

SWITZERLAND

BUSINESS MAGAZINE



CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON BUSINESS

Class Distinctions, Greetings, Language,
Communication, Cultures, Religion, and
More

TIPS FOR BUSINESS SUCCESS

Time, Monetary Denomination,
Holidays, Work week & Background

POLITICAL INFLUENCES ON BUSINESS

Political Systems, Political Risks, Trade
Barriers, and More



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WELCOME TO YOUR NEW BUSINESS HOME

BACKGROUND

Welcome to Switzerland a region of land located in the heart of Europe filled with snowy mountains, large lakes, and many downtown communal districts. Switzerland hosts multiple of the world's top 10 livable cities: Zurich, Geneva, and Bern, which complements the high quality lifestyle residents experience. Switzerland also contains 208 of the Appalachian Mountains and 1500 freshwater lakes. It hosts the largest particle physics laboratory and is famous for its entrepreneurial roots, as it is home to velcro, cellophane, multi-tool knives, edible chocolate and more. Switzerland consists of 4 official languages: Swiss German, French, Italian, and Roman, which invites a multitude of people.

This small, detailed and engaging, booklet will guide you through the ins and outs of Switzerland and their various cultural and political influences, as well as basic facts, such as their time zone and money denomination, to help you succeed in doing business in Switzerland. It will teach you valuable lessons that are influential to commerce in Switzerland, allowing you to gain ultimate success in your business. We bring you all of these facts from multiple, credible, research journals, websites, and other reports. We hope you can use this guide to its fullest capability to ensure your business a success.

TIME, MONETARY DENOMINATION, HOLIDAYS, WORK WEEK

TIME: CENTRAL EUROPEAN SUMMER TIME ZONE, CENTRAL EUROPEAN TIME ZONE

MONETARY DENOMINATION:
COINS CURRENTLY IN CIRCULATION ARE 5, 10, 20, 50 CENTS AND 1, 2, 5 FRANCS.
BANK NOTES ARE 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 1000 FRANCS.

HOLIDAYS: NEW YEARS DAY (JAN 1ST), GOOD FRIDAY, EASTER MONDAY, ASCENSION, WHIT MONDAY, SWISS NATIONAL DAY (AUG 1ST), FEDERAL DAY OF THANKSGIVING, CHRISTMAS DAY (DEC 25TH), ST STEPHEN'S DAY (DEC 26TH).

WORK WEEK: 5 DAY WORK WEEK IS THE NORM IN SWITZERLAND, AVERAGE OF 41 HOURS PER WEEK.



POLITICS



Political System

The Political System of Switzerland is a Consociational Democracy. A consociational democracy is a form of government where all the big political parties participate. Different racial, ethnic, religious, and many other groups form their own political organizations. Each group is given certain powers proportional to their sizes. Switzerland adopted this form of government in December 1992.

Switzerland has 26 Cantons and several distinct regions. It has 4 national languages: German, French, Italian, and Romansh. Because of the large differences in culture, language, and geography, Switzerland was very diverse and had customs and traditions of all kinds. Sometimes, diversity causes problems. Near the end of 1992, the Swiss elections showed a growing tension between the French-Swiss and the German-Swiss. To combat the negativity, the consociational system was implemented. This allowed both the French-Swiss and the German-Swiss to have seats within the government and allowed them to work together. This also allowed smaller and minority groups to have seats within the government as well. Before, only the large political groups could take part and have a say in the government. The implementation of the consociational democracy allowed for a larger representation.

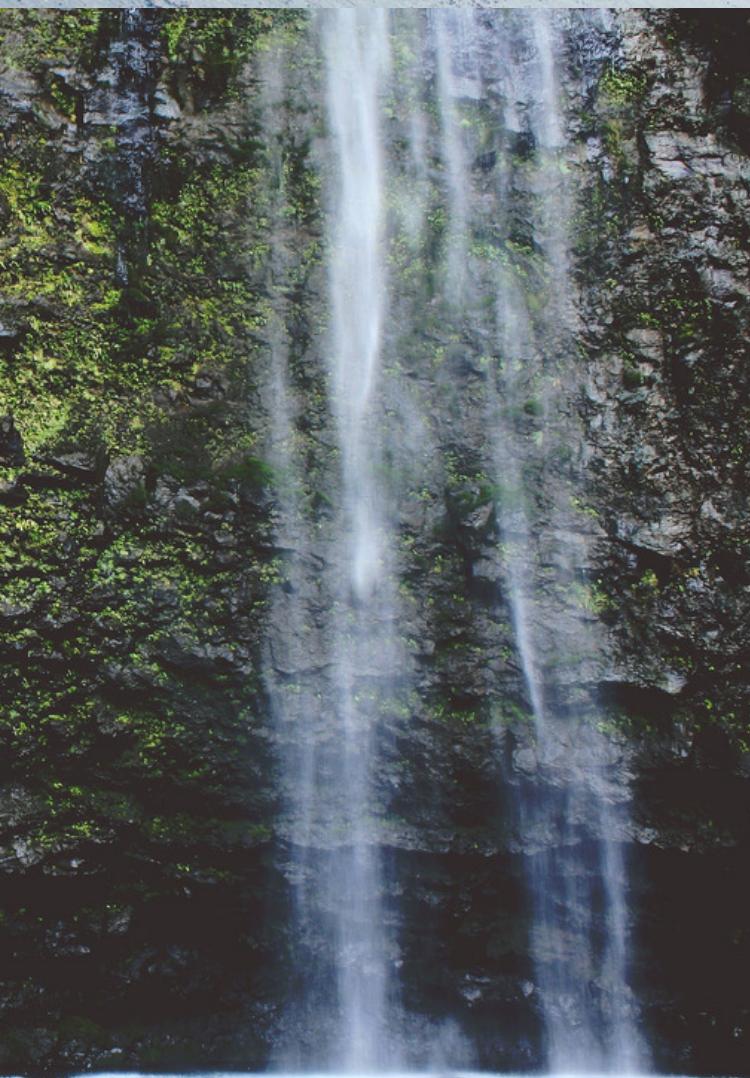
Trade Barriers

Switzerland has very few trade barriers. Switzerland has removed the trade barriers in the automotive and many other sectors. There are still strict regulations on agricultural and biotechnological products.

"MY RANK IS THE HIGHEST KNOWN IN SWITZERLAND: I'M A FREE CITIZEN."
- GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

Political Risk

Switzerland is known for having a low political risk. Switzerland is one of the most capitalistic countries in the world. In addition, Switzerland remained neutral in the World Wars. By being neutral, Switzerland was not vulnerable and offered many businesses and people a stable and secure place. Switzerland maintains strong relations with the European Union. Today, Switzerland has a very diverse workforce and has low unemployment rates.



CULTURE IN SWITZERLAND

While having a conversation in Switzerland, there are several important things to remember. The first thing is to avoid personal questions. Swiss can be rather earnest, so it is advisable to avoid making jokes until you are sure of your ground. It is rude to interrupt your Swiss colleagues with remarks or comments. Swiss are very conservative in their opinion and they will not change their minds easily.

Safe topics to discuss with colleagues: world politics and economics, your travels in Switzerland, positive aspects of Switzerland, Swiss cuisine, Sports (particularly winter sports), and the founding of the Swiss Federation.

Topics to avoid during discussion with colleagues: Swiss Neutrality, Switzerland's role in both World Wars, Swiss military, voting rights for women in modern Switzerland, monopolies of the industry, and any personal questions.

It is very respectful to always maintain a good posture in Switzerland. Fidgeting, moving hands, and making sweeping gestures are considered rude. Do not point your index finger to your head, it is an insult. Slouching, stretching, or yawning in public is considered poor posture.

The following tips are essential when addressing other people in Switzerland. Swiss society is rather formal. One can go on for years addressing a business colleague, neighbor or acquaintance by their surname. It is a sign of respect and privacy. Always address someone first by his or her professional title, such as Dr, then their family name and only when invited to, use their first name. Shake hands with everyone; use a firm hand and make eye contact.

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