



PRAY FOR EAST ASIA

Pray for Switzerland

The Lord is slow to anger but great in power; the Lord will not leave the guilty unpunished. His way is in the whirlwind and the storm, and clouds are the dust of his feet.

— Nahum 1:3

Country Profile

Switzerland, a country known for its neutrality, is an independent democracy surrounded by countries of the European Union. It is a prosperous and modern market economy with low unemployment, a highly skilled labour force, and a per capita GDP among the highest in the world. The average household net adjusted disposable income per capita is USD 36,378 a year, higher than the OECD average of USD 30,563.

The fate of the Swiss economy is tightly linked to that of its neighbours in the euro zone, which accounts for half of Swiss exports. In January 2015, the Swiss National Bank abandoned the Swiss franc's peg to the Euro. In recent years, Switzerland has responded to increasing pressure from neighbouring countries and trading partners to reform its banking secrecy laws, by agreeing to conform to OECD regulations on administrative assistance in tax matters, including tax evasion.

Freedom of religion is a basic constitutional right in Switzerland. Two-thirds of the country is made up of Roman Catholics and Protestant Christians, while 5% are Muslims, mainly from the Balkans and Turkey. Despite this, Switzerland, like its neighbors, is struggling with a social and spiritual malaise. There is increasing secularisation in the state sector. Institutions that used to have a religious character, such as care homes, schools and teacher training colleges, are secular today.

Churches are experiencing a decline in numbers. Regular church-goers and believers now stand at about 15% of Protestants and 23% of Catholics. Notably, the ranks of faithful Catholics are being swelled by immigrants.

The total percentage of foreigners in Switzerland has reached 25%, out of which 14% are Muslims. There are about 54,000 East Asians living in Switzerland. Deepened partnership and intensified integral mission among the different churches is giving hope for further growth and deepened discipleship.

OMF has long-standing connections with Switzerland. In 1866, the Swiss missionary Louise Dégraz sailed on the Lammermuir to China. Later, Chrischona Mission sent workers to CIM as full members. In 1946, a Swiss National Council was established, accepting candidates from many different denominations. In 1972 work was started among East Asians living in Switzerland.

Although secularism is growing in Switzerland, there is a spiritual openness and a new awareness of mission among young people. OMF's Serve Asia Program is well suited to offer interested Christians a chance for intercultural experience, vocational training and godly encounters.



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Population

- **Total:** 8.4 million
 - **Swiss:** 6.3 million
 - **Other European:** 1.7 million
 - **African:** 94 thousand
 - **American:** 79 thousand
 - **Asian:** 137 thousand
 - **Others:** 6 thousand
 - (figures from www.bfs.admin.ch (2016))

Religions

- **Protestant:** 25%
- **Roman Catholic:** 37%
- **No religious affiliation:** 24%
- **Other Christian denominations:** 6%
- **Muslim:** 5%
- **Others:** 3%

Lord, thank you for all the blessings and grace you have placed upon Switzerland. We ask you would again let this nation experience a spiritual revival. Continue to awaken, mobilize and send out workers from Switzerland to the nations. Let the Swiss church be involved in praying, supporting and proclaiming the good news about Jesus to people who have never had a chance to hear it.