

# SWITZERLAND

Switzerland, also known as Swiss, is a country of 7.5 million people in Western Europe with an area of 41,285 km<sup>2</sup>.

Switzerland is a federal republic consisting of 26 states called cantons. Berne is the seat of the federal government and *de facto* capital, while the country's economic centers are its two global cities, Geneva and especially Zürich.

Switzerland is bordered by Germany, France, Italy, Austria and Liechtenstein.

Switzerland is multilingual and has four national languages: German, French, Italian and Romansh.

Switzerland has a long history of neutrality – it has not been at war since 1815 – and hosts many international organizations, including the Red Cross, the WTO and one of the U.N.'s two European offices.

The Swiss confederation consists of 26 cantons:

- Aargau
- Appenzell Innerrhoden\*
- Appenzell Ausserrhoden\*
- Basel-Stadt\*
- Basel-Landschaft\*
- Bern
- Fribourg
- Geneva
- Glarus
- Graubünden
- Jura
- Lucerne
- Neuchâtel

## Sports:

Like many European nations the Swiss are big fans of football and the national team or 'Nati' is widely supported. Swiss wrestling or "Schwingen" is an old tradition from the rural central cantons and considered the national sport. Hornussen is another indigenous Swiss sport, which is like a cross between baseball and golf.

What is Hornussen?

Hornussen is an indigenous Swiss sport and is like a cross between baseball and golf. The sport gets its name from the puck which is hit which is known as a "Hornuss" or "Nouss" or hornet in English on account of the noise it makes as it whizzes through the air at up to 300 km per hour.

## Information

### Area

- Total [41,285 km<sup>2</sup> \(136th\)](#)  
[15,940 sq mi](#)

- [Water \(%\)](#) 4.2

### Population

- 2006<sup>[3]</sup> estimate 7,508,700 ([95th](#))

- 2000 census 7,288,010

- [Density](#) 182/km<sup>2</sup> ([61st](#))  
100/sq mi

However southern half of the country has more mountains and is far more sparsely populated than this average, while the northern half has a somewhat greater density, is more hospitable hilly terrain, partly forested and partly cleared, as well as several large lakes.

Switzerland have three basic topographical areas: the Swiss Alps, the Swiss plateau or "middleland", and the Jura mountains along the northwestern border with France.

The Alps are a high mountain range running across the central-south of the country. Among the high peaks of the Swiss Alps, the highest of which is the Dufourspitze at 4,634 metres, are found countless valleys, many with waterfalls. From these the headwaters of several major European rivers such as the Rhine, Rhône, Inn, Aare, and Ticino flow finally into the largest Swiss lakes such as Lake Geneva (Lac Lemman), Lake Zürich, Lake Neuchâtel, and Lake Constance.

Switzerland has a modern market economy. For much of the 20th century, Switzerland was the wealthiest country in Europe.

Switzerland is home to several large multinational corporations.

Banking, tourism, pharmaceuticals, and chemicals are important industries in Switzerland.

Switzerland's unemployment rate has increased since the beginning of the 21st century, where it stood at a low 1.8% in 2001. The unemployment rate doubled due to problematic low economic growth to 3.9% in 2006 and decreased again to 3.3% in 2007.

Switzerland has no official state religion.