

Facts about the Basel Area

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The Basel Area is an economic powerhouse and Switzerland's most dynamic business environment. Access to knowledge, highly qualified talent and a strong industrial backbone have turned the region into the Swiss business and innovation hub of the future. The Basel Area exemplifies the advantages of Switzerland as a business location for global and national operations: employees and companies benefit from an excellent educational and healthcare system, competitive tax rates, a business friendly environment and a superb quality of life with a variety of cultural offerings. According to Mercer's global quality of life city ranking 2019, Basel is a global top 10 city to live in. InterNations ranks Basel among the world's top 10 expat cities.

With its triborder location next to France and Germany, an international airport with daily flights within Europe, a close intercontinental airport, a transnational port and a dense network of public transport, the Basel Area offers unparalleled accessibility and closeness to reach all European hubs and Swiss business regions. This makes the Basel Area a very favorable operations base to reach the European market and its more than 700 million consumers.

The Basel Area can count on a highly skilled, well-trained international workforce of around three million people. About 66,000 people commute from France and Germany to the Basel Area every day. The exceptional talent pool make the region an ideal location for global, European and Swiss headquarters and brands.

Two global pharma leaders, Novartis and Roche, run their global operations as well as key R&D centers from here. Other companies like Lonza, Moderna, Abbott, Johnson & Johnson, Bayer, Boehringer Ingelheim and Syngenta as well as numerous small and medium-sized companies and a large number of successful startups and spin-offs ensure the Basel Area the undisputed life sciences leader of Europe. The region is home to over 700 life sciences companies and more than 1,000 research groups, over 32,500 specialists covering the entire pharmaceutical value-chain.

Blue-chip multinationals rub shoulders with dynamic startups and prolific incubators. Especially the promising healthtech sector is growing fast. More and more newly established companies and startups are focusing on healthcare technologies, including innovative solutions in personalized medicine and the digitalization of the health and pharmaceutical industries, which makes the Basel Area the location where the future of healthcare is taking place.

A growing ICT ecosystem collaborates with the life sciences industry. ICT companies using cutting-edge technologies and tools have excellent business opportunities. They collaborate with biotech startups, medium-size companies or big pharma to innovate and bring better medicines to patients faster. Enterprises include Medgate or Holmusk that provide world-leading software tools and services in life sciences R&D. Over 11,000 professionals in the Basel Area work in the ICT industry.

Numerous world-class research institutions are located here. The University of Basel is regularly listed among the top 100 universities worldwide. An extensive network of universities, research institutes, suppliers, manufacturers, distributors, specialized service providers and leading hospitals is fostering innovative solutions.

As an integral part of the region's strong life sciences cluster, top medtech players have chosen the Basel Area. Medtech giants like Straumann as well as small and medium-sized enterprises such as Medartis, Ascencia, Composites Busch and BienAir establish the Basel Area as the most dynamic center of medtech companies in Switzerland. A skilled labor force of more than 8,500 employees helps medtech manufacturers keep their competitive edge and is also instrumental in attracting foreign investment.

Venture capital from top-tier investors such as the Novartis Venture Fund, Versant Ventures, Roche Venture Fund and BioMedPartners make the region an ideal breeding ground for company creation. In a thriving and growing startup scene young companies have countless options for support on their road to success. In its role as a research and innovation hub, the Basel Area offers a fertile and productive environment to help companies thrive and prosper. This is clearly underpinned by the fact that Basel has the highest hourly productivity worldwide.

The Basel Area is the most affordable metropolitan area in Switzerland and offers the lowest corporate income tax of all major Swiss business centers. The effective corporate income tax rate is between 13% and 15% (including the federal, cantonal and municipal levels). R&D and IP activities can lead to a corporate income tax rate of approximately 11%. The cost of office space in the Basel Area is significantly lower than in Zurich or Geneva. Liberal labor laws allow for flexible management of the workforce.

As the country's main logistics hub the Basel Area offers a talent pool of 12,000 logistics professionals who know how to manage your supply chain. Retail and consumer goods companies benefit from the excellent logistics infrastructure and the location right at the border to the European Union. Basel's international airport is just 20 minutes from the city center and connects the region with every principal European city. The Rhine ports in the region provide Switzerland's only access to the sea. From Basel, goods can be delivered to Rotterdam or Antwerp and from there to all over the world. Based at the nexus of northern and southern Europe, the Basel Area plays an important role in the transcontinental transport of goods by rail and road.

The Basel Area consists of the three cantons Basel-Stadt, Basel-Landschaft and Jura, the total area is 1,393 km². In the region live 560,000 people. The undisputed centre of the region is the city of Basel with its cosmopolitan lifestyle. Bordering the city of Basel, the canton of Basel-Landschaft is home to many chemical, life sciences and logistics companies. Its reasonable costs have made it a very attractive location for businesses and for living. Away from the more urbanized areas, the landscape is dotted with small towns and villages – an attractive location for nature lovers or families to set up home and enjoy the natural beauty of the countryside. The French-speaking canton of Jura also has a rural character. Its business world is made up of local and international, small and medium-sized companies. Highly specialized suppliers produce premium components and machines for the worldwide watchmaking and medtech industry.

Facts and figures

The Basel Area consists of three cantons: Basel-Stadt, Basel-Landschaft, Jura

Location: Northwestern Switzerland, triborder France, Germany, Switzerland

Total area: 1,393 km²

Population: 560,000

Internationality and expat living:

- 160 nationalities
- Percentage of non-Swiss nationals: 27%
- Cross-border commuting: About 64,000 people commute from France and Germany to the Basel Area every day
- According to InterNations, Basel is the most popular location for expatriates in Switzerland
- 70% of the expats stay longer than three years, 45% more than seven years

Languages:

- German (official language in Canton Basel-Stadt and Canton Basel-Landschaft) and French (official language in Canton Jura)
- Foreign languages are widely spoken; 26% of the population speak English at work, 35% speak two or more languages at work

Main industries:

- Life Sciences
- Pharmaceuticals, Biotech
- Medtech
- Healthtech
- Precision engineering
- Microtechnology, watchmaking and machine tools
- Financial services
- ICT
- Logistics, trade, consumer goods
- Chemical industry
- Creative industries
- Trade fairs, congresses

Talents:

- Unrivalled talent pool of 32,500 well-qualified life sciences employees

Academia and research:

- 14 universities with about 170,000 students within 1 hour
- More than 1,000 research groups
- The education system is tailor-made for international families with 42 private and international schools

Quality of life:

- Basel ranks among the top ten global cities according to Mercer's global quality of live city ranking 2019
- In less than two hours you reach the Swiss Alps, in less than one hour the Black Forest in Germany and the Alps in France

- More than 500 restaurants, over 20 of them ranked by GaultMillau or Guide Michelin
- Hometown of tennis legend Roger Federer
- International ATP tennis tournament Swiss Indoors
- Soccer club FC Basel regularly plays in the UEFA Champions League or UEFA Europa League

Culture:

- Basel is known as Switzerland's 'Capital of Culture'
- Basel has the highest density of museums in Europe
- According to the "The Times" the Kunstmuseum Basel is the fifth best art museum worldwide
- Other world-class museums: Fondation Beyeler, Tinguely-Museum
- Art Basel fair in June
- Carnival in February or March (Basler Fasnacht) is on the Unesco's list of intangible cultural heritage