ch

Mobile calls at border-busting prices!

→ Phone calls starting from 3 cts/min.

For further price informations please visit yallo.ch

Call your friends and family as if they were in Switzerland



www.yallo.ch



Working in Switzerland

Switzerland's economy is based on a highly skilled labour force. Probably the best-known Swiss export products are watches, chocolate and cheese; however, mechanical and electrical engineering and chemistry together account for over half of Swiss export revenue.

Entering the Country

Thanks to the bilateral *Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons* between Switzerland and the EU citizens from EU/EFTA countries basically have the same rights as Swiss citizens with regard to entering, residing and working in Switzerland; provided they have a valid employment contract, are self-employed or have sufficient financial means and a health insurance. To nationals from the new EU member states as well as to nationals from other countries entry restrictions may apply.

Job Mobility within Europe

In January 2011 Switzerland became a full member of the *European Union's Lifelong Learning Programme*. As a consequence grants for traineeships in Switzerland have to be applied for in your country of origin. This means that European students and graduates as well as vocational students and graduates interested in doing a traineeship in Switzerland may apply for a Leonardo or Erasmus grant with their university or vocational school and possibly also profit from placement services.

For Language Studies, Traineeships, Diploma Works & Work

Below some pages which might help you to find all the information you need for your stay in Switzerland. We highly recommend you to study the *Federal Office for Migration's (BFM)* homepage to get all the information you need.

- www.bfm.admin.ch/content/bfm/en/home/themen/arbeit.html
- www.ch-go.ch/programme
- www.chstiftung.ch/home
- www.iaeste.ch
- www.ti.ch/lingue-stage

Working in Switzerland

To apply for a job in Switzerland, the general steps described below have to be passed through. They could vary depending on the job you are applying for. As everywhere you can respond to a job advertisement or send a speculative application. In any case it is important to be well informed about the company and the recruiter's name before you write your job application!

Application

Always get to the point and only include job-relevant topics (do not write about your hobbies, unless they are job-relevant).

An application contains the following:

- Cover letter (about one A4 page), indicating your career goals, professional interests and your potential contribution to the company
- CV (about 1-2 A4 pages) with a professional photo
- Copies of school degrees, diplomas and recommendations (if they are not in one of the four official languages or in English, you probably need a graduated translator to translate them)

You can expect an answer within one week. After one week with no answer, feel free to contact them by phone.

Interview Process

Usually you have to pass at least two interviews.

First you will be invited to a first interview with a Human Resources staff member, as well as with staff in the field you could be working in. Be prepared for questions about your personal life as well as your professional and social competencies.

In the second interview, you will meet with the heads of Human Resources, and the head of the department you want to work in. It is important that you get to know the team you will be working in. Depending on the job profile, you may spend an unpaid day in the department and find out more about the job, requirements and people.



Online Job Portals - cull
www.jobup.ch
www.jobwinner.ch
www.kampagnenforum.ch
www.monster.ch
www.semestra.ch
www.staufenbiel.ch
www.stelle.admin.ch
www.studentenjobs.ch
www.students.ch/jobs
www.success-and-career.ch
www.topjobs.ch



PALLOMERI:
Pan-European
Association
Leading
Local
Organisation
Making
Erasmus
Richer
Inside

ESN International
www.esn.org

ESN Switzerland
www.esn.ch

Local Sections
basel.esn.ch
bern.esn.ch
chur.esn.ch
epfl.esn.ch
fribourg.esn.ch
geneva.esn.ch
lugano.esn.ch
neuchatel.esn.ch
stgallen.esn.ch
unil.esn.ch
waedenswil.esn.ch
winterthur.esn.ch
zurich.esn.ch

What is Erasmus Student Network?

The *Erasmus Student Network (ESN)* has 12,000 active members and 17,000 buddies, making it one of the biggest interdisciplinary student associations in Europe. ESN offers its services to around 160,000 international-minded students. ESN was created on 16 October 1989 and was legally registered in 1990 for supporting and developing student exchange.

ESN works under the principle of “*Students Helping Students*” for the creation of a more mobile and flexible education environment by supporting and developing the student exchange from different levels, and providing an intercultural experience also to those students who cannot access a period abroad (“*internationalisation at home*”). ESN is composed of more than 440 local sections in 36 countries working in Higher Education Institutes (Universities, Polytechnics, Universities of Applied Sciences, Colleges of Education, etc.).

The network is organised on a local, national and international level and mainly based on voluntary work.

Main Principles

- ESN works in the interest of international students.
- ESN works to improve the social and practical integration of international students.
- ESN represents the needs and rights of international students on the local, national and international level.
- ESN provides relevant information about mobility programmes.
- ESN motivates students to study abroad.
- ESN works with the reintegration of homecoming students.
- ESN contributes to the improvement and accessibility of student mobility.
- ESN cares about its members.
- ESN values volunteering and active citizenship.

International Level

International Board (IB)

The *International Board* of ESN is the executive body of ESN. It consists of five members: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Communication Manager and Web Project Administrator. Since September 2005, the International Board is working in the headquarters in Brussels. It can take decisions except from budgetary, strategic, and policy matters. The Board is supervised by *CNR* and *AGM* while *CNR* represents *AGM* during the ESN year.

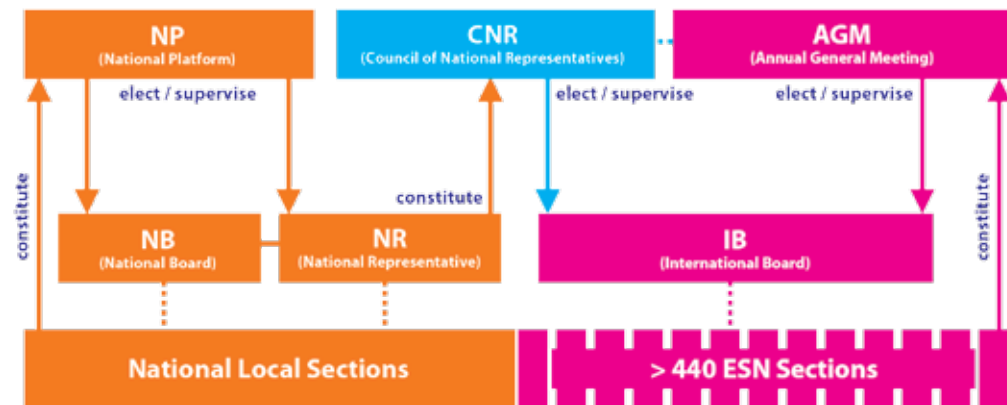
Council of National Representatives (CNR)

The *CNR*, composed of all *National Representatives (NRs)* represents the highest decision-making body during the ESN year and is one of the main strategic bodies of ESN International. The *CNR* gives advice and checks the work of the Board. The *CNR* meets in total six times each year, in which various topics of importance to the local and international level are discussed and voted up.

Council of National Delegates (CND)

The *Council of National Delegates* is an enlarged *CNR* meeting taking place once a year. Every country is supposed to send besides the *NR*, one *National Delegate* and one *National Vice-Delegate* to this meeting.

Structure Chart





International Events

ESN International organises many international events throughout the year. At international events you can meet members of ESN sections from the whole of Europe (and beyond!). The most important event is the *Annual General Meeting* (AGM).

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The Annual General Meeting lasts for four days and is the main decision-making body of ESN International as all the network's official sections are invited to decide about how ESN should be run the following year. The program begins on Thursday evening and the official Meeting is scheduled for Friday, Saturday and Sunday. As the AGM is a perfect opportunity to exchange information between all the sections, a lot of time is dedicated to different workshops from the Local Level, National Level and International Level.

Regional Platforms

In order to talk about issues that will be matters for discussion at the AGM, to exchange good practices about local activities and to start partnerships with other sections, ESN sections have the opportunity to meet at the *Regional Platforms*:

- Northern European Platform: DK, EE, FI, IS, LV, NO, SE
- Central European Platform: AT, CZ, HR, HU, LT, PL, SK, SI
- South-Eastern European Platform: BA, BG, CY, GE, GR, IT, MK, RO, RS, TR
- South-Western European Platform: ES, FR, IT, MT, PT
- Western European Platform: BE, CH, DE, IE, LU, NL, UK

Italy belongs to both the South-Eastern European Platform and the South-Western European Platform.

Cultural Medley (CM)

The *CM* is an annual event in which a section, a city or a country presents itself culturally to the rest of ESN through many exciting events and activities.

Swiss National Level

National Board (NB)

The *National Board* is responsible for the communication between the sections as well as the communication with partners and institutions outside ESN. Besides, the National Board cares for the knowledge management, the organisation of *National Events* and the support of the sections.

National Representative (NR)

The National Representative represents the voice of the sections within the international area. The NR expresses the country's opinion and gives feedback on various issues presented at the CNR meetings as well between them.

National Platform (NP)

The *National Platform* is the highest national body of ESN and takes ordinary place twice a year. At the *NP* the members of the different Swiss sections meet and discuss current topics concerning ESN Switzerland. As a matter of course at these meetings have fun and social parts like a party on Saturday night which must not be missed. It is the time for Swiss ESN members to connect and make new plans.

Local Representative (LR)

Every section has a *Local Representative*, which connects the local level with the national level. The *LR* is therefore responsible for the communication flow between the local and the national level. Furthermore the LR represents the section's interest at the national and international level.

Council of Local Representatives (CLR)

The *Council of Local Representatives* (former *Section's Meeting* or *President's Meeting*) is a meeting of all national LRs and other interested people. It takes place at least twice a year and contains a formal and an informal part. Its main purpose is to share knowledge and to get to know each other. If needed a CLR could be announced as an extraordinary NP.





What the heck is...

... Buddy System / Mentoring?

The *Buddy System* gives exchange students the possibility of “having a local student of their own”. Exchange students who apply to the Buddy System get a “Buddy” who shows “his/her” city to the student, helps with trouble shooting and tries to be a good friend. The Buddy programme is a great opportunity for exchange students to connect with locals. You can get information about the ESN Buddy System of your host university on the local section’s homepage or by asking the ESN guy/girl passing you in the university’s hallways.

... SocialErasmus

The aim of the *SocialErasmus* project is to complete the stay abroad with the original values of the Erasmus Programme. International students are invited to volunteer in the framework of the SocialErasmus project under three main areas of action: education, charity and environment. Best practices of the actions in the education field include information sessions in schools “*Europe at School*”, in the environment field planting trees to raise awareness with the “*Erasmus Forest*” project or the “*fire prevention*” project and in the charity field activities aimed at helping less favoured children such as the International Santa Claus.

... ESNSurvey

Every year, ESN launches a *survey* that explores the current issues connected to academic and non-academic mobility. Since 2005 more than 80,000 students responded to the annual online survey. Through the gathered students’ opinions, ESN gets a better insight into the issues and is therefore able to represent the students’ needs. ESN shares the results with the main stakeholders in higher education and mobility programmes: the European Commission, National Agencies of Erasmus Programme, higher education institutions and all associations concerned with the topic.

What the heck is...

... Tandem?

Tandem is a system of learning foreign languages with another student during individual meetings. That way you can learn or improve a foreign language for free. Besides, you and your partner can choose where to meet and the frequency of your meetings based on your own preferences. It is also an easy way to gain first-hand knowledge about another country. Not from books, but through someone like you.

... PRIME

Students in Europe enjoy great opportunities of mobility through exchange programs such as the Erasmus Programme. However, they still have to face various barriers and obstacles, a continuous problem of course recognition among them. The Erasmus Student Charter states Erasmus students’ right of an obligatory learning agreement prior to departure and full recognition of their study courses abroad by their home higher education institution upon return. The annual survey of ESN revealed that slightly more than half of all Erasmus students receive full recognition of their courses taken abroad. Clearly this situation requires more attention and more effective solutions. For this reason ESN with the financial support of the European Commission conducted in-depth qualitative research to point out the true causes of the above mentioned obstacles and to provide suggestions for improvements: *PRIME - Problem of Recognition in Making Erasmus*.

... ESNcard

The *ESNcard* is the magic key for many ESN activities. It gives you cheaper access to trips, parties and other activities organised by ESN sections. There are many special deals for ESNcard holders. For further details on discounts check the homepage of the according section! Being an exchange student, you have the opportunity to get an ESNcard from the ESN section of your host university for a small amount.





Join the ESN Team

You want to keep in touch with an international environment after your exchange? Then we recommend for you to join your local ESN section after you return to your home university. If there is no ESN section in your city yet, then there is nothing easier and more challenging than starting a local section with your friends and other former exchange students.

ESN members are

- Willing to work for ESN's main principles
- Internationally minded and very mobile
- Communicative, active, and dynamic
- Open-minded

Advantages for Members

Besides being in contact with an international environment, a commitment as an active ESN member gives you many possibilities such as:

- Managing independently successful projects
- Personal development
- Trainings and conferences
- Practice of foreign languages
- ECTS credits may be granted by your university
- Easier entrance in the job market
- Influencing EU policy makers in area of education
- New friends from around the world
- Fun events

How to Set Up a New ESN Section

First check under www.esn.org/content/section-information if there already is an ESN section at your university. If there is none, go to www.esn.org/content/become-section where you can find all information needed to set up a new section.

Basel • Bâle • Basilea

Language of the state of Basel: German

ESN Section

ESN Basel was founded in 2006. The section is active at the *University of Basel* and organises various events such as weekly drinks on Thursday, cultural events and city trips for all exchange students. There is a Buddy System as well.

The City

Basel is the third biggest city in Switzerland, after Zurich and Geneva. It is the centre of North-Western Switzerland, bordering Germany and France. This special geographical position is called "*Dreiländereck*" (border triangle). Thanks to this, it is possible to easily visit all three countries during your stay. The



city's motto is "Basel beats differently", which is absolutely true! Basel has a traditional, but lively culture and an international flair. Identification with the city is exceptionally high not only among the city's population, but also among those who live in the city's suburbs and beyond. Basel successfully combines

small town features such as clarity and intimacy with the advantages of a city: expansiveness, wide choice, and diversity. The University is the oldest in Switzerland - founded in 1460!



ESN Section
basel.esn.ch

University
www.unibas.ch

Tourism / Town
www.basel.ch
www.mybasel.ch

Public Transport
www.bvb.ch

Student Pub
www.skuba.ch (SkuBAR)

Clubs / Going Out
www.areal.org
www.atlan-tis.ch
basel.usgang.ch
www.dasschiff.ch
www.garagebasel.com
www.kaserne-basel.ch
www.kuppel.ch

Cinemas
www.cineman.ch
www.kultkino.ch

Culture
www.theater-basel.ch
www.museenbasel.ch

Bern • Berne • Berna

Languages of the state of Berne: German and French

ESN Section

The *ESN Berne* section consists of around 15 volunteers, who try to make the stay of the incoming students in the canton of Bern as unforgettable as possible. We offer a variety of services, such as a buddy system or mentoring program, many different cultural events, adventurous trips, parties, etc. These activities should help the “*Erasm*” (as we call “*our*” Erasmus and other exchange students) get to know the universities better as well as the city of Berne, the whole country of Switzerland and last but not least to get in touch with each other and the locals. ESN Berne unites the *University*, the *University of Applied Sciences* and the *College of Education* of Bern.

The City

Bern is the federal town of Switzerland (de facto capital) and the seat of the Swiss government. The picturesque old town of Bern is on the list of the *UNESCO cultural heritages* and is a very cosy and open-minded city. Bern’s inhabitants are famous for their satisfied and unhurried way of life. The historical University of Bern was founded in 1834 and today is the third biggest in Switzerland with more than 14,000 residential students and around 200 exchange students. Bern is close to the Bernese Alps and therefore an ideal starting point for winter sports enthusiasts.



ESN Section
bern.esn.ch

University
www.bfh.ch
www.int.unibe.ch
www.phbern.ch
www.sub.unibe.ch
www.unibe.ch

Library
aleph.unibas.ch

Tourism / Town
www.bern.ch
www.berninfo.com

Public Transport
www.bernmobil.ch

Clubs / Going Out
www.bewegungsmelder.ch
www.bern.usgang.ch

Cinema
www.cineman.ch

Culture
www.bhm.ch
www.schlachthaus.ch
www.stadttheaterbern.ch
www.zpk.org

Chur • Coire • Coira

Languages of the state of Grisons: German, Italian and Romansh

ESN Section

The Chur section was created in 2010 as a part of the “*Studentenschaft der HTW*” but is now active on its own since 2011. We strive to provide incoming international and exchange students with support and interesting activities during their stay at *HTW Chur*. The students have the opportunity to request a buddy whose aim is to help ease them into their new lives in Chur.



The City

Chur is said to be the oldest city in Switzerland and acts as the gateway to the “*Bündner*” (Grisons) mountains. The small but charming city offers not only various cultural activities but is also a paradise for sports lovers. Those who like to discover Chur by night will find interesting venues in “*Welschdörfli*”, a street made up of bars and clubs as well as the usual after-party-Kebab stands. “*Brambrüesch*”, the city’s local mountain, is the ideal escape from the busy city life. In summer it offers nice trails to hike up and mountain biking. In the winter it is a close option for skiing and snowboarding enthusiasts.



ESN Section
chur.esn.ch
www.facebook.com/ESNChur

University
www.htwchur.ch

Tourism / Town
www.churtourismus.ch
www.chur.ch

Public Transport
www.buschur.ch

Clubs / Going Out
www.cava-club.ch
www.churbynight.ch
www.felsenbar.ch
www.mellowdie.com
www.selig-live.ch
www.schallundrau.ch
www.tabacodownstairs.ch

Cinema
www.kinochur.ch

Culture
www.buendner-kunstmuseum.ch
www.graubuendenkultur.ch
www.klibuehni.ch
www.naturmuseum.gr.ch
www.raetischesmuseum.gr.ch
www.schlossoper.ch
www.theaterchur.ch



Freiburg • Fribourg • Friburgo

Languages of the state of Fribourg: German and French

ESN Section

ESN Fribourg is a charming and bilingual section just like the university and the town. It offers not only a buddy programme but it also organises social and cultural events to suit every exchange student's taste. It is constantly growing and offers practical help and support during your stay and especially upon your arrival in Fribourg. This is possible thanks to the well-working cooperation with the university, the student body and the International Office.



The City

Fribourg/Freiburg is a bilingual city at the border of French-speaking and German-speaking Switzerland. The beautiful city is famous for its romantic medieval old town which is situated at the Sarine River. Fribourg is a typical student city with an international flair: of its 35,000 inhabitants in which around 10,000 are students. In the evening you can find the students in cosy bistros or at student parties. Bern, the federal city of Switzerland (de facto capital) is only a 20 minute train ride away. Perhaps you had never heard of Fribourg before, but once you are here you will never want to leave!



ESN Section
fribourg.esn.ch

University
www.unifr.ch
www.unifr.ch/international

Tourism / Town
www.fribourgtourisme.ch
www.fribourgregion.ch
www.ville-fribourg.ch

Public Transport
www.tpf.ch

Student Pubs
www.paddys.ch/fribourg

Clubs / Going Out
www.anciennegare.ch
www.fri-son.ch
www.lapart.ch

Cinemas
www.cinemotion.ch

Culture
www.fr.ch/mahf
www.kellerpoche.ch
www.theatreosses.ch



Genève • Genf • Ginevra

Language of the state of Geneva: French

ESN Section

The activities offered by *ESN Geneva* are no less dynamic and varied than its participants and reflects far more than just the *Swiss way of life!* Exchange students have the opportunity to visit the most important sites in Geneva, such as the *UN* and *CERN*. Besides that, *ESN Geneva* also offers a weekly pub night in the most alternative and unique bars and the possibility to have dinner in little known artisanal restaurants. This gives exchange students the opportunity to experience parts of Geneva they otherwise would never see.

The City

Embedded between nearby Alpine peaks and Jura's hilly terrain, the French-speaking city of Geneva lies in the bay where



the Rhone leaves Lake Geneva. With its humanitarian tradition and cosmopolitan flair, Geneva is known as the "*capital of peace*". The city hosts the European seat of the

UN and the headquarters of the Red Cross. The *University of Geneva* is the second largest university in Switzerland.



ESN Section
geneva.esn.ch

University
www.unige.ch

Tourism / Town
www.geneve-tourisme.ch
www.ville-geneve.ch

Public Transport
www.tpg.ch

Clubs / Going Out
www.nuit.ch

Cinemas
geneve.cine.ch

Culture
www.geneveopera.ch
www.ville-ge.ch/culture



Lausanne • Losanna

Language of the state of Vaud: French

ESN Sections

Lausanne has two sections that take care of exchange students: *ESN uni Lausanne* and *ESN epf Lausanne*. Both organizations, together and separately, try their best to make the stay of the exchange students exceptional - for example through discoveries of the country in a multitude of ways, mingling of cultures and learning of French. Among the numerous activities organised are ski weekends, hikes, visits of famous Swiss cities and sites, wine tasting, boat cruises, international dinners, etc. It is also very tempting to discover the different bars of the city by attending the Pub Nights every Wednesday.



The City

Lausanne, the *Olympic Capital*, is not only for sports lovers. Lausanne spreads around part of *Lake Geneva* and offers gorgeous views of the Alps and neighbouring France. The city is perfect for sports lovers of all kinds but beware, you may get lost in the steep streets of the old city while admiring the lake views. Lausanne's Cathedral offers amazing views but there is even much more to see and do: the famous "*Béjart Ballet*", the incredible wine of the "*Lavaux*", the great choice of interesting museums and theatres, etc. Of course Lausanne is also known for its active night-life thanks to its many university students.



ESN Sections
epfl.esn.ch (EPFL)
unil.esn.ch (UNIL)

Universities
www.epfl.ch (EPFL)
www.unil.ch (UNIL)

Tourism / Town
www.lausanne.ch
www.lausanne-tourisme.ch

Public Transport
www.t-l.ch

Student Pubs
www.zelig.ch
satellite.epfl.ch

Clubs / Going Out
www.buzz-club.ch
www.dclub.ch
www.le13esiecle.ch
www.madclub.ch
www.my-darling.ch

Cinemas
www.lausanne.ch/cinema

Culture & Sports
www.lausanne.ch/musees
www.lesdocks.ch
www.opera-lausanne.ch
sport.unil.ch

Lugano

Language of the state of Ticino: Italian

ESN Sections

ESN Lugano was founded in March 2013 and is one of the newest ESN sections of Switzerland. In collaboration with the International Office, we organise a Buddy Program, which provides support to exchange students when they arrive in Lugano. Moreover, we aim to entertain incoming students by organising parties and other activities around Switzerland.

The City

Lugano is the main city of Switzerland's Italian-speaking region. It forms a conurbation of more than 57,000 inhabitants and is the third financial centre in Switzerland after Zurich and



Geneva. Lugano (and Ticino) blends cultural components that are typically Italian with a tradition of politics and administration that is unmistakably Swiss. Moreover, it is able to act as a genuine bridge linking central

Europe to the Mediterranean area. Some of its attractive features and opportunities worth highlighting include: a rich selection of cultural events, a natural landscape of moving beauty characterised by its lake, but also its mountains (good ski resorts for winter sports); and a temperate and sunny climate.



ESN Section
lugano.esn.ch

University
www.usi.ch

Tourism / Town
www.lugano.ch
www.luganoturismo.ch

Public Transport
www.tpls.ch

Clubs / Going Out
www.casinolugano.ch
www.ticinoatavola.ch

Cinema
www.ticinocinema.ch

Culture
www.lugano.ch



Neuchâtel • Neuenburg

Language of the state of Neuchâtel: French

ESN Section

ESN Neuchâtel was officially founded in June, 2007. Its members are active in organising social events for an average of eighty exchange students that come to the *University of Neuchâtel*. The section offers a rich programme which includes a welcome party, monthly pub nights, hiking in the local area, as well as visits to other Swiss cities.

The City

Neuchâtel is a small French-speaking city, situated in the "Arc jurassien". Its size and location – between *Lake Neuchâtel* and the mountains – make it an enjoyable place to live. Beyond the landscape, the city also offers a vast cultural life with cinema and music festivals, as well as theatres, museums and bars. The old town is also known for its beautiful architectural features and narrow streets. Currently, around 4,000 students attend



its University, which makes it one of the smallest in Europe.



Olten • Olte

Language of the state of Solothurn: German

ESN Section

ESN Olten was founded in 2012. The tutoring team, which is responsible for exchange students and part of the umbrella organisation students council of the *University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland Olten* (FHNW), contains about 20 volunteers. These volunteers plan, organise and guide events, cultural and company visits. Concurrently the team allocates buddies for each exchange student, who pick up incoming students on their arrival day and introduce, advise and support them during their exchange.



The City

Olten with its 70,000 inhabitants has a medieval centre and is Switzerland's rail hub: therefore, you are within 30 minutes of Zurich, Bern, Basel, and Lucerne. Olten is currently expanding and modernising rapidly not only because of the new FHNW campus but also because of new urban expansion and building including traffic free pedestrian and riverside zones. The great outdoors (Jura mountains, Aare river, woodlands) are only minutes away.



ESN Section
olten.esn.ch

University
www.fhnw.ch

Tourism / Town
www.oltten.ch
www.oltentourismus.ch

Public Transport
www.bogg.ch

Clubs / Going Out
www.astoria-olten.ch
www.paraiba.ch
www.terminus.ch

Cinemas
www.youcinema.ch

Culture
www.bowlingcenter-trimbach.ch
www.dancestudio-olten.ch
www.sportpark-olten.ch
www.stadttheater-olten.ch



St. Gallen • Saint Gall • San Gallo

Language of the state of St. Gallen: German

ESN Section

The *BuddySystem* in St. Gallen has a core team of seven people and around 100 local students called 'Buddies' that take care of the individual integration of more than 250 exchange students every semester. The *BuddySystem* organises the introduction week, city visits, legendary parties, weekend trips as well as company visits and cultural events like ski days. The team works in close cooperation with the Student Union, clubs and the International Office of the University.

The City

Apart from being one of the leading business schools of Europe, if not of the world, St. Gallen is home to 70,000 inhabitants, *OLMA* and *Bratwurst*. St. Gallen also offers some UNESCO World Heritage sites, including the *abbey district* and famous library with books from the 8th century. The old town that surrounds this cultural and historic site has not lost any of its charm and is embedded between rolling hills. Nightlife heavily depends on the students and the *BuddySystem* offers them a variety of student parties.



ESN Section
stgallen.esn.ch

University
www.unisg.ch

Tourism / Town
www.st.gallen-bodensee.ch
www.stadt.sg.ch

Public Transport
www.vbsg.ch
www.ostwind.ch

Clubs / Going Out
www.backstageclub.ch
www.casablanca-sg.ch
www.elephant-club.ch
www.mt-group.ch/felix
www.trischliclub.ch

Cinemas
www.kitag.com

Culture
kultur.stadt.sg.ch
www.theatersg.ch



Wädenswil

Language of the state of Zurich: German

ESN Section

ESN Wädenswil is a small but friendly section and welcomes around 15 exchange students per semester. Incoming students not only profit from the *Wädenswil* events but also from those in *Winterthur*, as both locations are part of the same school - the *Zurich University of Applied Sciences* - and both locations have the same ESN team. Furthermore, exchange students can participate in all events that are organised by *ESN Zürich*. *ESN Wädenswil* organises various events during the term. The goal of this section is to help exchange students find Swiss friends quickly; the local buddy system main purpose is to achieve this goal.

The City

Wädenswil is a small town of 20,000 inhabitants on the southern side of *Lake Zurich*. It lies around 20 km away from *Zurich* and about 40 km away from *Winterthur*. Downtown you can find different bars and restaurants with international food. During the summer, you can swim or relax on the beaches of *Wädenswil*. There is also a cinema, a tennis court, an indoor swimming pool, different fitness centres and many more things to do. It takes about one hour to get to the mountains for a ski weekend or to simply to enjoy the great outdoors and the excellent views. If you feel like clubbing or partying until the early morning, you can get to *Zurich* in less than 20 minutes.



ESN Section
waedenswil.esn.ch

University
www.zhaw.ch/en/science.html
www.zhaw.ch/international

Tourism / Town
www.waedenswil.ch

Public Transport
www.zvv.ch

Clubs / Going Out
www.barolino.ch/Manusbar
www.club-industrie.ch
www.engel-waedenswil.ch/bar
www.msclaernisch.ch
www.waedenswiler.ch

Cinemas
www.schlosscinema.ch

Culture
www.theater-ticino.ch
www.waedenswil.ch



Winterthur • Winterthour

Language of the state of Zurich: German

ESN Section

ESN Winterthur is a very active section with around 15 members and 220 exchange students a year. The goal of ESN Winterthur is to make the study period in Switzerland the best time in an exchange student's life! We help all foreign students settle down in Winterthur, introduce them to Swiss culture (including buddy system and eating fondue) and organise various events, ranging from sports activities to pub tours, ski and snow weekends, city trips, and so on. We are very proud to be the number one chosen school of higher education for exchange students in Switzerland and we will do our best to keep it that way!



The City

750¹²⁶⁴₂₀₁₄
WINTERTHUR
Stadtrecht seit 1264

Winterthur, also named "the city of museums", is an attractive town with about 108,000 inhabitants, located 30 km northeast of Zurich. It celebrates the 750th anniversary of its town charter in 2014. For that reason the calendar of events is enriched by almost 70 events throughout the year: www.winterthur750.ch. Winterthur is the Canton of Zurich's second, and Switzerland's sixth largest town. Its function as a site of education is gaining more and more importance. Furthermore it is a cultural centre and offers its residents a good quality of life. Despite the industrial character throughout the town, there are a lot of green spaces. In the old part of the city you will find many shops, street cafés, bars, clubs and discos. There are also museums and a lot of historical places in and around the town. Furthermore the region around Winterthur is ideal for cycling, hiking, and all kinds of water sports and wine tasting.



Zürich • Zurich • Zurigo

Language of the state of Zurich: German

ESN Section

ESN Zurich is the biggest ESN section in Switzerland with approximately 40 members and 20 years of experience. The section of Zurich organises various events such as a big welcome party, city trips, ski weekends and tandem and mentor systems. This section is active at the University of Zurich (UZH), the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich (ETHZ), but also open to students at the University of Teacher Education Zurich (PHZH) and the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHDK).

The City



Zurich has about 393,000 inhabitants and is the biggest city and also the economic centre of Switzerland. Moreover, it is an important city in higher education with two universities ranked within the top 60 universities in the world. Going out in Zurich is an unforgettable experience thanks to the highest density of nightclubs in Europe, as well as a huge variety of cinemas and pubs. The old city centre and the lake create a unique ambience. Thanks to the great cultural activities, which include theatres or the famous opera house, Zurich is among the cities with the highest quality of living in the world.



ESN Section
zurich.esn.ch

Universities
www.ethz.ch (ETHZ)
www.phzh.ch (PHZH)
www.uzh.ch (UZH)
www.zhdk.ch (ZHDK)

Tourism / Town
www.zuerich.com

Public Transport
www.vbz.ch
www.zvv.ch

Student Pub
www.bqm-bar.ch

Clubs / Going Out
www.kanzlei.ch
www.mascotte.ch
www.x-tra.ch
www.zurich.usgang.ch

Cinemas
www.arena.ch
www.arthouse.ch
www.kitag.com

Culture
www.kunsthau.ch
www.museum-gestaltung.ch
www.opernhaus.ch
www.schauspielhaus.ch



Switzerland in a Nutshell

Confoederatio Helvetica - Switzerland

Confoederatio Helvetica is the Latin name for the Swiss Confederation; the Swiss country code *CH* is the abbreviation of that name. After an estimated growth rate of 1.1%, Switzerland had a population of 8.04 Million in 2012 (around 1.92 Million or 23.8% foreigners). The currency used in Switzerland is the Swiss franc (CHF). The international country code for Switzerland is +41.

Emblem / National Flag

History books document the first reference to the *Swiss cross* around 1339. At that time, the citizens of Bern tended to sew two strips of white cloth in the shape of a cross on their clothes before resolutely marching off to battle. It was only in 1815 that politicians officially recognised the white cross on a red background in the Constitution as the Swiss national emblem.

Location and Surface Area

Switzerland is situated in the central Alpine region of Europe, bordering Italy in the south, Austria and the Principality of Liechtenstein in the east, Germany in the north and France in the west. Switzerland is a landlocked country with no direct access to the sea. Switzerland covers an area of 41,284.6 square kilometres. The Alps and glaciers cover 60% of Switzerland's surface area.

National Languages

There are four official languages in Switzerland: German (65.3%), French (22.4%), Italian (8.4%) and Romansh (0.5%). 20.9% of the population (also) have another main language than these ones.

Form of Government

The Constitution guarantees the execution of political rights in accordance with republican principles, in the form of a federal representative democracy. Berne is Switzerland's federal town (de facto capital) and the seat of the government. On 1 January 2013, Switzerland was divided into 26 cantons and 2,408 communes.

Switzerland in a Nutshell

Transport

In Switzerland, vehicles drive on the right hand side of the road. Drivers need a valid *vignette* to use the motorway network. Vignettes can be purchased at customs offices, post offices and petrol stations for CHF 40 and are valid for the current year. Cars that have been operating after 1970, must turn on their headlights during daytime. Public transport in Switzerland is very well-developed.

Education

Switzerland prides itself on its high standard of publicly-funded education. As a country with few natural resources, its prosperity depends to a large extent on its brain power.

Weather and Climate

Switzerland has a temperate climate. In July and August, average daily temperatures are between 18°C and 28°C, and in January and February, between -2°C and +7°C. Temperatures can differ greatly from these numbers depending on altitude. The climate in Southern Switzerland is generally mild.

Mains Voltage and Power Sockets

Mains voltage in Switzerland is 230 volts/50 hertz, single phase, for appliances and electrical equipment up to 2,200 watts; 400 volts, 3 phase, for cookers, washing machines, etc. The following specifications apply to plugs and power sockets: *Universal type C plugs*; *three-pin type J plugs* for larger appliances.

Economy

Switzerland belongs to the *Schengen Area* but neither to the EU nor to the *European Economic Area*. Switzerland's economy is based on a highly qualified labour force performing highly skilled work. The main areas include micro technology, hi-tech, biotechnology and pharmaceuticals, as well as banking and insurance know-how. The service sector now employs the greatest number of people.



© swissworld.org



© swissworld.org



© swissworld.org



© swissworld.org



Higher Education in Switzerland

Universities

www.sbf.admin.ch/themen/hochschulen/index.html?lang=en

University of Basel

Petersplatz 1
CH-4003 Basel

Mobility Office:

mobility@unibas.ch
+41 61 267 30 28

University of Bern

Hochschulstrasse 4
CH-3012 Bern

International Office:

infodesk@int.unibe.ch
+41 31 631 41 75

University of Fribourg

Av. de l'Europe 20
CH-1700 Fribourg

International Office:

international-incoming@unifr.ch
+41 26 300 70 47

University of Geneva

24 rue du Général-Dufour
CH-1211 Geneva 4

International Office:

international@unige.ch
+41 22 379 80 82

Higher Education in Switzerland

Universities

www.sbf.admin.ch/themen/hochschulen/index.html?lang=en

University of Lausanne

Affaires socio-culturelles, Unicentre
CH-1015 Lausanne

Mobility Office:

info.sasc@unil.ch
+41 21 692 21 13 | Fax: +41 21 692 21 15

University of Lucerne

Frohburgstrasse 3
CH-6002 Lucerne

International Office:

international@unilu.ch | www.unilu.ch/iro
+41 41 229 50 71 | Fax: +41 41 229 50 01

University of Neuchâtel

Avenue du 1er Mars 26
CH-2000 Neuchâtel

Mobility Office:

bureau.mobilite@unine.ch
+41 32 718 10 12

University of St. Gallen

Dufourstrasse 50
CH-9000 St. Gallen

Student Mobility:

exchange@unisg.ch
+41 71 224 23 39



Mobility
www.ch-go.ch

Other Universities
www.fernuni.ch
www.graduateinstitute.ch
www.idheap.ch
www.iukb.ch

State Secretariat for Education,
Research and Innovation
www.sbf.admin.ch

Teacher Education
www.cohep.ch

Universities
www.crus.ch
www.cus.ch
www.euraxess.ch
www.swissuniversity.ch

Universities o. A. S.
www.kfh.ch

Universities of Music
www.kmhs.ch



Higher Education in Switzerland

Universities

www.sbf.admin.ch/themen/hochschulen/index.html?lang=en

Università della Svizzera italiana

Via Buffi 13
CH-6904 Lugano

International Office:
relint@usi.ch | www.relint.usi.ch
+41 58 666 46 26

University of Zurich

Rämistr. 71
CH-8006 Zürich

International Office:
international@int.uzh.ch
+41 44 634 41 57

Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology

www.sbf.admin.ch/themen/hochschulen/01623/index.html?lang=en

ETH Zurich

Rämistrasse 101
8092 Zürich

International Office:
mobilitaet@rektorat.ethz.ch | www.mobilitaet.ethz.ch
+41 44 632 61 61

EPFL

1015 Lausanne

International Office:
services.etudiants@epfl.ch | <http://sae.epfl.ch>
+41 21 693 43 45



Higher Education in Switzerland

Universities of Applied Sciences

www.sbf.admin.ch/themen/01337/01339/01340/index.html?lang=en

BFH (Berner Fachhochschule)

+41 31 848 33 50 | international@bfh.ch | www.bfh.ch/international

FFHS (Fernfachhochschule Schweiz)

+41 27 922 39 00 | info@fernfachhochschule.ch | www.fernfachhochschule.ch

FHNW (Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz)

+41 56 462 49 11 | www.fhnw.ch

FHO (Fachhochschule Ostschweiz)

+41 71 280 83 83 | info@fho.ch | www.fho.ch

HES-SO (Haute Ecole Spécialisée de Suisse occidentale)

+41 32 424 49 00 | international@hes-so.ch | www.hes-so.ch/international

HfH (Interkantonale Hochschule für Heilpädagogik Zürich)

+41 44 317 11 11 | international@hfh.ch; info@hfh.ch | www.hfh.ch

HSLU (Hochschule Luzern)

+41 41 228 42 42 | international@hslu.ch; info@hslu.ch | www.hslu.ch

Kalaidos Fachhochschule (Federal supervised private school)

+41 44 200 19 19 | info@kalaidos-fh.ch | www.kalaidos-fh.ch

LRG (Fachhochschule Les Roches-Gruyère)

+41 21 989 26 00 | info@lrguas.ch | www.lrguas.ch

SUPSI (Scuola universitaria professionale della Svizzera italiana)

+41 58 666 60 33 | erasmus@supsi.ch | www.supsi.ch/international

ZFH (Zürcher Fachhochschule)

+41 43 259 23 31 | info@zfh.ch | www.zfh.ch

Mobility
www.ch-go.ch

Other Universities
www.fernuni.ch
www.graduateinstitute.ch
www.idheap.ch
www.iukb.ch

State Secretariat for Education,
Research and Innovation
www.sbf.admin.ch

Teacher Education
www.cohep.ch

Universities
www.crus.ch
www.cus.ch
www.euraxess.ch
www.swissuniversity.ch

Universities o. A. S.
www.kfh.ch

Universities of Music
www.kmhs.ch

Mobility
www.ch-go.ch

State Secretariat for Education,
Research and Innovation
www.sbf.admin.ch

Teacher Education
www.cohep.ch

Universities
www.crus.ch
www.cus.ch
www.euraxess.ch
www.swissuniversity.ch

Universities of Applied Sciences
www.bfh.ch
www.fernfachhochschule.ch
www.fhnw.ch
www.fho.ch
www.hes-so.ch
www.hfh.ch
www.hslu.ch
www.kalaidos-fh.ch
www.lrguas.ch
www.supsi.ch
www.zfh.ch

Universities of Music
www.kmhs.ch



© Flughafen Zürich AG



© Rega-Fotodienst



© Flughafen Zürich AG



© Graubünden Ferien

Air Rescue (rega)
www.rega.ch

Breakdown Service (TCS)
www.tcs.ch

Emergency Phone Numbers

Air Rescue (rega)	1414
Ambulance	144
Breakdown Service	140
Directory Assistance	1811 or 1818
Fire Brigade	118
Police	117
Railway Police	0800 117 117
Toxicological Centre	145

Useful Background Information

Sechseläuten und Morgestraich	(ISBN 978-3-7205-3029-3)
Statistisches Jahrbuch der Schweiz 2014	(ISBN 978-3-03823-874-4)
Switzerland in its Diversity	(ISBN 978-3-259-05533-5)

Useful Links

Federal Authorities
www.admin.ch

Going Out
www.bewegungsmelder.ch
www.usgang.ch www.tilllate.ch

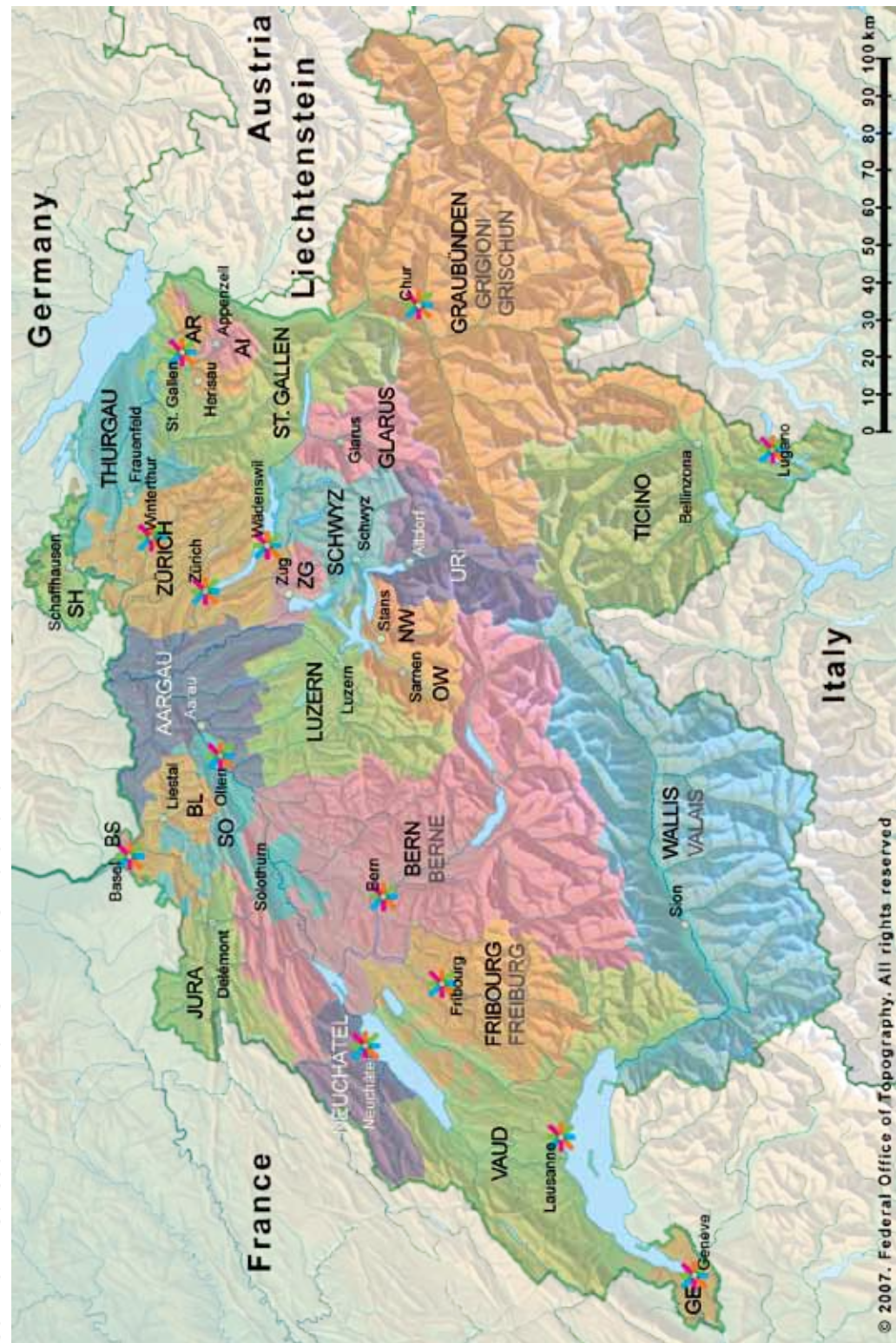
Maps
www.here.com maps.google.ch map.search.ch

News Portals
www.ch.ch www.swissinfo.ch
www.swissworld.org

Public Transport
Airport Basel www.euroairport.com
Airport Geneva www.gva.ch
Airport Zurich www.zurich-airport.com
Rural Car Service www.postauto.ch
Train and Bus www.sbb.ch www.bls.ch

Telecommunications
www.lebara.ch www.orange.ch www.ortel.ch
www.sunrise.ch www.swisscom.ch www.yallo.ch

Tickets (Concerts, Festivals, Sport Events, ...)
www.ticketcorner.ch www.ticketportal.ch
www.starticket.ch



Schweiz • Suisse • Svizzera • Svizra • Switzerland

© 2007. Federal Office of Topography. All rights reserved

Exchange in Switzerland - 2014 Internet Edition

Switzerland in Numbers

Geography

Total surface area:	41,284.6 sq km (15,940.1 sq miles)
Highest point (<i>Dufourspitze</i>):	4,634 metres (15,200 ft.) a.s.l.
Lowest point (<i>Lake Maggiore</i>):	193 metres (633 ft.) a.s.l.
North-South dimension:	220 kilometres (137 miles)
West-East dimension:	350 kilometres (217 miles)

Population

Country	Population ⁽¹⁾	Density ⁽²⁾	HDI (Rank) ⁽³⁾
Switzerland	8,039,060	201	0.913 (9)
EU-28	505,730,473	117	0.862 (29)
Norway	5,051,275	17	0.955 (1)
USA	316,668,567	35	0.937 (3)

(1): eurostat [2013-01] & www.cia.gov [2013-07] • (2): Data per sq km • (3): UN [2012]; UN Human Development Index

Economy

Country	Exchange Rate ⁽⁴⁾	Unemployed ⁽⁵⁾	Education ⁽⁶⁾
Switzerland	1.00 FCU / 1.00 CHF	4.8 %	5.22%
EU-28	1.23 CHF / 0.81 EUR	10.9 %	5.49%
Norway	0.16 CHF / 6.34 NOK	3.4 %	6.87%
USA	0.93 CHF / 1.08 USD	7.2 %	5.49%

(4): fxtop.com [average 2013]; FCU = Foreign Currency Unit • (5): eurostat [2013-09] • (6): eurostat [2010]; % of GDP

Country	GDP PPS ⁽⁷⁾	GDP Index PPS ⁽⁸⁾	Productivity Index ⁽⁹⁾
Switzerland	40,800 €	159	116.7
EU-28	25,600 €	100	99.9
Norway	49,900 €	195	160.4
USA	39,300 €	154	146.9

(7): eurostat [2012]; per capita • (8): EU-28 = 100 • (9): eurostat [2012]; EU-27 = 100

Country	Import ⁽¹⁰⁾	Export ⁽¹⁰⁾	Trade Balance ⁽¹⁰⁾
Switzerland	154.05 €	175.98 €	21.93 €
EU-28	1,808.38 €	1,697.19 €	- 111.19 €
Norway	68.01 €	125.41 €	57.41 €
USA	1,819.03 €	1,203.87 €	- 615.16 €

(10): stat.wto.org [2012]; milliard EUR