



# Integrated Country Strategy

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## Switzerland and Liechtenstein

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## **1. Chief of Mission Priorities**

Embassy Bern's first strategic priority directly supports the President's directive in the National Security Strategy to Promote American Prosperity. Switzerland is a key partner for the United States in creating a more prosperous and secure world. Switzerland is the 19th largest global economy, the 7th-largest investor into the U.S., and a top 15 trading partner. Total bilateral trade in goods and services exceeds \$100 billion annually. Switzerland is number one worldwide in private wealth management and holds significant further unexplored potential for investment in the U.S., particularly from small and medium sized enterprises. As the number one R&D investor into the U.S., Switzerland plays an important role in fostering economic innovation. The size, growth, and potential of the U.S. market, and the opportunities it provides for Swiss expansion beyond the EU market contribute to the appeal of the United States as an investment destination for Swiss companies. The economic environment between the U.S. and Switzerland has been more favorable and has shown more potential than in many recent years. Mission Bern, therefore, seeks to promote shared prosperity by leveraging the opportunities within the Swiss-U.S. bilateral relationship to increase foreign direct investment, trade and stringently vetted travel, and by improving U.S. workforce development via Swiss-style apprenticeship programs, fulfilling the President's mission to increase U.S. jobs and prosperity.

Our two countries share foreign policy goals that emphasize the importance of strategic partnerships on global security themes. Switzerland is a well-resourced, sophisticated, and engaged peer and partner in addressing transnational security challenges, including nuclear weapons proliferation, organized crime, preventing violent extremism, and counter-terrorism and terrorism finance. There has been increasing interest in cooperation on addressing geopolitical security threats, including cyber threats.

Strengthening collaboration on shared security and global development, particularly in the area of cybersecurity, ties directly into the President's National Security Strategy pillar to Protect the American People, the Homeland, and the American Way of Life. This is why our second top priority is to deepen and broaden our robust bi- and multilateral cooperation on security issues, including on terror finance, PVE, and foreign fighters. We also aim to conclude a defense cooperation agreement in 2018 and are encouraging expanded military and law enforcement training, and the Swiss acquisition of first-rate U.S. Defense materials.

The third of the Mission's highest priorities is to continue to protect America's security at home and abroad by delivering efficient and effective consular services in the interests of U.S. citizens in Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Iran that prioritize the security of the United States borders. We seek to accomplish this goal by continuing to strengthen relationships with Swiss and Liechtensteiner authorities as we expand formal and informal information sharing for visa vetting and by advocating for and protecting U.S. Citizens using a multi-pronged dynamic outreach strategy to increase efficiency and encourage two-way communication.

Switzerland's direct democracy, neutrality, and non-EU/NATO membership status remain a source of opportunity and challenge in this unique operating environment—specifically when it comes to the challenge of engaging the entire population, most of whom vote quarterly on matters frequently of

interest to the United States. Embassy Bern's strengths lie in its motivated, high-functioning staff and its close working relationships with Swiss and Liechtenstein counterparts, while the Embassy's lean staffing pattern remains a roadblock to full engagement.

Mission Bern is committed to these goals and objectives and will implement them strategically using carefully thought-out action plans, reviewed by, and approved by each section and agency leader to ensure complete engagement across the Embassy. We will review and reassess these action plans annually as a Country Team and make adjustments to our methods and strategies after analyzing our approaches and capturing lessons learned.

## 2. Mission Strategic Framework

**Mission Goal 1:** Promote mutual prosperity through increased trade and investment between the United States and Switzerland/Liechtenstein.

**Mission Objective 1.1:** Develop partnerships in public, private, and nonprofit sectors across Switzerland and Liechtenstein to promote investment into the U.S. market and cultivate a mutually beneficial environment for new U.S.-Swiss trade opportunities.

**Mission Objective 1.2:** Further assist development of Swiss-style apprenticeships in the United States, which will advance U.S. workforce readiness, increase U.S. prosperity, and further U.S. attractiveness for Swiss investment.

**Mission Goal 2:** Strengthen U.S.-Switzerland/Liechtenstein security partnerships to address transnational and global threats to peace and prosperity.

**Mission Objective 2.1:** Deepen security cooperation on cyber, counter terrorism, crisis preparedness, and defensive training operations, including coming to closure on a Status of Forces-like Agreement with Switzerland to enable U.S. Department of Defense operations and exercises with the Swiss.

**Mission Objective 2.2:** Support Swiss acquisition of first-rate American defense materials as win/win deal for Swiss security and the American economy.

**Mission Goal 3:** Deliver consular services efficiently and effectively to protect the lives and serve the interests of U.S. citizens in Switzerland, Liechtenstein, and Iran and prioritize the security of the United States.

**Mission Objective 3.1:** Continue to strengthen relationships with Swiss and Liechtensteiner authorities as we expand formal and informal information sharing on identity and citizenship documents as part of rigorous visa vetting.

**Mission Objective 3.2:** Advocate for and protect U.S. citizens in Switzerland and Iran using a multi-pronged dynamic outreach strategy to increase efficiency, strengthen connections to the Department, and encourage two-way communication.

**Management Objective 1:** Ensure a safe, supportive, productive, and inclusive workplace while ensuring effective operations and accountability to the U.S. taxpayer.

**Management Objective 1.1:** Regularize Bern's outdated and onerous Living Quarters Allowance housing model to a Department-standard leased housing pool model in order to meet Department-mandated residential security standards and improve employee efficiency and productivity.

**Management Objective 1.2:** Support accountability and management and fraud prevention controls through expanded use of technology.

### 3. Mission Goals and Objectives

**Mission Goal 1:** Promote mutual prosperity through increased trade and investment between the United States and Switzerland/Liechtenstein.

**Description and Linkages:** Switzerland and Liechtenstein are ready and able to deepen the economic relationship with the United States. Achieving this mission goal will make significant progress toward attaining both the State/USAID Joint Strategic Plan's and the National Security Strategy's aims to renew America's competitive advantage for sustained economic growth and job creation, thereby promoting American prosperity. These deepening ties also positively affect other mutual areas of collaboration.

**Mission Objective 1.1:** Develop partnerships in public, private, and nonprofit sectors across Switzerland and Liechtenstein to promote investment into the U.S. market and cultivate a mutually beneficial environment for new U.S.-Swiss trade opportunities.

**Justification:** Swiss companies are already the seventh largest source of investment (FDI) into the United States; significant additional potential exists. Post will continue to attract investment including through outreach to large corporations. Post will also increase its outreach to small-to-medium sized enterprises (SMEs), which drive the Swiss economy and make up over 90% of Swiss exporting companies. Swiss SMEs offer the potential of bringing high-value production to the United States, bringing the production closer to their customer base (the United States is Switzerland's #2 export destination after neighboring EU) while creating U.S. jobs. Further, Post will endeavor to include at least one company from Liechtenstein in the next Select USA Summit.

**Mission Objective 1.2:** Further assist development of Swiss-style apprenticeships in the United States, which will advance U.S. workforce readiness, increase U.S. prosperity, and further U.S. attractiveness for Swiss investment.

**Justification:** In line with an Administration priority, Post, together with colleagues at the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Education, Labor, and State, will develop a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on apprenticeship cooperation with Switzerland to capitalize on the Swiss desire to share their best practices regarding their long and successful experience with business-driven apprenticeships. On the apprentices' side, an average starting salary for a VET graduate in the commercial sector is about \$50,000 a year, and if they choose to pursue post-VET education in higher technical or commercial schools, they can earn close to \$100,000. Swiss cooperation could help the United States to expand the range of apprenticeships beyond manufacturing to include services and financial services (e.g., banking, insurance). An expanded and business-driven U.S. apprenticeship system could develop the U.S. workforce by providing future workers with the skills businesses need, creating a better match between supply and demand of skilled workers and jobs. A ready workforce would also serve as a further inducement to attract companies to invest in facilities in the United States. There is significant U.S. state-level interest in this system.

**Mission Goal 2:** Strengthen U.S.-Switzerland/Liechtenstein security partnerships to address transnational and global threats to peace and prosperity.

**Description and Linkages:** Partnerships with friend and ally nations are key in detecting, deterring, and defending our people from threats both man-made and natural. Strengthening and deepening these partnerships are paramount in fulfilling the State/USAID Joint Strategic Plan to protect American's Security at Home and Abroad and the President's National Security Strategy pillar to Protect the American People, the Homeland, and the American Way of Life; and like stronger economic ties, stronger security collaboration increases security for the United States.

**Mission Objective 2.1:** Deepen security cooperation on cyber, counter terrorism, crisis preparedness, and defensive training operations, including coming to closure on a Status of Forces-like agreement with Switzerland to enable U.S. Department of Defense operations and exercises with the Swiss.

**Justification:** Switzerland confronts many of the same challenges as the United States; enhancing our cooperation is in our national interest. Increasing our security cooperation on cyber issues can directly improve the environment for U.S. businesses and individuals located in Switzerland and will improve the cyber environment as a whole when we cooperate on third-country cyber issues. Similarly, the threat of terrorism knows no national boundaries, and increased cooperation on both the policy and operational level can reduce the threat to the United States, our citizens and our allies. A Status of Forces-like Agreement with Switzerland will allow for enhanced training opportunities for both our countries. Enhancing Switzerland's preparation for crises serves our interest in protecting the relatively large number of American Citizens who reside in and visit Switzerland each year.

**Mission Objective 2.2:** Support Swiss acquisition of first-rate American defense materials as win/win deal for Swiss security and the American economy.

**Justification:** The Swiss military has established a formalized process which will select a new fighter aircraft and ground-based radar to replace an aging fleet and equipment and to keep pace with partner and neighboring air forces who are doing the same. Estimated at 8 billion CHF, it is the largest acquisition in Swiss military history, something which will keep the attention of each Swiss voter as the country begins to have debates regarding the way forward to modernize the Air Force as the government considers 5 competitor aircraft, two of which are manufactured by the American companies of Lockheed and Boeing. Through its conduits in the Defense Attaché and Defense Cooperation offices, Post will continue to lobby the Swiss Ministry of Defense for robust yet equal access for both companies during a time that promises to include stiff competition from the other companies vying to win the contract. Post will also engage with the appropriate program offices, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) as well as the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) to facilitate host nation test and evaluation requirements in order to put both American companies on the surest and most competitive footing.

**Mission Goal 3:** Deliver consular services efficiently and effectively to protect the lives and serve the interests of U.S. citizens in Switzerland, Liechtenstein, and Iran while prioritizing the security of the United States.

**Description and Linkages:** Ensuring the safety and welfare of U.S. citizens living or traveling overseas is the primary responsibility of all U.S. diplomatic missions, while promoting legitimate travel to the U.S. is critical in supporting educational, professional and cultural exchanges, tourism, economic growth and innovation. Accomplishing Mission Goal 3 helps to not only support and promote security and economic endeavors of the Administration at all levels, but also helps advance American Influence and Balanced Engagement.

**Mission Objective 3.1:** Continue to strengthen relationships with the Swiss and Liechtensteiner authorities as we expand formal and informal sharing on identity and citizenship documents as part of rigorous visa vetting.

**Justification:** In today's world, extreme vetting is a necessary part of consular work. One of the Mission's highest priorities is protecting America's security at home and abroad by supporting consular programs that protect American borders. Here in Switzerland, the Consular Section offers visa services to third country nationals from countries posing national security concerns. We also process passport and other applications for the Swiss Protecting Power office in Tehran. As a result, it is necessary to collaborate regularly with local and international law enforcement. Continuing to strengthen these relationships mean better information and a more secure United States.

**Mission Objective 3.2:** Advocate for and protect U.S. citizens in Switzerland and Iran using a multi-pronged dynamic outreach strategy to increase efficiency, strengthen connections to the Department, and encourage two-way communication.

**Justification:** The safety and security of U.S. citizens is the Department's highest priority. To ensure we are delivering the best service possible to U.S. citizens, it is crucial for the Consular section to streamline crisis management strategies with Swiss law enforcement and emergency service contacts. By improving communication and efficiency, the Embassy will be able to assist more citizens faster.

## 4. Management Objectives

**Management Objective 1.1:** Regularize Bern's outdated and onerous Living Quarters Allowance housing model to a Department-standard leased housing pool model in order to meet Department-mandated residential security standards and improve employee efficiency and productivity.

**Justification:** U.S. Embassy Bern is the only 100% LQA post in the EUR bureau, and one of only two fully LQA posts remaining in the entire world. Transitioning to the Department-standard housing pool model will (1) incentivize landlords to lower lease costs since Post will offer attractive longer lease terms; (2) give Post greater control to ensure implementation of Department-required safety upgrades in all residences; and (3) ensure that funding for safety measures is received and upgrades are implemented before move-in. Embassy Bern will work with the EUR Bureau, the Office of Overseas Building Operations, and the ICASS councils at Post and in Washington to gain support. Once full approval is received, implementation will be gradual over a period of three to four years. By remaining on the LQA model, Bern employees are subject to additional safety and security risks in their housing, and the Bern Management section anticipates a continually increasing investment of time and resources to maintain the outdated program model.

**Management Objective 1.2:** Increase productivity, support accountability and enhance and strengthen management and fraud prevention throughout the Mission.

**Justification:** As stewards of taxpayer dollars, Embassy Bern's Management takes very seriously their duty to uphold standards of efficiency and accountability. In an expensive operating environment like Switzerland, identifying efficiencies and increasing productivity allow the Mission to do more with its limited budget. Strengthening management controls ensure that our efforts do not get diverted by fraud, waste, or mismanagement.