

OIE Information & Travel Cheat Sheet

Country:

Switzerland (CH)

Sex & Dating

- Initial dates can be formal with handshakes and eye contact as signs of respect
- Reserved politeness and direct communication styles should be expected
- Sex is considered a taboo topic

Alcohol & Drugs

- Legal age to buy/consume alcohol: 16 (beer/wine) or 18 (high-proof)
- Switzerland has a decriminalization approach to drug usage
 - Cannabis is legal for recreational use

LGBTQIA+ Culture

- CH is increasingly tolerant of LGBTQ, gender expression, same-sex relationships
 - Public affection in all relationships is rare
- Lively LGBT community in urban areas such as Geneva, Basel and Zurich
- Resources
 - Rainbow SIG
 - OutRight Action International
 - Pink Cross CH

Cultural Customs and Norms

- Population: 8.7 million
- Currency: Swiss Franc
- Official Language: German, French, Italian
 - English is widely spoken
- CH values honesty, work ethic, and punctuality
- Social structures are considered rigid

Resources

117 Police / **118** Fire / **114** Ambulance / **1414** Air Ambulance

+41 Country code

- International SOS
 - DU Membership Number: 11BSGC000067
 - Phone: 215.942.8478 / Website: [internationalsos.com](https://www.internationalsos.com)
- Student Support Program (My SSP): 24/7 Mental Health Support
- U.S. Department of State Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP): travel.state.gov



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This is meant to be a helpful resource for students in selecting, understanding, and preparing for their time abroad. There is no intent to discriminate, generalize or stereotype the country or culture with the information provided here. A variety of sources, both formal and informal, were researched to gather this information.