

WHY SWITZERLAND SHOULD BE YOUR NEXT CONFERENCE DESTINATION

**A Strategic Report for Associations
and Membership Bodies**

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MEMBERSHIP WORLD CO.UK
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Switzerland has long held a reputation as one of the most desirable and reliable destinations for international gatherings. For associations and membership organisations, hosting a conference in Switzerland means aligning with values of innovation, neutrality, sustainability, and operational excellence. This report highlights the country's strategic advantages, infrastructure, and support systems that make it an optimal location for annual general meetings, summits, or congresses.

With world-class venues, direct global connectivity, and multilingual capabilities, Switzerland enables international associations to reach global audiences in a secure and welcoming environment. In this report, we detail why Switzerland is uniquely positioned to host association events of all scales, provide cost-mitigation strategies, and explore opportunities for academic, technological, and cultural alignment.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR EVENT ORGANISERS:

- Access to first-class venues and transport systems
- Political neutrality and safety
- Tailored support from national and local convention bureaus
- Sustainability leadership
- Opportunities for content enrichment and delegate engagement

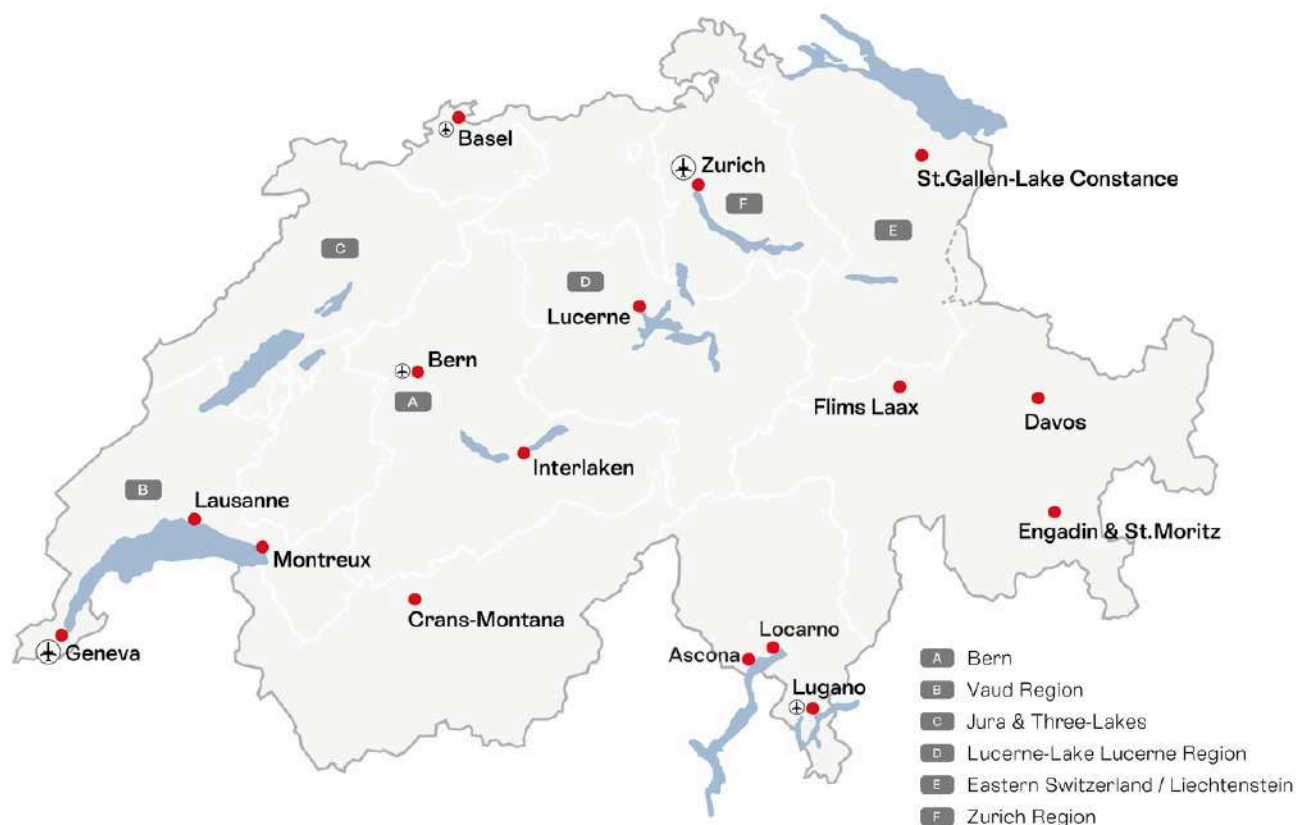
STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES OF SWITZERLAND

A. NEUTRAL AND INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION

Switzerland is home to globally significant organisations such as the United Nations, World Health Organisation, and the World Economic Forum. Its long-standing neutrality and commitment to diplomacy make it the perfect place for politically unbiased, globally inclusive meetings.

B. ACCESSIBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

Located in the heart of Europe, Switzerland is reachable within a few hours from almost anywhere in Europe. Major international airports in Zurich, Geneva, and Basel offer seamless global access. The Swiss travel system provides reliable and efficient rail connections throughout the country. For many delegates, visas are simple or not required, enhancing accessibility.



C. SAFETY AND STABILITY

Consistently ranked among the safest countries in the world, Switzerland boasts low crime rates, political stability, and one of the best healthcare systems globally. These factors provide peace of mind for organisers and attendees alike.

D. WORLD-CLASS CONFERENCE INFRASTRUCTURE

Switzerland hosts an impressive range of venues to suit any association's needs:

Palexpo Geneva: Ideal for large-scale trade shows and congresses

Congress Center Basel: One of Europe's most modern and spacious venues

Zurich Convention Center: Versatile, tech-forward spaces

Numerous boutique venues for board retreats and leadership summits can be found in Switzerland.

The country also leads in hybrid and virtual conference solutions, supported by its advanced digital infrastructure.



E. SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP

Switzerland is a pioneer in sustainable tourism and green meetings:

- Many venues are Swisstainable certified
- Free public transportation locally in most destinations when staying in a hotel
- Carbon offset programmes are widely offered
- Cities like Zurich and Lausanne regularly rank among the world's most environmentally conscious

Case Study: In April 2025, the Switzerland Convention & Incentive Bureau organised a “Go Sustainable” study trip from London to Switzerland for 35 participants. The aim was to showcase sustainability in all its dimensions and to demonstrate how travelling as a group by train can turn the journey itself into a meaningful part of the networking experience.

The trip was a close collaboration with Eurostar, TGV Lyria, and the Convention Bureaus of Lucerne and Zurich. Every aspect of the programme was designed with sustainability at its core: no flights, no meat, sustainable venues, and zero-waste workshops. This commitment resulted in carbon savings of over 90% compared to flying. Notably, both Lucerne and Zurich are recognised leaders in the Swisstainable initiative by Switzerland Tourism.



F. INNOVATION, EDUCATION AND SECTOR ALIGNMENT

Switzerland's strength in **life sciences, AI, cleantech, pharma, and banking** creates countless collaboration opportunities. Many associations align their agendas with leading local universities and research centres such as:

- ETH Zurich (AI, robotics, engineering)
- University of Geneva (global health, diplomacy)
- EPFL Lausanne (innovation, sustainability)

These connections enable speaker sourcing, industry site visits, and meaningful academic partnerships.

A scenic view of a Swiss city, likely Geneva, featuring a large church with two prominent towers and a boat on the water in the foreground. The text 'G. INCENTIVES AND SUPPORT FOR ASSOCIATIONS' is overlaid on the top left.

G. INCENTIVES AND SUPPORT FOR ASSOCIATIONS

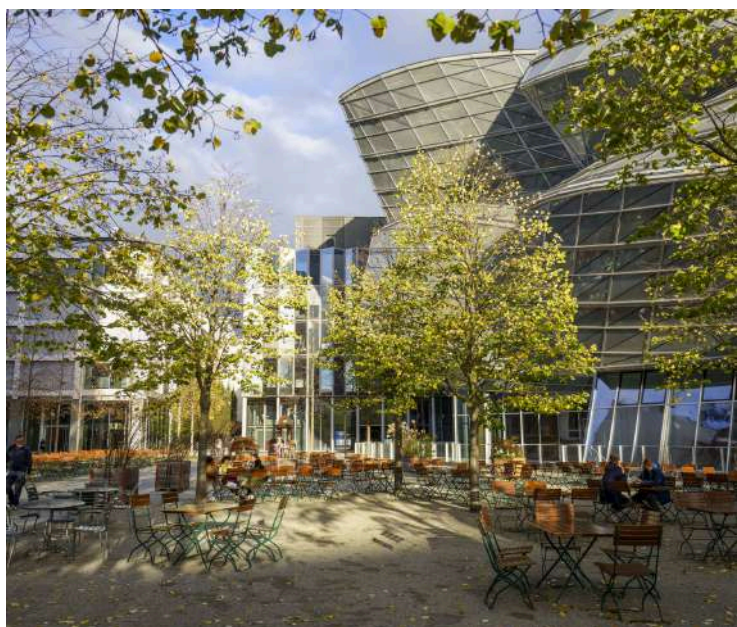
The Switzerland Convention & Incentive Bureau (SCIB) and regional convention bureaus provide a wide range of free services:

- Proposal and bid support
- Venue recommendations and introductions
- Assistance with delegate experiences and social programmes
- Financial support or hosting grants in some cases

Convention Bureaus focussing on association meetings:

- Basel Convention Bureau
- Geneva Convention Bureau
- Zurich Convention Bureau
- Lausanne-Montreux Congress

Other destinations such as Bern, Davos, Interlaken, Lucerne, Lugano, and St Gallen do also offer similar services and are open hosting meetings of associations.



46th Annual Conference of the International Society for Clinical Biostatistics

24 - 28 August 2025, Basel, 800 PAX

[READ MORE](#)

48th IHF World Hospital Congress

10 - 13 November 2025, Geneva, 1500 PAX

[READ MORE](#)

European Geothermal Congress

6 - 10 October 2025, Zürich, 1000 PAX

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READ MORE SUCCESS STORIES:

[SWITZERLAND SUCCESS STORIES](#)

The background image shows a modern building with a glass facade and a curved walkway by a river. The building is tall and rectangular, with a grid-like pattern of windows. The walkway is paved with dark asphalt and has a curved concrete wall on the left side. The river is calm, and the sky is blue with some clouds. In the distance, there are other buildings and hills.

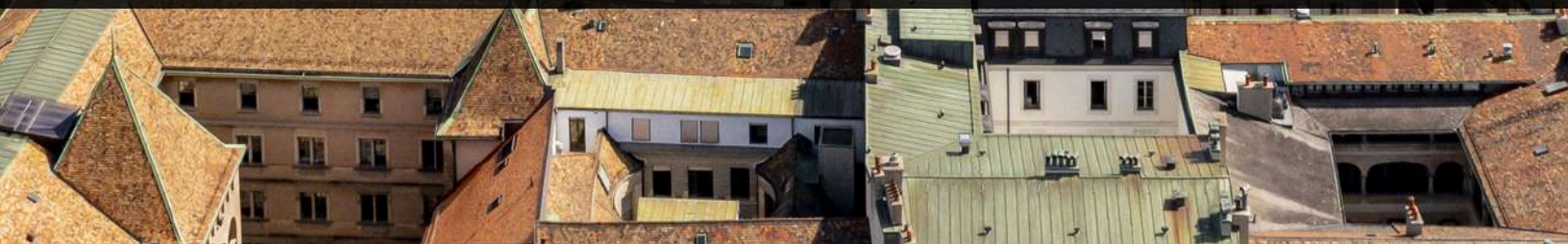
"Switzerland delivered excellence at every touchpoint — from logistics to delegate satisfaction."

Anna M., Event Director, International Medical Congress



“For many reasons, obviously Geneva is a premium location from a geography point, logistic standpoint, or infrastructural standpoint for organizing international multi-companies events.”

Gilles Andrier, CEO Givaudan, World Perfumery Congress 2024



“I would not have better words than, excitement and sensational atmosphere here in Basel.”

Dr. Raed Al Dieri, Director General, European Society of Pathology, 34th European Congress of Pathology

“Our members were especially delighted that Zurich is a city that’s easy to explore on foot. People mentioned how much they appreciated how quick and easy it was to get to the city from the airport.”

Fanny Senez, AIJA 2021 Zurich: International Young Lawyers’ Congress



I. COST CONSIDERATIONS

Switzerland has a premium reputation, but costs can be managed effectively.

TIPS FOR COST-EFFICIENCY:

- Plan for touristic shoulder season (March, October)
- Include SBB Congress Tickets into your delegate fee to cover transportation from any Swiss border or Airport to your congress destination
- Work with the local Convention Bureaus to access subsidised services

Example:

Mid-size 3-day conference (300 delegates) in Bern:

Venue and AV:
£30,800

Catering:
£110 per
delegate/day

Accommodation
(3 nights)
£528 per delegate



J. CULTURAL AND DELEGATE APPEAL

Switzerland's multilingualism (German, French, Italian, English) makes communication seamless. It also offers unforgettable post-event experiences:

- Alpine excursions, lake cruises, historic towns
- World-class museums, music festivals, gourmet dining
- Opportunities for informal networking in scenic settings

Switzerland Convention & Incentive Bureau encourages delegates to extend their stay in Switzerland to explore the beautiful nature and diverse cultural offerings.

Whether it's an outdoor adventure, relaxing hours of sweet idleness or a visit to one of the renowned museums – there is always a reason to extend your business trip and make your trip more sustainable.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Switzerland offers a strategic, safe, and sustainable solution for associations looking to elevate their events. Its unique combination of neutrality, global connectivity, and sector alignment ensures maximum impact for every gathering. Event organisers are strongly encouraged to consider Switzerland for their next annual congress, leadership summit, or educational conference.





TYPICAL WEATHER OVERVIEW BY MONTH

METEOSWISS CLIMATE REPORT

SWITZERLAND CLIMATE FACTS



SAMPLE PLANNING TIMELINE

12–18 months out: Define goals, secure venue, prepare bid

9–12 months out: Confirm speakers, partnerships, accommodation

6 months out: Open registration, finalise AV/logistics

1–2 months out: Marketing push, site visit, contingency planning

VENUE COMPARISON TABLE

Venue	Capacity	Capacity	Notable Events
Palexpo Geneva	2,000+	Geneva	Medical Congress, Watches & Wonders
Congress Center Basel	3,000+	Basel	Pharma & Chemical Summits
Davos Congress Centre	1,800	Davos	World Economic Forum
CICG Geneva	2,200	Geneva	UN & NGO conferences
Zurich Convention Centre	1,100+	Zurich	Financial Summits

