



## ONE YEAR IN SWITZERLAND!

YOUTH FOR UNDERSTANDING (YFU) GIVES YOU THE OPPORTUNITY  
TO SPEND A HIGH SCHOOL YEAR IN SWITZERLAND!

YFU IS A NON-PROFIT EDUCATIONAL YOUTH EXCHANGE  
ORGANIZATION WHICH WAS FOUNDED OVER 50 YEARS AGO.  
OUR GOAL IS TO PREPARE YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THEIR  
RESPONSIBILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES  
IN A CHANGING AND INTERDEPENDENT WORLD.

[WWW.YFU.CH](http://WWW.YFU.CH)



## LIFE IN SWITZERLAND

SWITZERLAND IS LOCATED IN THE HEART OF EUROPE, SURROUNDED BY GERMANY, FRANCE, ITALY, AUSTRIA AND LIECHTENSTEIN. ITS POPULATION IS APPROXIMATELY 7.5 MILLION. THE BIGGEST CITIES IN SWITZERLAND ARE ZUERICH, BASEL, GENEVA, BERN, LAUSANNE – AND WHILE THESE CITIES ARE RELATIVELY SMALL COMPARED TO OTHER EUROPEAN CENTERS, THEY STILL HAVE AN INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE.

In addition to these urban centres, you will find many rural areas in Switzerland: snowy mountains, rolling green hills and clear blue lakes offer almost unlimited possibilities for outdoor activities. The climate in Switzerland can vary, though we usually experience hot summers (up to 30°C) and rather cold and snowy winters (approx. 0°C). A well-known particularity of Switzerland is that we have not one but four national languages: German, French, Italian and Rhaeto-Romanic. As an exchange student to Switzerland, you will be placed in either the German or the French speaking part of the country and you will learn the language spoken in your area, depending on your preference. Note that the (spoken) Swiss German differs from the (written) standard German, though as an exchange student you will soon get used to both language varieties.



## HOST FAMILY LIFE IN SWITZERLAND

THERE IS NOT REALLY A TYPICAL SWISS FAMILY: SWISS FAMILIES COME IN MANY SHAPES AND SIZES. HOWEVER, MORE OFTEN THAN NOT THEY ARE SMALL, WITH BETWEEN ONE AND THREE CHILDREN, AND CLOSELY KNIT. GRANDPARENTS OFTEN LIVE NEARBY, BUT SELDOM IN THE SAME HOUSE.

A majority of Swiss families have pets at home: dogs, cats, birds, fish etc. Common meals are an important fixture in the daily routine of many Swiss families. Dinner is usually enjoyed in the family circle. This is a perfect opportunity for family members to share ideas, to make plans for the weekend or the holidays and to discuss problems. As an exchange student you might as well have the opportunity to join your host family for walks, cultural events, hikes or even longer trips to discover the beautiful Swiss landscape. Incidentally, the public transport system in Switzerland is very well developed, which will allow you to explore different parts of the country.





# SCHOOL LIFE IN SWITZERLAND

**AS AN EXCHANGE STUDENT, YOU WILL PROBABLY ATTEND A GYMNASIUM/COLLÈGE – A SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS WAITING TO GO ON TO UNIVERSITY. A GYMNASIUM/COLLÈGE USUALLY ENCOMPASSES GRADES 7/8-12. AT THE END OF GRADE 12, STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO TAKE A FINAL EXAM.**

Gymnasium/Collège classes are very academic: The basic curriculum usually includes Mathematics, French, English, German, Italian, Latin, Science, Geography, History, Art and Physical Education. In addition to this, students are able to choose from a wide variety of optional classes.

Since schools in Switzerland do not offer many extracurricular activities, teenagers often join clubs outside school. The choices are usually manifold. In almost every town, there are a variety of sports and arts clubs, as well as choirs and bands.

In Switzerland, teenagers often go out on Saturday nights and during holidays. Most probably, you and your new Swiss friends will go to the movies, parties, cafés, bars, concerts, the theater or you will gather at somebody's house to cook and eat together, to chat or to watch a movie.

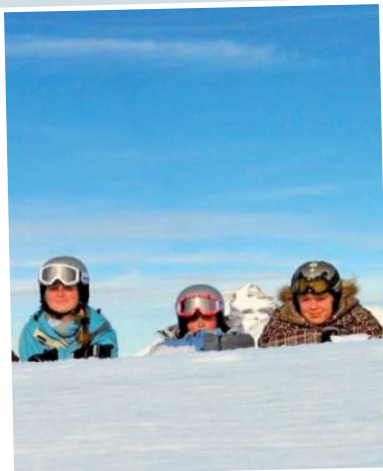




## YFU ACTIVITIES

**DURING YOUR YEAR IN SWITZERLAND, YOU WILL HAVE MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET OTHER EXCHANGE STUDENTS. THERE WILL BE EVENTS IN YOUR REGION, AS WELL AS THREE MAJOR EVENTS FOR ALL EXCHANGE STUDENTS STAYING IN SWITZERLAND. ALL YFU EVENTS IN SWITZERLAND ARE ORGANIZED BY YFU VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE FORMER PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS THEMSELVES.**

About two months after your arrival in Switzerland you will participate in a five-day camp that will give you the opportunity to spend some time with other YFU exchange students, reflecting on your experience so far and getting ready for the upcoming months. In January, the YFU ski camp takes place - a great opportunity for you to spend an unforgettable week with your new friends while working on cross-cultural skills and having lots of fun on the snowy hills and slopes. Towards the end of the exchange year, everyone will gather one more time to think about how to say goodbye and to look back on the past. This will be one more opportunity for you to spend a great time with your new friends from all over the world...



### ARE YOU CURIOUS?

GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR  
LOCAL YFU ORGANIZATION  
ON [WWW.YFU.ORG](http://WWW.YFU.ORG)



YFU Switzerland wants to get to know  
you and is looking forward to welcoming  
you in the heart of Europe!