

learn your world switzerland

To support your global practice, ACC Docket offers country-specific fun facts from your peers who've been there – literally.

Economy

GDP (current US\$)
\$631.2 billion (2012)

GDP by composition:
Agriculture (1.3%)
Industry (27.7%)
Services (71%)

Forecast:

After reporting a solid 2% growth in 2013, the Swiss Federal Government's Expert Group expects growth in GDP to accelerate further to 2.2% in 2014 and to 2.7% in 2015.

Corruption

According to Transparency International's "2013 Corruption Perception Index," Switzerland is the seventh "cleanest" (i.e., the least corrupt) country out of the 177 that were scored.

Additional Resources

The Federal Authorities of the Swiss Confederation
www.admin.ch/index.html?lang=en

Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research EAER
www.seco.admin.ch/index.html?lang=en

Switzerland Tourism Information
www.myswitzerland.com/en-ch/home.html

Swiss Federal Statistical Office
www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/en/index.html



HIKERS ON THE MATTERHORN VIEW TRAIL © OLGA DANYLENKO

Swiss people are often defined as hyperactive perfectionists, and the pressure is high to deliver flawlessness on short deadlines. Their high-tech, high-precision watch industry reflects the talents of the Swiss people. One should never forget that a good number of the country's inhabitants are descendants of poor mountain people, farmers and mercenaries and, therefore, have a legacy of industriousness, physical prowess and grit in the face of a challenge.

A healthy work/life balance is crucial for the Swiss. A weekday might start with rowing or biking at 6 AM. After a 8 AM to 5:30 PM workday, with a break between for a healthy lunch and a glass of wine, they return home for dinner with family, followed by a tennis match or a run. On weekends, they usually prefer climbing a mountain they have yet to successfully traverse, or skiing the steepest or bumpiest slopes they can reach rather than shopping or clubbing.

To communicate with the Swiss, you need to be fluent in German, French and Italian. Despite the fact that Swiss people speak English, they will

revert to their local languages during the two-minute toilet breaks that double as mini decision-making sessions. If you can't keep up with the conversation, you will only become aware of the decision when everybody returns to the conference room.

International arbitration is one of the strengths of Swiss lawyers. Known to be very hands-on, they use their language skills to resolve disputes by combining arbitration and mediation processes.

Once you get to know Swiss people and their numerous laws, which you should never bend or break, you will be very happy in Switzerland, particularly if you like outdoor activities. And if you ever wish to leave this small country, the border is never more than 80 km away and easy to cross because Switzerland belongs to the European Schengen "open space" — despite strong objections to joining the European Union or the European Economic Space.

CAROLINE MING, ACC EUROPE BOARD MEMBER AND TREASURER,
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