



SWISS NATIONAL DAY

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT SWITZERLAND

Here are some facts to learn about Switzerland:

- Switzerland is one of the only two countries to have a square flag - the Vatican is the only other country
- Switzerland boasts some of the world's most famous inventions - such as Velcro, cellophane, the Swiss Army Knife, the potato peeler, Helvetica font, muesli and milk chocolate to name a few.
- Military service is still compulsory for male Swiss citizens
- Albert Einstein developed his famous formula E=MC2 in Switzerland - he developed his theory of relativity while studying and living in Bern
- Europe's largest clock face is in Zürich (not in London)
- Zürich has a staggering 1224 fountains
- Swiss mailboxes have two slots - one for letters, and one for packages



- Switzerland was the origin of instant coffee - Nescafe was created by Swiss Nestlé in 1938
- The Rhine Falls are Europe's largest waterfalls
- 60% of Switzerland's electricity is produced by hydroelectric power!
- The Swiss are champions in recycling (in 2012, Swiss residents recycled 96% of glass, 92% of aluminium cans, 81% of plastic bottles, and 72.5% of batteries), but recycling is prohibited on Sundays.
- Switzerland has the most hospital beds per 1000 people: 5.8 beds
- Gotthard Base Tunnel located in Switzerland is the world's longest railway tunnel
- Although Swiss watches are world famous, the cuckoo clock is not a Swiss creation :
- Switzerland is not governed by one head of state - instead it has a seven-member executive council that serves as the Swiss collective head of state. A president is elected for

Swiss identity embedded in diversity

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today, with the biggest cities being Zurich, Geneva, Basel, Lausanne and the capital Bern. Switzerland has a relatively high foreign resident population - 23.3 per cent, or around 1.87 million. Foreign residents have contributed to a big extent to the successful development of

Switzerland and they have further enhanced Switzerland's linguistic diversity. 21.6 per cent of the Swiss population today have a native tongue that is not one of Switzerland's four national languages. In rural cantons, such as Appenzell Innerrhoden, foreigners make up as little as 10 per cent of the resident

population, while in more urban cantons, like Geneva, they account for up to 40 per cent of the total population.

Switzerland is a federal state with three political levels: Federal government, 26 cantons and around 2,400 municipalities. The cantons and the municipalities are largely autonomous. Every

canton has its own constitution, laws, government, parliament and courts. Both the cantons and municipalities have full responsibility for certain policy areas, including in the areas of taxation. For example, the cantons are in charge of education and the police, while the municipalities are in charge of welfare services.

Switzerland is an active player in international affairs

SWITZERLAND is an active player in the international arena and pursues a policy of active neutrality. Switzerland is a state that promotes dialogue and builds bridges as part of its foreign policy. The objective of Swiss foreign policy, as defined in the Federal Constitution, is to safeguard Switzerland's interests, independence, well-being and security. Switzerland remains neutral in international conflicts but through its foreign policy instruments, Switzerland plays its part in promoting peace, respect for human rights and democracy across the world.

Switzerland has a long history in mediation and providing support in seeking solutions to conflicts in many parts of the world. Switzerland is committed to the rule of law, a culture of compromise, co-determination and power sharing, humanitarian

principles and the prevention of conflicts and extremism.

Switzerland strongly believes that sustainable development can only be implemented around the world successfully if all

come poverty- and development-related challenges.

Switzerland has a long tradition of partnership with the United Nations. Since joining the UN in September 2002,

connecting the nations and their people.

Switzerland maintains a big network of embassies around the world. Asia is increasingly becoming important for Switzerland. Swiss trade and investment relations with the Asian countries are expanding rapidly and so is the potential significance of the Asia Pacific region. Swiss foreign policy emphasizes on strengthening bilateral relations with countries in Asia Pacific, including Bangladesh, and actively participates in regional fora like the Asia-Europe Meeting, where Switzerland joined in 2012 together with Bangladesh and Norway.

Bangladesh is an important partner for Switzerland in this fast changing environment. Switzerland and Bangladesh have enjoyed excellent bilateral relations since the independence of the latter. The relations have evolved and grown deeper over the years. Currently, trade and development cooper-

ation are the two main pillars of the bilateral relations. Bangladesh is one of the priority countries of SDC for development cooperation, while trade relations between the two countries are rapidly growing.



the stakeholders do their part. As a result of this, Switzerland is strongly promoting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda both nationally and internationally. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) supports countries in their own efforts to over-

Switzerland has been an active and innovative member. Swiss city Geneva hosts the European headquarter of the United Nations and many multilateral and international organizations which allows Switzerland to play a pivotal role in

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