

# Spotlight on Switzerland



In the center of Switzerland lies picturesque Luzern. Tourists and businesses flock to the region for its stunning alpine vistas, rich cultural heritage, vibrant city life, and robust economic ecosystem.

## A Look Inside the World's Most Innovative Economy

Switzerland exudes a captivating blend of breathtaking landscapes and economic dynamism

Switzerland, a land renowned for its scenic landscapes and historical landmarks, has evolved into a global economic powerhouse, consistently holding the coveted top position on the Global Innovation Index as the world's most innovative country. This innovative nation has a solid foundation with state-of-the-art infrastructure, attractive investment incentives, a highly skilled labor force, industry clusters, and world-leading academic institutions. The country's ecosystem fosters research and development (R&D), attracting companies and individuals from around the world who strive to create groundbreaking technologies, pioneering solutions and expand operations.

One of Switzerland's key strengths lies in its first-class business-friendly legal and regulatory framework, providing a stable and supportive environment. Moreover, Switzerland has prioritized infrastructure, with efficient transportation networks and advanced, ultra-modern facilities, offering ease of connectivity, and contributing to a high quality of life for its residents.

Switzerland's dual education system further contributes to the country's competitiveness, providing both vocational education and apprenticeships, ensuring a well-educated, productive workforce. Ricarda Demarmels, the CEO of Emmi, the leading manufacturer of high-quality dairy products in Switzerland stated, "What differentiates us from others is not only our top universities that are at the forefront of international research, but also our unique vocational training. This dual education combines classroom training with on-the-job training, with more than 200 apprenticeship professions recognized. Emmi offers a wide range of them and has this year a record number of 130 apprentices in Switzerland, from cheesemakers to computer science. In some ways it offers better opportunities than classical universities, by promoting lifelong learning, upskilling, and reskilling."

Swiss academia plays a pivotal role in catalyzing innovation within the private sector. Institutions renowned for their world-class research in fields such as engineering, biotechnology, and computer science, help provide valuable expertise and talent to businesses. Through collaborative partnerships and knowledge exchange, academia and the private sector synergize, driving Switzerland's reputation as a global innovation hub. This collaborative workforce is part of the reason Swiss industrial production per capita astonishingly beats both the USA and China's rankings.



**Jan Atteslander**  
Member of the Executive Board and Head of the Department of International Relations  
EconomieSuisse

Economic and political stability are also hallmarks of Switzerland's success, providing a footing for long-term investment and growth. Jan Atteslander, Member of the Executive Board and Head of the Department of International Relations at EconomieSuisse, an umbrella organization for the Swiss business sector, stated, "Switzerland offers a high degree of legal stability, rule of law and international business-friendly conditions. It is important to note that Switzerland has always been like this. Switzerland has a rich history of openness and innovation, a quality that is highly esteemed by business people worldwide. It has led us to receive high rankings across many benchmarks, particularly amidst a global surge of protectionism. Switzerland holds a unique stance; we at EconomieSuisse are committed to open markets, and this commitment is celebrated and exempli-

fied by the recent abolition of import duties on industrial goods, a testament to our unwavering dedication to remaining open on the world stage."



**Alexandre Edelmann**  
Head  
Presence Switzerland

In addition to being open and secure, Switzerland offers a compelling proposition for investors seeking opportunities in pioneering fields, and those who equally value a well-balanced life. Alexandre Edelmann, Head of Presence Switzerland, the governmental communication agency of Switzerland abroad, noted, "We measure the perception of Switzerland in different countries, and Switzerland is viewed as stable and trusted, which is key as businesses tend to dislike instability. Another important aspect is the Swiss lifestyle. Innovation needs inspiration, and in large Swiss cities employees of multinationals can take inspiration from our country's natural beauty. For instance, they can go swimming in our pristine rivers and lakes or have a walk over lunch breaks, something few residents of cities abroad have the possibility to do. It nurtures creativity and peace of mind."

In light of increased global volatility, economic complexities, and geopolitical risks, entities continue to trust and cast a vote in favor of operating in Switzerland and engaging Swiss partners. In addition to being home to large multinationals, Switzerland serves as an exceptional base for globally minded startups and SMEs, offering a strategic location, stable business environment, and a well-established reputation for quality and precision. With a strong focus on R&D, Switzerland continues to lead the way in cutting-edge advancements across various sectors, providing value-added solutions that are solving global challenges.



**Martin Naville**  
CEO  
Swiss-American Chamber of Commerce

**"American FDI in Switzerland amounts to over USD 220 billion, and Swiss companies employ over 480,000 people in the USA."**

### Swiss-American Relations

Swiss-American relations are based on shared values and historically strong social and economic interests. The sister republics have close political similarities as federal unions of independent states with representative democracies. Swit-

zerland acts as the gateway to Europe for many American companies, and in turn the USA is the largest export market for Swiss companies. This partnership extends to various sectors.

Martin Naville, CEO of the Swiss-American Chamber of Commerce, an organization that advocates for Swiss, American and multinational business interests, stated, "If we look at the development of bilateral trade, twenty years ago Switzerland exported the same to Italy, Germany, France, and the USA. Today we export more to the USA than Italy, France, UK, and Austria combined. The USA recently surpassed Germany as the leading Swiss export market, with 19.5% to the USA and 16.2% to Germany. The development and cooperation between the two countries has been massive. For instance, American FDI in Switzerland amounts to over USD 220 billion, and Swiss companies employ over 480,000 people in the USA."

Naville continued to discuss the synergy between the two countries. He added, "A major topic today is sustainability, and Swiss companies are world champions in this field, giving them an added edge. They're collaborating with American companies to help build a more sustainable and prosperous future."

### The Swiss Financial Center

Switzerland's financial expertise reverberates globally, cementing its status as a premier financial hub. As a cornerstone of the Swiss economy, the financial sector contributes roughly 10% to the nation's GDP. Switzerland is a linchpin in wealth management, asset management, insurance, and reinsurance, managing approximately a quarter of the world's cross-border assets.



**Roman Studer**  
CEO  
Swiss Bankers Association

Renowned for its meticulous precision, the Swiss banking sector exemplifies excellence, with a commitment to progressive financial services and unwavering adherence to rigorous regulatory standards. Roman Studer, CEO of the Swiss Bankers Association, the sector's leading industry association with around 270 member institutions, stated, "The Swiss financial center has existed for centuries, with Swiss banks providing a wide range of services for foreign customers for over 200 years. The Swiss financial services industry has developed a strong position and remains a center of global importance despite the country's relatively small size. This achievement is due not only to traditional success factors, but also to the fact that we are innovative and respond to and anticipate new global trends such as sustainable finance. The center might be best known for its banks, but its base is much broader, including insurance, reinsurance, fintech, and more."

As sustainable finance is becoming increasingly important across the globe, the Swiss financial center is positioning itself as a leading sustainable investment hub. Switzerland has also embraced global benchmarks in tax regulation, anti-money laundering protocols, and enables the financial sector to provide high-quality, innovative products and services.

### The Power of Cluster Dynamics

Switzerland hosts a diverse array of clusters ranging from the prominent life sciences and financial hubs to the precision engineering and cleantech clusters, each driving transformation in their respective fields. They represent dynamic ecosystems where innovation thrives with collaboration and synergies among businesses, research institutions, and governmental entities.

By working in close proximity to one another, the companies benefit from shared resources, knowledge exchange, and a culture of innovation, driving breakthroughs in various fields and vertically integrating technologies in biotech, medtech, fintech, cyber security, and industrial design. Emerging areas with the potential to develop into super-clusters in Switzerland over the next decade include drones, robotics, software, cryptocurrencies, mobility and autonomous transportation, agrotech, foodtech, advanced manufacturing, and more.

Arnd Kaldowski, CEO of Sonova, a Swiss-based medical group specializing in hearing care, mentioned, "Switzerland's dynamic ecosystem has many positive elements for companies like Sonova on the medical device side. About 1.3% of the Swiss workforce is working for medical device related companies, which is two and a half times larger than the average Western country. Innovation and engineering thrive in Switzerland, in part due to a strong talent pool thanks to well-renowned Swiss universities, spearheaded by ETH and EPFL. Their focus on microelectronics, software, research, and talent cultivation, has been especially vital in our own field of hearing aids. We tap into universities, active startups, and innovative small companies, not just from a talent perspective, but also for collaborations with technology and innovation. Switzerland's distinguished talent pool is robust, and a cornerstone of Sonova's success."



**Jeff Rowe**  
CEO  
Syngenta

Switzerland's innovative clusters garner global attention, with leaders from various industries echoing sentiments of its one-of-a-kind business environment. Jeff Rowe, CEO of Swiss headquartered Syngenta Group, a world leading agritech company, stated, "As an American who is living in Switzerland, I have a fairly unique perspective regarding what drives Switzerland's success as an innovation nation. It starts with a central focus on creating a business environment that is productive and efficient. As a global agritech company, we strive to solve localized problems with a global mindset. Farmers from around the world face various issues that reflect different environmental concerns, farming practices, and even economic situations. For companies like Syngenta, our ability to innovate enables us to deliver solutions to evolving farming challenges. Switzerland is a key R&D and manufacturing hub globally for us. It's not difficult to convince top scientists from around the world to relocate to Switzerland. We've found they're eager to live and work here."



Paradeplatz is a square in downtown Zürich with a historic tram stop for financial services and the headquarters of premium Swiss bank, UBS.

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# Discover the Grisons

Where World Class Innovation, Production and Natural Beauty Converge



The rapidly developing Life Sciences Research Center Davos consists of various institutes and a clinic. It is nestled in the breathtaking nature of the Grisons mountains.

The Canton of the Grisons, also known by its German name, Graubünden, is recognized as one of the country's premier locations for starting or growing a business. It is located in the geographical epicenter of Europe, boasting a holistic offering with an exceptional innovative ecosystem and a renowned talent pool stemming from the world's leading and pioneering universities in science and technology.

The Canton's advanced digital, health, and educational infrastructure provides a highly competitive environment for both individuals and companies. The seamless transport infrastructure facilitates connectivity with the rest of Switzerland and its five neighboring countries, while its multilingualism further enriches its appeal. The Grisons has various industry clusters and is recognized as a prime hub for photonics, medtech, ICT, and biotech. This, combined with its unparalleled quality of life and natural beauty, makes it an appealing location for multinationals.



**Reto Bleisch**  
Director of Economic  
Affairs and Tourism  
Canton of the Grisons

**“Our excellent strategic location, stable political system, legal security, liberal labor laws, attractive individual and corporate taxes, trust of public institutions, access to the European market, and our focus on high-end research, all make the Canton an attractive hub.”**

Director of the Office of Economic Affairs and Tourism of the Canton of the Grisons, Reto Bleisch stated, “In the Grisons, we are uniquely positioned in the heart of Europe, with access to a population of over 15 million people within three-hours. Our excellent strategic location, stable political system, legal security, liberal labor laws, attractive individual and corporate taxes,

trust of public institutions, access to the European market, and our focus on high-end research, all make the Canton an attractive hub, especially for high-tech companies combining research and development with production. Overall, the Grisons offers an outstanding quality of life, and a collaborative, resource-rich business environment. Its uniqueness of place, sense of community, cultural and recreational amenities, dual education system, and labs attract visionary entrepreneurs, and well-educated, highly skilled talent. Moreover, Switzerland's investment in vocational education and training is unique. Worldwide, only a few countries have a well-elaborated and efficient vocational and professional education and training system, among these the Swiss.”



Photo: Graubünden Ferien, Nicolai

The Grisons offers relaxation or physical challenges with impressive surroundings, such as in St. Moritz in the Engadin Valley.

He continued, “For instance, Davos is based in our Canton, which is globally renowned for hosting the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting. Davos is also home to two prestigious institutes associated with the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) and the University of Zurich. Davos is a dynamic town at the forefront of cutting-edge research including high-end solar and climate research, big data, AI, and advanced medtech innovation. Top scholars and experts from around the globe work in the region to explore advanced technologies and achieve breakthroughs. Being surrounded by the breathtaking Swiss Alps fosters an inspiring environment for scientific exploration and collaboration. Furthermore, the innovation strategy of the Grisons 2028 aims to match the education system with the needs of companies, ensuring degrees match future needs.”

One location for scientific discovery is the Photonics Lab at the University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons. It is home to a dedicated team of scientists and researchers who harness the power of light, driving innovation across a variety of fields, from telecommunications to medical diagnostics. Equipped with cutting-edge technology, the state-of-the-art lab serves as a beacon of excellence in the realm of optics and photonics research. Alongside other players, the Alpine Rhine Valley is developing into a “Photonics Valley” with international recognition.

The Canton is heavily dedicated to nurturing innovative research and encourages entities from around the globe to participate in their ecosystem. The Grisons offers an array of incentives including subsidies, low-interest loans, and tax incentives. The Canton is particularly looking to attract entities focused on translational medicine, advanced patient care, and companies striving to lower treatment and healthcare costs.

Bleisch added, “During the pandemic, half of the global supply for breathing machines used for COVID-19 patients, and 60-70% of all chips for automatized COVID-19 testing were developed and produced in the Grisons. Private entities in the Canton are investing in advanced research on DNA sequencing technologies, developing new tools, and pioneering methodologies in the medical field, paving the way for personalized medicine. We are working with partners from the private sector, and institutions locally and across Switzerland to form a new institute in Davos. Focusing on medtech and biotech, the institute will further strengthen international collaborations and position the region as a key contributor to future medical advancements.”

Another cluster in the Canton is focusing on cutting-edge ICT infrastructure, from the potential of Big Data and IoT, to chip manufacturing and cloud technologies. With areas like cloud computing and advanced networking solutions, players wishing to harness the power of digital transformation can cohesively innovate in the Grisons.



The Grisons is home to stunning offices such as InnHub La Punt Auditorium, a dedicated campus for co-creation, innovation, and transformation.

To host and enhance such clusters, the Grisons has a multitude of dedicated locations across its region. For instance, the InnHub La Punt, which is set to open in 2028, is a dedicated campus, established to encourage co-creation and transformation for human and planetary health. It will be an architectural marvel, designed by Lord Norman Foster and will include high-profile companies such as ON and Swisscom.

Bleisch expanded, “Notably, the Grisons offers vast industrial sites, with over 300,000 m<sup>2</sup> of land readily available, which is rare in the heart of Europe between major metropolitan areas such as Munich or Milan. This is particularly interesting for entities seeking locations where they can grow end-to-end. We offer the space required to conduct research and eventually start production when entities are ready to commercialize.

We're ideally seeking to attract highly specialized entities focusing on value-added solutions with a certain degree of R&D and engineering workforce.”

One example of an American company excelling in the Grisons is Hamilton. It chose the Grisons for its European headquarters and expanded its most important high-tech production site in the Industrial Park Vial, which is the Grisons' largest purely industrial zone. From here, Hamilton is continuously improving mechanical ventilation therapies for patients worldwide and holds numerous patents in innovative areas. The industrial park has been ideal for sectors focused on advanced manufacturing, life sciences, high-tech, and value-added solutions. With its direct highway access, it makes it extremely convenient to reach Zurich Airport in just over an hour.



Photo: Philipp Schmidli

RhB Railway set the world record in the Grisons as the longest passenger train in October 2022. Photo source: Graubünden Ferien

**Work Where Others Vacation: Exploring Quality of Life and Tourism**  
Nestled in the heart of the Swiss Alps, the Canton of the Grisons captivates visitors with its breathtaking landscapes and rich cultural heritage. Renowned for its picturesque mountain villages, pristine lakes, and sprawling valleys, the Grisons offers an unparalleled escape into nature's embrace. Home to iconic destinations such as St. Moritz, Davos, and the Engadin Valley, the region attracts outdoor enthusiasts year-round for skiing, hiking, and mountaineering adventures.



Photo: Graubünden Ferien, Nicolai

Whether gentle or challenging, the incredible nature of the Grisons always has an adventure in store.

Beyond its natural splendor, the Grisons boasts a vibrant history shaped by its unique position at the crossroads of European cultures. With its medieval towns and centuries-old traditions, the Canton exudes a sense of timeless charm. The UNESCO railway route of Rhaetian Railway, which is over 100 years old, is one of the world's most spectacular railway lines. From exploring historic castles to savoring local delicacies like Capuns, Pizokel, or Tuorta da Nuschs, a journey through the Grisons embodies the essence of Switzerland's finest offerings.

Thanks to its alpine allure, strategic location, highly skilled workforce, a myriad of clusters, and favorable business environment, the Grisons is a compelling destination for businesses seeking to thrive amidst a backdrop of innovation and natural beauty. ■

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# From Alpine Origins to Global Success

## Aebi Schmidt Group's Remarkable Expansion Journey



Designed to tackle daily cleaning challenges in urban settings, Aebi Schmidt's Cleango 550 is now electrified. Its compact yet robust build ensures effective cleaning while adhering to stringent environmental standards.

The road to global success for Aebi Schmidt Group began over 140 years ago in the historic Swiss town of Burgdorf. In this town, the Group's oldest brand, Aebi, was first established as a mechanical workshop for agricultural machinery. Schmidt, the second oldest brand under the Group's umbrella began as a small factory in Germany focusing on snowplows. Since its modest origins in the Swiss and German countryside, Aebi Schmidt Group has undergone a remarkable transformation. With a focus on elevating local innovation to a global scale, it has experienced substantial growth, and following a multitude of international acquisitions, Aebi Schmidt Group now stands as a globally oriented enterprise.



**Barend Fruithof**  
CEO  
Aebi Schmidt

In recent years, under the stewardship of Group CEO Barend Fruithof, Aebi Schmidt Group experienced a particularly notable evolution. The company focused on being a solution provider and diversifying its portfolio, specializing in purpose vehicles for winter service, street and surface cleaning, and agriculture maintenance. By leveraging industry expertise, the company cu-

rated a comprehensive product range designed to maintain critical infrastructures and address the complexities of challenging terrains, from state-of-the-art snowplows to advanced street sweepers. Throughout this period, the company also sped up its geographical reach while maintaining a steadfast commitment to innovation, quality, and a focus on customer-centric solutions.

In addition to product diversification, Fruithof also focused on the expansion of the Group's global footprint. He spearheaded efforts to establish a consolidated presence in America, and proudly stated, "We now have a robust presence in the USA that today accounts for 53% of our revenue, followed by 44% in Europe, and a modest 3% in other regions."

This impressive growth trajectory was bolstered by acquisitions, facilitated by Switzerland's favorable financing environment allowing the company's headquarters to secure the necessary funding for its expansion. Fruithof mentioned, "Through strategic partnerships and targeted investments we've tripled Aebi Schmidt's revenue across the last seven years."

Since its inception, the Group has acquired various brands originating from different countries such as Arctic, ELP, Monroe, and Towmaster, adding to its portfolio. The Group also has a strong U.S. heritage with multiple companies under the Group's umbrella stemming from the states. For instance, MB was

founded in Wisconsin in 1907, Meyer in New York in 1926, and Swenson in Illinois in 1937. Aebi Schmidt Group's most recent acquisition was the snow products business of Wisconsin-based Oshkosh Corporation.

In addition to acquiring innovative brands and businesses, the Group continuously invests in R&D. In the USA, the company hosts a robust R&D competence center dedicated to advancing its airport equipment and winter maintenance technologies. It is the leading provider in the airport maintenance sector for snow clearance, de-icing equipment, and control systems technology. Meanwhile, in Germany, Aebi Schmidt's sweeper business thrives under the expertise of its specialized competence center, engineering extremely quiet, compact, and robust sweepers designed for everyday cleaning operations in urban areas. It also focuses on winter maintenance. Notably, the heart of its agricultural innovation still beats in Switzerland, where the company's agricultural competence center drives forward-thinking solutions for the maintenance of extreme slopes. Fruithof summarized this stating, "Thanks to these R&D centers, our pipeline brims with innovative products, services and solutions."

Fruithof expanded, "As we pave the way forward for Aebi Schmidt in the USA, our focus is crystal clear - to seamlessly integrate our cutting-edge technologies. Take for instance our European compact sweepers which

are already making strides in cities like Charlotte and New York. The demand is surging, yet our challenge lies in meeting the demand. Currently, we ship these machines from Europe, but soon, we'll be manufacturing them in the USA. The potential is immense, especially as we champion sustainability with solutions like our electrically-driven compact sweeper Cleango, which is taking center stage this year."

Aebi Schmidt Group's electric Cleango is improving maintenance practices in an era where sustainability and electrification are at the forefront. Designed to enhance efficiency, the newly electrified Cleango can empower municipalities to reduce the number of trucks required for service. Thanks to its high suction power it minimizes the overall work hours needed to clean designated areas. Improving efficiency coupled with the environmentally friendly engine, innovative engineering, and low costs over the product's life cycle all ensure sustainability.

Speaking of future ambitions, Fruithof added, "We aim to further grow our business in the USA by another 10-15% over the next year. The USA has been a welcoming environment for us, and we've been grateful for the support and assistance we've received. The local authorities, alongside the Swiss embassy, played pivotal roles in facilitating our development. Their pragmatism and efficiency were instrumental, exemplified by the swift approval and establishment of our facility in Chilton, Wisconsin within a mere 18 months—a process that could have taken years in Europe. This speed was pivotal in realizing our growth ambitions."

He continued, "Americans appreciate Swiss quality standards and our robust financial management practices. We're delighted with our progress, owing much to the loyalty and support of the people we've encountered. Rest assured, we remain committed to further investing in the USA."

In the dynamic business world, Swiss leaders like Fruithof inspire their global operations with vision, a commitment to excellence, and sustainable long-term growth, showcasing a legacy of innovative leadership. ■

# Invest in the Grisons

Well developed and ideally located industrial areas are hard to find in Switzerland – except in the Grisons, where export-oriented companies can evolve on inexpensive land in a supportive and inspiring environment. What makes the most popular leisure-time region of Switzerland into an attractive high-tech innovation and production location?

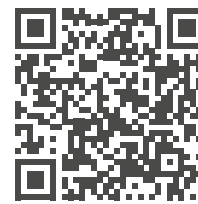
- Stable and favorable economic and political framework
- Access to European and global markets
- Central location in Europe with excellent transport connections
- Easy access to international airports
- Home to numerous global players in high-tech sectors
- Very moderate taxation for companies and individuals
- Funding programs for innovative, export-oriented companies
- Availability of skilled labor, with 13 universities nearby
- Excellent quality of life

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Room to grow!



# Transforming Global Education

**Singularity Academy: a humanity-centered hybrid research and educational institute**



Photo: Henrique Ferreira on Unsplash

Zurich stands as a global epicenter for education, renowned for its prestigious universities, innovative research institutions, and commitment to academic excellence.

Singularity Academy believes in humanity's boundless potential and the relentless pursuit of excellence. Embracing its mission to help singularity members identify their humanity-centered singular growth path, the Academy has emerged as a vanguard in the field of novel education, reshaping conventional paradigms and nurturing the minds of tomorrow.



**Dr. Ying Zhang**  
Founding Dean  
Singularity Academy

Singularity Academy is headquartered in Zurich, with campuses across Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Germany. It is a newly developed hybrid research and educational institute offering K-12 education consultation, higher education, and continuous lifelong learning. Dr. Ying Zhang, the founding dean of Singularity Academy and professor on sustainability and entrepreneurship, together with her

leadership team gathered world-level experts, coaches, and mentors to merge knowledge, be at the frontier of research and sustainability, and position the Academy with the best global practices. Offering a holistic and tailor-made approach to learning, Dr. Zhang stated, "We're treating every student as if they're our family and child, offering unparalleled attention and individualization - creating a positive educational revolution and improving our students' mental and physical health."

Swiss academia and education have played a pivotal role in empowering youth and adapting to prepare future generations for the challenges of tomorrow effectively. However, after twenty years of working in the higher education sector, Dr. Zhang noticed some setbacks. She stated, "The training track for educators and evaluation standards are too one-dimensional - blocking the role of academia to collaborate with industry truly. For instance, it cannot be easy to convert the skills and knowledge students are learning to real practice, and it is further challenging to convert this to innovation in the marketplace. Although many traditional universities

have scientific output, converting most of them to concrete and down-to-earth innovation can often be impossible. This is something we're focusing on at Singularity Academy."

Dr. Zhang added, "The education sector needs to evolve. Students are not properly engaged in the classroom. This is partly because primary to middle school content is similar to 60 years ago - made for the requirement of mass production-focused corporations during industrialization. Today's curriculum does not reflect today's society, and AI and digitalization are underrepresented. The foundation of training for teachers and professors is also dated, creating a ripple effect across the entire educational ecosystem."

Founded on principles of interdisciplinary collaboration and cutting-edge research, Singularity Academy strives to transcend the confines of traditional education. Its tailor-made curriculum, meticulously crafted to foster creativity and critical thinking, challenges young minds to explore the frontiers of science, technology, and beyond. From artificial intelligence to biotechnology, students are immersed in a dynamic learning environment that empowers them to confront the complexities of the modern world.

At the heart of Singularity Academy's ethos lies a commitment to enabling global citizens. Drawing upon Switzerland's cultural tapestry and spirit of innovation, the Academy cultivates a diverse community of scholars poised to shape history. Through collaborative projects and immersive experiences, students engage with peers of all ages from around the world, forging lasting connections and gaining invaluable insights into the interconnectedness of global society.

Sixty percent of students at the world's leading universities have experienced varying degrees of mental health issues, including depression and anxiety. Dr. Zhang added, "With a holistic educational approach, we can upgrade our members' future well-being. We have different committees to thoroughly analyze each pupil before helping them set out their individualized curriculum. Committee members are highly knowledgeable and include scholars, doctors, and psychologists to comprehend each student's 360 degrees. Our three hos-

pitals and well-being clubs, just as an additional facility, are under our system to help our students keep their health stable. Only after a complete evaluation of each student do we develop a customized, overarching-themed program to ensure that students develop themselves and become noble and responsible humans."

**"Our value chain incubates students to become entrepreneurs."**

She continued, "Our value chain incubates students to become entrepreneurs. We have a strong group of C-level coaches guiding them to avoid pitfalls. We help students create feasibility analyses to see what resources they may need and try to help them access those resources. This support helps their businesses succeed compared to their peers from traditional universities."

Central to Singularity Academy's pedagogical approach is the concept of singularity and helping its members identify their humanity-centered, sustainable, and infinite growth. In the future, technological advancement may reach a point of exponential growth, fundamentally altering the fabric of human existence. With this vision as its guiding light, the Academy equips students with the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate the complexities of an ever-evolving world. By embracing uncertainty and embracing the unknown, students emerge as trailblazers poised to lead humanity into uncharted territory.

In an era defined by rapid technological advancement and unprecedented global challenges, the role of education has never been more crucial. Singularity Academy inspires a new generation of thinkers and innovators to harness the power of knowledge for the greater good. It represents a bold vision for the future of education—one that transcends boundaries and empowers individuals to realize their full potential. As the world stands on the precipice of a new age, educators and leaders are suggested to look at institutions like Singularity Academy for more inspiration. ■

## Molding Leaders in Hospitality and Culinary Arts



In Switzerland, where the majestic Alps cast their shadows over scenic lakes and charming towns, lie seven of the top ten hospitality management schools in the world. Two of these institutions are under the umbrella of Sommet Education, a world leader in hospitality education that unites premier hospitality and culinary art schools from across the globe. Drawing upon Swiss traditions, the group has cultivated a dynamic learning environment

that nurtures talent and instills a profound sense of professionalism.

Benoît-Etienne Domenget, CEO of Sommet Education, said, "We have a global network of five brands and twenty campuses. Two of the top ten globally best-ranked institutions for hospitality education are under our group, including Glion Institute of Higher Education and Les Roches, both founded in Switzerland. Les Roches is celebrating its 70th anniversary

this year, and we're committed to setting the benchmark when it comes to quality. We're teaching the most talented students in the world and offering them a transformative experience - training them to become future leaders and positioning them to work for the best employers in the world."

At the core of the group's success is its esteemed academic programs. From undergraduate degrees to postgraduate studies, the group offers a comprehensive range of over 400 programs that blend theoretical knowledge with practical experience. Students are immersed in a multicultural environment, where they engage with industry experts, participate in internships at prestigious hotels, and gain firsthand insights into the intricacies of hospitality management and culinary arts.

Domenget added how Swissness is a key ingredient to the group's overall success. He said, "Swiss values are embedded across all of our brands. For instance, we offer a high level of personalization and impressive ratios of one faculty member to every fourteen students. Our diverse range of courses also adds to our appeal, offering a one-stop shop, from training with the best pastry chefs in the world to the best managers."

Another one of the group's crowning achievements is its esteemed network of institutions. Beyond the two Swiss-based flagship campuses, the group also has the culinary and pastry arts schools École Ducasse, Invictus, and Indian School of Hospitality under its purview. They attract aspiring professionals from every corner of the globe, where students are not merely learners but ambassadors of Sommet Education's philosophy embracing the art of hospitality.

Domenget continued, "Job readiness is also critical. We have a high student placement post-graduation rate with 90-95% of our students finding employment upon graduation. Our graduate employment rate at Invictus in South Africa is 93%, which is particularly impressive due to the country's high rate of unemployment, especially for youth. We're proud to be a significant player in the education sector and export Swiss educational values. Switzerland is known for having many sectors of excellence, and education is absolutely one of them."



**Benoît-Etienne Domenget**  
CEO  
Sommet Education

The group also has strong allies in the USA. Sommet Education's École Ducasse has an academic partnership with one of the largest culinary school brands in the USA, Auguste Escoffier School of Culinary Arts. Escoffier students can experience an immersive study abroad program at École Ducasse's campus in Paris, France. Domenget stated, "America is a gigantic market for the hospitality, food and beverage, and luxury experience industries. The more we can consolidate relationships in the USA the better."

Furthermore, the group is launching a new campus in Abu Dhabi later this year. Domenget added, "In September we'll be opening a new campus of Les Roches in Abu Dhabi as the needs in the Middle East for hospitality education are high. We're planning on also opening another three campuses in South Africa, and aim to open a campus in Shanghai in 2025."

Always looking for ways to pay it forward, Sommet Education created its own Foundation, offering scholarships to merited individuals from disadvantaged communities. The Foundation aims to provide tools to help with social mobility and address current employment shortages within the sector. It is striving to create a more sustainable and thriving hospitality sector.

Sommet Education is redefining standards in the field, ensuring its graduates are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and mindset to thrive. As the group continues to expand, it will mold leaders in the hospitality and culinary industries worldwide. ■

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# A Tale of Tradition, Innovation and Sustainability



Gruyère cheese, an iconic symbol of Swiss culinary tradition, embodies centuries of artisanal craftsmanship and the rich terroir of the Swiss Alps. Renowned for its distinctive nutty flavor, creamy texture, and subtle hints of fruitiness, Gruyère cheese is a timeless classic cherished by cheese connoisseurs around the world.

In Switzerland where green pastures meet towering white peaks, lies a sector embracing old traditions, innovative dairy products, and a strong commitment to sustainability. This trifecta is woven into the fabric of the nation's agrifood sector. The multifaceted impact of Swiss dairy and the nation's unique approach to agriculture epitomizes the symbiosis of tradition and innovation.

## Preservation of Heritage

Switzerland's agricultural heritage is deeply rooted in its history, with agriculture serving as the bedrock of the nation's economy until the 19th century. Despite its modest contribution to GDP today, which stands at a mere 1%, the agrifood sector's value transcends financial metrics. According to Ricarda Demarmels, CEO of Swiss dairy leader Emmi, "The sector is the backbone of our nation's heritage and prosperity. It sustains our landscapes, nourishes people, and provides opportunities in narrow valleys where the sun can come up late and go down early. Swiss agriculture balances centuries-old farming traditions with innovative techniques. We're ensuring sustainability and competitiveness in a rapidly evolving global landscape."



**Ricarda Demarmels**  
CEO  
Emmi

The integration of traditional knowledge with modern technologies showcases Switzerland's commitment to preserving its agricultural legacy while embracing innovation and change. Demarmels continued, "As we progress, we try to keep old traditions alive, and value the unwritten Swiss social contract, which is an informal agreement among Swiss societal stakeholders, to maintain a balanced social system fostering equality, social justice and solidarity. This contributes to Switzerland's overall success."

## Sustainability: An Integral Part of Emmi's Identity for Generations

With just under 16,000 square miles, slightly less than twice the size of New Jersey, Switzerland has little

land to work with, and two-thirds of the country's surface is non-useable land because of mountainous terrain and steep hillsides. Due to these constraints, Switzerland prioritizes efficiency and is committed to sustainability measures to ensure prospects remain intact for the next generation.

The Swiss dairy industry, in particular, has emerged as a global leader in sustainable practices, setting industry standards for environmental stewardship. Demarmels stated, "The transformation to a sustainable food system is an important challenge of our time, and another important challenge is to feed people healthy food containing essential nutrients. Milk is at this intersection and the Swiss dairy industry plays a critical role, with Emmi acting as a role model."

Through initiatives like Swiss Milk Green, which mandates eco-friendly practices and promotes biodiversity conservation, Swiss dairy farmers are pioneering a path towards a more sustainable future. Demarmels stressed, "As of the first of February this year, 100% of Swiss-produced milk adheres to the industry-wide sustainability standard 'Sustainable Swiss Milk,' reducing the environmental impact of milk production. This initiative is clearly recognizable for consumers via the on-pack label 'Swiss Milk Green' and has a clear set of requirements, including animal welfare, involving comfortable living for the animals with access to pastures, humane treatment of the animals, and even a name for the cows. It also clearly regulates the feed and medications, so Swiss milk can achieve a 100% GMO-free label. It supports innovation and encourages dairy farmers to adopt environmentally friendly and sustainable farming practices, such as reduced chemical use and biodiversity conservation. The result of these initiatives is that today, Switzerland is closer to a high-quality biodiverse grassland with Alpine flowers, herbs and clover. This creates the unique taste of Swiss milk, an extraordinarily high nutritional value, and a record low bacteria count. Something that rarely gets attention is that because Swiss grass is so sustainably farmed, it also absorbs CO2 really well, contributing to carbon sequestration."

Embracing the principles of innovation and sustainability, Emmi is on a journey towards a more resilient food system. Demarmels noted, "Recently, it was decided that all stakeholders will have climate calculators to determine their footprint, a project which is rolled out industry-wide across Switzerland in 2025. We also have another pioneering project called Climate Star Milk (KlimaStaR) where we've joined forces with research institutions, the Swiss Federal Office for Agriculture, Aaremilch, ZMP, AgroCleanTech, and Nestlé Suisse. This broad initiative works on gaining scientific insights on how to make the dairy industry more climate-friendly and sustainable."

## Swiss Cheese: A Culinary Ambassador

The cultural significance of Swiss cheeses, which serve as culinary ambassadors for the nation's rich heritage and commitment to quality, cannot be understated. From the iconic Emmentaler to the exquisite Gruyère, Swiss cheeses embody centuries of craftsmanship and a profound connection to the land and people.

As consumers increasingly gravitate towards artisanal foods, Swiss cheeses stand poised to capture the imagination and palate of discerning food enthusiasts. Demarmels emphasized, "Cheese craftsmanship has been part of our blood, in our DNA, and passed down for hundreds of years from generation to generation. Swiss cheese offers a variety, from mild buttery to assertive pungent cheeses. The special KALTBACH Le Gruyère AOP is particularly unique."

KALTBACH Le Gruyère AOP has a complex palate of flavors being fruity and spicy with a deep earthiness. Its texture is luxuriously smooth, punctuated by a delicate flakiness and crunchy specks from the pronounced crystals within. It is left to ripen in the Kaltbach Cave, an ancient sandstone cave dating back 22 million years. Within the cave's depths is a serene meandering stream. This subterranean area maintains a steady 96% humidity in the mineral-laden atmosphere, a vital factor in shaping the unique texture and flavor of the cheese produced here, setting it apart from any other variety worldwide.

Demarmels continued, "Only the best Swiss cheese gets brought to Kaltbach. It ripens under the watchful eye of our cavemasters in this special environment, with water dripping from the stone ceiling, eventually making its way to platters around the world. Emmi has been awarded tons of accolades for this at the World Cheese Awards. The unique terroir of Swiss pastures, and generations of artisanal expertise, impart a distinct character to Swiss cheeses that global audiences should discover."

## Looking Ahead: A Commitment to Excellence and Innovation

As Switzerland's largest milk processor, Emmi plays an essential role in shaping the trajectory of the agrifood sector, both domestically and abroad. Emmi is the leading manufacturer of high-quality dairy products in Switzerland, and has a foothold in 14 countries. It currently distributes its products to around 60 nations while operating 57 production sites in eleven countries. Over 9,000 employees work for Emmi, with 70% based outside of Switzerland. 2023 was a record year for Emmi, with sales of USD 4.6 billion.

With the North American market as one of Emmi's strategic must-win markets, Emmi seeks to leverage its expertise and resources to expand its footprint and promote Swiss culinary excellence. Demarmels mentioned, "North America is our most important market, outside of Switzerland. We have a number of businesses in the USA, and in addition to importing we produce cheese in the states. For instance, we own the number one feta brand in the USA called Athenos. We also have a large premium dessert business where we produce traditional Italian desserts, and own Meyenberg, the number one goat milk in the states. The Emmi Group has a fantastic portfolio of local brands, providing people with a moment of heartfelt indulgence."

In Switzerland, where tradition meets innovation, the agrifood sector stands as a testament to the nation's enduring commitment to excellence and sustainability. As Swiss cheeses continue to captivate palates around the world, Emmi leads the charge towards a more sustainable future. The legacy of Swiss agriculture will remain a source of pride for the nation. ■

## Lucerne: Discover Switzerland in a Nutshell



Lying directly on the shores of Lake Lucerne, the city is the social and cultural center in the heart of Switzerland. Lucerne's roots date back to the 12th century, and its connection to history can still be felt today. Thanks to its beautiful location on the lake and its immediate proximity to the surrounding Alps, this lively city has welcomed visitors and developed its tourism offering over the last 200 years.

Today, Lucerne and the Lake Lucerne Region are among the most popular international tourist destinations in Switzerland. The combination of a city with a wide range of cultural and musical attractions and sights, all embedded in the impressive mountain terrain and surrounded by

wild nature, is unique in Switzerland, making the destination extremely popular, especially with visitors from North America.

With its historic old town, embraced by the Musegg Wall and the iconic Chapel Bridge with its octagonal water tower, the heart-wrenching Lion Monument, or the KKL Luzern with its unmistakable architecture, there is plenty to discover. Lucerne also hosts a wealth of music festivals throughout the year, such as the Lucerne Festival and Lucerne Live, which cover a wide spectrum from classical music to jazz and pop. For art lovers, the Rosengart Collection Lucerne and the Lucerne Art Museum are highly recommended. Lu-

cerne is also home to the country's most popular museum, the Swiss Museum of Transport, where the history of mobility can be traced in an interactive way using a wide variety of exhibits. Various shopping opportunities, especially in the watch and jewelry segments, a large selection of restaurants with specialties from Switzerland and around the world, as well as hotels with a rich history, round off the city's offering perfectly.

The world's largest fleet of nostalgic steamboats operates on Lake Lucerne. The five paddle steamers are around 100 years old, and a high-quality public transportation network connects the city with the surrounding mountains of Mt. Pilatus, Mt. Rigi and Mt. Titlis. Vari-

ous mountain railways, including some record-breaking ones, allow travelers to reach alpine heights in comfort while enjoying the ever-changing views. This charming landscape offers outstanding hiking trails for all fitness levels, and many opportunities for active recreation. Travelers from North America are impressed in particular by the historic old town and enjoy the easy accessibility of the mountains by historic paddle steamers and spectacular mountain railways. The Lucerne-Lake Lucerne Region is ideal for anyone who wants to explore what makes Switzerland so special. Lucerne is Switzerland in a nutshell.

Lucerne-Lake Lucerne Region online: [luzern.com](http://luzern.com) ■

# The Swiss Model for Medtech Innovation

## Swiss-based Medacta leads the charge in redefining orthopedics



The Italian-speaking Swiss Canton of Ticino has the perfect blend of Swiss precision and Italian creativity. From its thriving industrial sector to its burgeoning Medtech cluster and dynamic financial center, Ticino is a hub for innovation, and upcoming advancements in artificial intelligence.

Switzerland has a distinguished reputation as a global leader in medical technology (medtech). Renowned for its unwavering commitment to pioneering solutions, the Swiss medtech ecosystem stands as a testament to a rich heritage of innovation. Fueled by a blend of academic prowess, governmental support, and industry dynamism, Switzerland continues to push the boundaries of possibility, fostering an environment that enables collaborations and groundbreaking advancements. One company blooming within this nurturing atmosphere is Medacta, a Swiss company dedicated to helping doctors improve the care and well-being of orthopedic and spine surgery patients around the world.



**Francesco Siccardi**  
CEO  
Medacta

Switzerland's prominence as a premier medtech hub is underscored by its robust industry presence, boasting over 1,400 companies, and provides employment to 67,500 individuals. These enterprises collectively generate revenue surpassing USD 24 billion per year according to

Swiss Medtech, the association of Swiss medical technology. Francesco Siccardi, CEO of Medacta, an exemplar among the sector's success stories, offered insight into this dynamic ecosystem. He emphasized the paramount importance of collaboration in propelling innovation, affirming, "In Switzerland, there is access to expertise that is second to none."

**"In Switzerland, there is access to expertise that is second to none."**

Much of this expertise stems from the Swiss academic sector, renowned for spearheading global innovation and research efforts. With state-of-the-art facilities and world-renowned researchers, Switzerland's academic institutions offer a fertile ground for interdisciplinary collaboration and the cultivation of emerging talent. By partnering with both local and international corporations, Swiss academia propels cutting-edge technology, shaping the future of scientific discovery in the sector.

Similar to the majority of companies within the sector, Medacta collaborates with other key stakeholders. In general, Swiss medical equipment manufacturers exhibit a staggering preference,

with over 90% opting to engage with a diverse array of partners, including universities, hospitals, and companies from allied sectors like mechanical engineering and pharmaceuticals.

Siccardi expanded, "Historically, Switzerland has heavily focused on innovation. Due to the country's high cost of living, we are forced to be innovative, ensuring we create high-value-added products and services that improve efficiency. For the last several years Switzerland has ranked number one in the world for patent production per capita. Swiss innovation is strongly supported by governmental projects and initiatives. For instance, some research funds are relatively easy to access if you collaborate with local universities, fostering partnership between industry, research centers, and academia."

Switzerland's free trade policies further lay the groundwork for an optimal environment, complemented by strategic governmental initiatives such as Innosuisse, the Swiss Innovation Agency. Innosuisse serves as a catalyst for knowledge transfer, further facilitating valuable partnerships, offering startup coaching, and provides funding for up to half of research project costs for companies partnering with Swiss institutes.

Cohesively collaborating with institutes around the globe, Medacta has led the charge in revolutionizing orthopedic surgery through groundbreaking innovation in the development of orthopedic products and surgical techniques, setting new standards for patient care and surgical outcomes. The company's solutions create highly personalized preoperative planning and implant placement methodologies, including personalized kinematic models and 3D-planning tools for use in hip, knee, shoulder, and spine procedures. Their pioneering techniques reduce surgical incisions and preserve nerves, muscles, and tendons surrounding joints. Their minimally invasive techniques further reduce commonly associated risks of traditional approaches and promote swift recovery.

Reflecting on Medacta's journey since its inception in 1999, Siccardi emphasized, "Medacta is very unique; it was founded by an orthopedic patient whose own experience encouraged him to become a pioneer and discover a new approach to joint replacement. When we

develop new products, our primary goal is to positively transform the patient experience. On top of that, we are committed to ensuring our innovation creates value for the healthcare system, and doesn't increase the overall cost of a preexisting solution. We want to change the way things are done and transition standard orthopedic procedures to minimally invasive procedures, reducing costs, the need for long hospital stays, shortening rehabilitation, and improving patient outcomes."

He continued, "Minimally invasive techniques are one macro-level direction we are spearheading. The second one is personalized medicine - providing tailored tools to individual patients. As healthcare costs in the United States are rapidly growing, there is a need in the orthopedic field to transition surgeries from expensive hospitals to smaller-scale, less expensive, and potentially even better care - ambulatory surgery centers. Our solutions offer minimally invasive, same-day procedures, and more personalized medicine, making healthcare more sustainable, while adding value - an important trend in American healthcare. We are also developing personalized solutions utilizing 3D images, CT scans, and MRIs. With the help of AI, we're able to better identify treatment solutions tailored to each patient's needs. This is an example of imaging management and imaging reconstruction prediction with diagnostics, all supported by AI."

This year marks a significant milestone for Medacta, as it celebrates its 25-year anniversary. Siccardi mentioned, "We will celebrate this benchmark with another important aspect - medical education. The more innovation Medacta brings to the market, the more medical education we will need to provide surgeons and customers. We are hosting informative, educational events this year across the United States, Europe, Australia, and Japan."

As the American market represents 50% of the total addressable global orthopedic market, Siccardi is strategically broadening Medacta's American footprint, and strengthening its network by fostering collaborations with prominent academic centers across the states. In the future, the company strives to keep pushing forward with cutting-edge medical education, innovative technologies, and personalized solutions. ■

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### Tourism Triumphs

Switzerland's tourism industry plays a pivotal role in its economy, attracting millions of visitors annually to its breathtaking landscapes, charming cities, and cultural treasures. Revenue generated from tourism supports local businesses, sustains jobs, and contributes to infrastructure development. Beyond economic benefits, tourism promotes cultural exchange, fosters understanding between nations, and preserves Switzerland's natural and historical heritage.



**Dieter Vranckx**  
CEO  
SWISS

Dieter Vranckx, CEO of Swiss International Air Lines, the leading airline of Switzerland, added, "Switzerland is a small landlocked country so a lot is built around air travel. It's important to connect the country with the rest of the world for both business and leisure purposes. SWISS, Switzerland's leading air carrier, is investing heavily in expanding its network, not only for passengers, but also for cargo worldwide. We currently serve 114 destinations, and have expanded our intercontinental offering this year with new flights to Washington D.C., Toronto and Seoul, which represents a milestone for SWISS. Our purpose is to connect Switzerland sustainably with the world, and ensure we provide premium solutions for our travelers."

Today, Swiss tourism thrives, with the United States serving as the third largest source for overnight stays after local Swiss and German tourists. The number of American tourists visiting Switzerland is at an all-time high, with

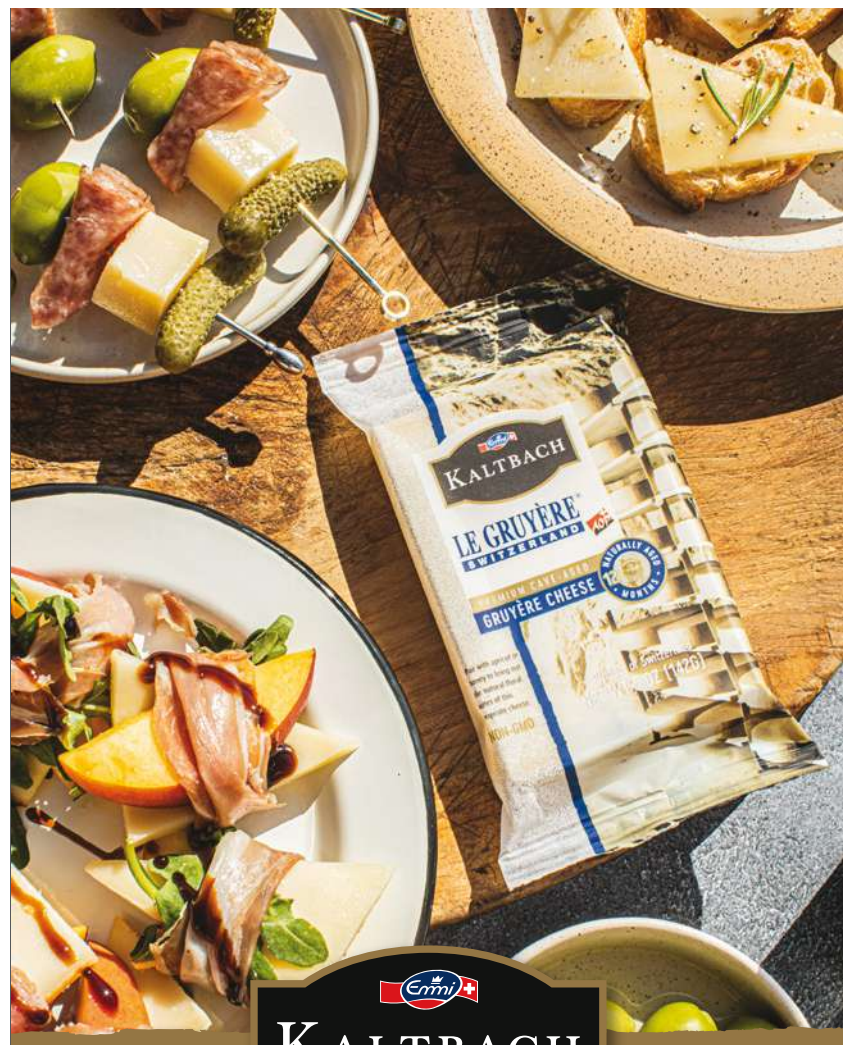
statistics showcasing a sharp increase in American visitors and a doubling in numbers over the last 15 years.



**Marcel Perren**  
CEO  
Luzern Tourism

Marcel Perren, CEO of Luzern Tourism, the organization dedicated to positioning first-class services for the Lucerne-Lake Lucerne Region, stated, "The unparalleled quality of life enjoyed by residents in Switzerland and Lucerne in particular is complemented by the country's spectacular tourism offerings, especially in the pre-Alpine regions. The United States has consistently been a crucial market for Swiss tourism, reflecting a longstanding appreciation for the country's diverse attractions. With post-pandemic tourism evolving, there are notable investments underway to enhance the region's appeal to visitors. There is also a vision for widening the geographical impact of tourism. As a global destination, we're not only offering unforgettable experiences, but also advocating for sustainable and responsible tourism practices."

Residing amidst a backdrop of unparalleled beauty, thriving innovation, and a robust economy, it comes as no surprise that Switzerland consistently ranks among the world's happiest nations. This harmonious mix of natural grandeur and economic prosperity fosters a unique sense of well-being and contentment among its residents. Furthermore, Switzerland's commitment to sustainability initiatives underscores its unwavering dedication to enhancing the lives of its citizens and preserving its remarkable legacy for generations to come. ■



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