

6 – SWITZERLAND AND THE SWISS

In Switzerland it's expected that you participate in its economic, social and cultural life. It's also recommended that you learn about the social conditions in Switzerland and that you learn the language of the part of the country you live in, for example German.

Here's some useful information about Switzerland and the Swiss: Swiss citizens value organisation and punctuality. Streets are usually clean, people have a smooth driving style and stop at red lights. Pedestrians always have right of way. Public transport runs according to a schedule and is punctual.

The Swiss stay polite most of the times and respect each other's privacy: people speak quietly when they're out in public, you rarely hear loud music or the hum of cars and horns. Appointments are arranged in advance and are taken seriously. When you arrive somewhere you can greet someone by saying "Grüezi" and it is even better if accompanied by the name of the person you're talking to. Usually you say "Sie" - the formal "you" – at first. After a while, if both parties agree, you can say "Du" to each other, that is the informal "you".

In Switzerland associations are very common organizational forms for non profit initiatives. The association form gives an initiative a serious character and credibility towards authorities and sponsors. There are several migrants' associations in the region of Basel. You can find many of them at www.integration-bsbl.ch.

Visit the websites www.ch.ch or www.swissworld.org for further information about Switzerland.