

Mission Atlas Project

Switzerland

Basic Facts

Name: The official name is the Swiss Confederation, but Switzerland is also known by the names *Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft* (in German), *Confederation Suisse* (in French), and *Confederazione Svizzera* (in Italian). Their Latin name of *Helvetia* is used on all Swiss coins and stamps.

Population: The estimated 2001 total population is 7,283,274 people. The population is expected to rise to 7,602,762 (+0.18%) by 2010 but decline to 7,586,992 (-0.10%) by 2025. Presently, 68% of the Swiss population reside in urban areas. The population age breakdown is 23% between ages 0 – 19, 28.9% between 20-39, 32.7% age 40-64, 11.3% age 65-79, and 4.1% are 80 or above. (See Chart at end of the Report) The life expectancy for a male in Switzerland is 76.85 years and a female 82.76 years.

Area: Total of 41,290 sq km with 1,520 sq km of inland water. Switzerland is divided into three main geographical areas. These are the Swiss Alps, the Jura Mountains, and the Swiss Plateau. These two mountainous regions make up 65% Switzerland's total land area. The Swiss Plateau between the mountains contains 80% of the country's population.

Economy: The Gross Domestic Product was US\$207 billion (est. 2000) with an annual growth rate of 2%. This equates to a GDP per person of US\$28,600. They also currently have an inflation rate of 2%. The major industries in Switzerland include banking, insurance, pharmaceuticals, precision instruments, and tourism. Switzerland now has more jobs than their current population can fill, so 1/5 of their labor force is comprised of people from other countries. Their major trading partners are EU countries (particularly Germany, France, Italy, and the United Kingdom), Japan, and the United States.

Switzerland lacks many natural resources, forcing them to import such raw materials as iron ore, coal, and petroleum. Crops are raised on only 10% of Switzerland's total land and 28% of the land is used for grazing, but only during the summer months. Much of the cattle present in Switzerland are used to produce cheeses for export. Forests comprise 32% of the land of Switzerland, but the forests are being damaged from increased air pollution. The rivers are used for hydro-electric power and five nuclear plants supply the countries remaining power needs.

Government: Switzerland is a federal republic based upon the Swiss Constitution of 1848, which was later revised in 1874. Their capital city is located at Bern. Political power is divided between the central government and the 26 cantonal (state) governments. Each canton has its own laws, parliament, and courts. Each canton also has control over the educational system, social services, and controls their own police force.

The people have considerable involvement in the government through referendum and initiative. A referendum allows the people to vote on the laws passed by the legislature, if 50,000 people request the vote. An initiative allows the people to bring an issue before the voters and must be requested by at least 100,000 citizens. Switzerland was one of the last countries in Europe, except for Liechtenstein, to grant women the right to vote. Women were granted the right to vote in 1971 and equality for men and women was adopted into the constitution in 1981.

Switzerland has a number of different political parties. Since 1959, the four largest groups have controlled the Federal Assembly, the legislative branch of government. These are the Christian Democratic, Radical Democratic, and Social Democratic parties and the Swiss People's Party. The Federal Assembly is divided into two chambers. The National Council represents the people and the Council of States represents the cantons.

The Swiss Constitution states that, "every Swiss male is obligated to do military service." Each Swiss male must serve in the military for 330 days over a 22-year period between ages 20 – 42. Switzerland operates under a militia style defense. In case of war, these citizen soldiers are activated. In case of war, 360,000 soldiers can be mobilized in a matter of days. Switzerland has maintained a strict policy of neutrality and therefore has not joined any military treaty organization such as NATO.

Society: Switzerland has one of the world's highest standards of living. Children must attend school, but age limits vary from canton to canton. Most cantons require that children attend school from the ages of 6 – 14. Students who desire to go to the university then pick between three types of high schools. One trains them in Greek and Latin, the second focuses on the modern languages, and the third focuses on math and science. Other students, not wishing to attend the university, attend trade or technical schools and learn a trade as an apprentice. The Swiss have won more Nobel Prizes and registered more patents per capita than any other country.

Sports are an important aspect of Swiss life. Due to their proximity to the mountains, about 1/3 of the Swiss people ski. They also enjoy hiking, camping, and bobsledding. Due to the requirement of men to join the military, target shooting is very popular with competitions held often. Other activities that the Swiss enjoy include bicycling, boating, gymnastics, soccer, swimming, and wrestling.

Most Swiss people marry later in life. The average age of marriage for a man is 30.8 and 28.2 for women. Much of Swiss life revolves around their finances; therefore, many wait to marry in order to concentrate on their careers first. Once married, due to the cost of living and lack of childcare, the average Swiss family only has one or two children. The average of women per children is 1.27. Switzerland has a higher rate of both marriage and divorce than elsewhere in Europe. The divorce rate in 1999 was 37%. Most Swiss couples live together first and marry just before the birth of their first child. Switzerland does have a lower rate of babies born out of wedlock than other European countries, in 1998, this accounted for 8.8% of all live births.

Source of Statistics: http://www.schweiz-in-sicht.ch/en/3_bev/3_fs.html

Language: Switzerland endorses German, French, and Italian as their three official languages and all national laws are published in these three languages. Switzerland's highest court, The Federal Tribunal, must have representatives from each language group. German is the largest language group comprising 63.7% of the population. French is second with 19.2% of the population and Italian speakers compose 7.6%. In addition to the three principle languages, some 50,000 or 0.6% of the total population in the canton of Graubunden also speak Romansch.

The German that is spoken in Switzerland is called *Schwyzerdutsch* (Swiss German) or called Allemannisch in Austria and Alsatian in France. This Swiss German is unlike standard German and varies from canton to canton. This variety among cantons is used to maintain borders of regions or cantons and even functions to keep one village different from another.

Other languages spoken include Lombard (a form of Italian) and Romani (a Gypsy language). For the deaf, there are Swiss-French, Swiss-German, and Swiss-Italian sign languages.

Urbanization: The largest cities in Switzerland are Zurich (343,045 people), Basel (176,220), Geneva (171,744), Bern (129,423), and Lausanne (117,153). The urbanization rate is 68%.

Literacy: 99% of the people over the age of 15 are literate.

Religion: Switzerland has freedom of religion. Roman Catholics comprise 46.1% of the population (3,261,000), Protestants 40% (3,016,000), other Christian groups 2.5% (174,000), Islam 3.10% (228,957), Judaism 0.3% (17,726) *Joshua Project lists 10,000 Jews total*, Baha'i (0.19% (7386)), Buddhist 0.18% (7800), and other Religious groups 1.80% (132,943) Around 8.9% (605,628) report non-religious/other. Of the 26 cantons in Switzerland, 15 claim a Roman Catholic majority and the remaining 11 claim a Protestant majority.

Although the number of Protestants appears to be high, in a survey conducted in 2000, only 16% of Swiss people ranked religion as "very important" to them. This ranked below family, jobs, sports, and culture. Another survey found that church attendance has dropped 10% over the last 10 years.

Of the Catholics, 38.5% said that they do not attend church and 50.7% of the Protestants responded as not attending church. One survey found that 71% of the people that responded believed in God.

Other religious groups are present in Switzerland for a variety of reasons and in differing patterns. The Jewish population, for example, resides primarily in the major

urban centers. The Muslim influence is due to the Turkish migrant workers and from recent Bosnian and Kurdish refugees. Of the 7800 Buddhists are included some 500 refugees from Tibet. The Dalai Lama has assigned many Gelukpa and Sakyapa lamas to the Tibet Institute of Rikon near Zurich. Also, there is the European Institute for Buddhist Studies located in Geneva.

Brief History of Switzerland

A Celtic group of people called the *Helvetians* originally lived in the area of Switzerland. The Roman army under the command of Julius Caesar conquered this group in 58 B.C. This region became known as the Roman province of *Helvetia*. The Alemanni and the Burgundians, two Germanic tribes, settled in this region in A.D. 400. The Franks, another Germanic tribe, defeated these tribes in A.D. 500 and later became powerful under Charlemagne until dividing up in 800's.

Switzerland's next segment of history was its incorporation into the Holy Roman Empire in AD 962. All of modern day Switzerland was incorporated by the year 1033. By the 1200's, the powerful Hapsburg family had gained control over much of Switzerland. The three cantons of Schwyz, Uri, and Unterwalden signed the Perpetual Covenant in August 1291. They agreed to defend each other against Rudolf I, the first Hapsburg to rule the Holy Roman Empire. This Perpetual Covenant was the beginning of the Swiss Confederation. The Confederation became known as Switzerland, named after the canton of Schwyz. Since the Hapsburgs ruled Austria, the Swiss fought several wars against Austrian forces defeating them several times. In some cases, they defeated armies many times greater than their own.

Switzerland became a strong military power during the 1400's and began a policy of expansion. In 1512 and 1513, the Swiss drove the French out of lands in northern Italy. Switzerland controlled these lands for 300 years before finally admitting this land into the federation. In 1515, the Swiss suffered a defeat by the French, which cost them heavy losses. Due to this defeat, the Swiss adopted a policy of neutrality, remaining out of foreign wars ever since.

The Reformation took root in Switzerland as two prominent figures made Switzerland a base. Huldreich Zwingli preached in Zurich and John Calvin preached in Geneva. The Reformation divided Switzerland into Protestant and Catholic groups. Each raised armies and fought each other in 1529, 1531, 1656, and 1712. Neither side ever won total control.

In 1798, the French army occupied Switzerland. They established the *Helvetic Republic*, which gave Switzerland a strong centralized government. Previously, each of the cantons were able to rule as they determined and met only occasionally with each other, but with no national authority. Later, Napoleon of France reestablished the canton system of with a degree of self-government and reduced the national powers. When Napoleon was defeated in 1815, the Congress of Vienna gave Switzerland three more cantons, formerly under French control, and reestablished the confederation system,

reducing the federal powers. The Congress of Vienna also recognized Swiss neutrality, which has never since been broken.

After demand for political reform, Switzerland adopted a new constitution in 1848. This constitution established a federal democracy with a two-house legislature. It established federal powers and guaranteed religious freedom. This constitution was later changed in 1874 to increase the federal government's power.

Jean Henri Dunant founded the Red Cross in Geneva in 1863. The Red Cross flag was copied from Switzerland's flag, but with the colors on the flag reversed.

At the outbreak of World War I in 1914, Switzerland declared its neutrality immediately. After the war ended, Geneva was chosen as the headquarters for the League of Nations. This organization was an association of countries dedicated to preventing war. Switzerland became one of the original members of this league.

Switzerland again declared its neutrality during World War II and became a major supply link between Germany and Italy during the war. It also represented the Allies in enemy countries and cared for more than 100,000 refugees from several countries.

Switzerland refused membership in the United Nations, fearing that the UN policies of possible warfare by member nations might violate its neutrality policy. The United Nations did choose Geneva as its European headquarters and Switzerland joined many of the UN's specialized agencies.

Switzerland has chosen to join some economic organizations. It helped form the European Free Trade Association and the Council of Europe, which promotes unity among members for economic and social progress. In 1992, Switzerland joined the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

People / People Groups

(See Chart at end of the report for graphical representation)

Arab (2,500) Palestinian, Egyptian, Levantine, and Syrian migrant workers. The majority religion is Islam (77% of these people). The remaining are Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Coptic Orthodox. Their language is standard Arabic.

Austrian (33,812) Emigrants from Austria or expatriates on business. The majority denomination is Roman Catholic with 10% of them nonreligious. They speak standard German.

Bosnian (114,000) These people are refugees of the Bosnian civil war of 1991. Islam represents the religion of 90% of the group while 8% are nonreligious. They speak Serbo-Croatian.

British (33,000) Expatriates from Britain. The denominations represented include

Anglican Church, Church of Scotland, Methodist Church of Great Britain, and Jehovah's Witnesses.

Croat (29,000) Refugees from Croatia arriving mostly after 1990. Their major denomination is Roman Catholic and 9% are non-religious. They speak Serbo-Croatian.

Czech (13,000) Refugees from Czechoslovakia after 1945. Their denominations include Roman Catholic and Federation of Swiss Protestants with 21% nonreligious. They speak Czech and Southwest Bohemian.

Dutch (13,000) Expatriates from Holland working in business and industry. Their major denominations include Dutch Reformed Church and the Netherlands Reformed Church. In this group, 20% are nonreligious. They speak Dutch.

Fintika Romma, Finnish (1,000) Expatriates from Finland.

Franco-Provencal (7,000) They speak a Franco-Provencal dialect and are Roman Catholic with 10% nonreligious.

French (1,272,000) These are the French speaking Swiss. Their major denominations are Roman Catholic Church (8 Dioceses), Federation of Swiss Protestants (4 Cantonal Churches), Friends of Man, Salvation Army, Jehovah's Witness, and Seventh Day Adventist. Of this group, 13% are nonreligious. Included in the population total are 51,000 expatriates from France working in business.

German Swiss (4,215,000) This is the largest of the people groups in Switzerland. They speak Alemannisch (also called Schwyzerdutsch), which has 70 different dialects. Major denominations include Roman Catholic (8 Dioceses), Protestant Churches (14 Cantonal Churches), Friends of Man, New Apostolic Church, Salvation Army, Christian Catholic Church, Jehovah's Witness, Evangelical Lutheran, and United Methodist.

German, Standard (108,198) This group is comprised of expatriates from Germany working in business. Denominations of this group include Roman Catholic, Protestant Churches, New Apostolic Churches, Salvation Army, Jehovah's Witness, and Evangelical Lutheran.

Greek (13,525) This group is comprised of migrant workers from Greece that speak Greek. Their predominant denomination is Greek Orthodox and 5% of this group is nonreligious.

Grishun (22,000) This group speaks Romansch and is located on the Swiss borders with Italy and Austria in the canton of Graubunden.

Gypsy, Swiss (21,000) They speak standard German and are comprised of settled German-speaking gypsies. They have nomadic caravan churches and also have members in the Roman Catholic Church and the Gypsy Evangelical Movement.

Han Chinese, Mandarin (1,300) This group contains longtime residents from China and its diaspora. Of this group 74% are Buddhists or practice Chinese folk religions. Some are also members of the Roman Catholic Church. They speak Mandarin Chinese.

Hungarian (13,000) This group contains refugees from Hungary primarily after 1945. They speak Hungarian and belong to the Roman Catholic Church and Hungarian Reformed Congregations. Of this group, 18% are nonreligious.

Italian (195,000) This group is comprised of expatriates of Italy working in business. Also included in this number are Swiss people living in cantons along the Swiss border with Italy. Major denominations include the Roman Catholic Church and the Christian Church.

Japanese (5,200) This group is composed of immigrants from Japan that are in Switzerland for business. Their language is Japanese and 98% of them are Mahayana Buddhists.

Jewish (1,300) This group is composed of communities of mostly practicing Jews. They are located in cities with 10% identified as nonreligious. They speak Yiddish.

Jews, French (7,400) This group includes secular and religious Jews in 20 cities. They practice Judaism and 30% of this group is classified as nonreligious. They speak French.

Jews, German (1,300) This group includes secular and religious Jews in 22 cities. They practice Judaism and 34% of this group is nonreligious. They speak standard German.

Kurds (36,000) These are laborers and refugees from Turkey, Iran, and Iraq. They speak Kurmanji and 100% of them are Sunni Muslims.

Ladin (26,000) This group speaks Ladin, which is related to Romansch. This is an Oberland dialect, spoken throughout the Oberland Valley of the upper Rhine. They belong to the Roman Catholic Church or the Swiss Reformed Church.

Lombardi (303,000) This people group is located in Ticino and Graubunden cantons and in two districts south of St. Moritz. The Lombard language is a form of Italian. They belong to the Roman Catholic Church and the Christian Church.

Lule Saami (2,000) They speak Lule Saami.

Rhaeto-Romania, Engadi (40,000) They speak Romansch, but it is an Upper Engadine dialect found in southeastern Switzerland. They belong to the Swiss Reformed Church and the Roman Catholic Church.

Romanian (6,700) This group is composed of refugees from Romania and speak Vlax Romani. They belong to the Romanian Orthodox Church and 15% of this group is nonreligious.

Russian (6,700) This group came to Switzerland after 1917 from the USSR. This group contains 27% nonreligious and 6% atheists. They belong to the Russian Orthodox Church or the Russian Orthodox Church outside of Russia.

Serb (70,000) This group is comprised of refugees from Yugoslavia that came to Switzerland primarily after 1989. They belong to the Serbian Orthodox Church and 12% are nonreligious. Their language is Slovenian.

Sinite Gypsy (Rom) (21,000) This group is composed of nomadic gypsies located in 10 countries. They live in caravan communities. Some belong to the Roman Catholic Church or the Gypsy Evangelical Movement.

Spaniard (117,000) This group speaks Spanish and is composed of expatriates from Spain that works in business. They belong to the Roman Catholic Church and Spanish-speaking Evangelical churches.

Swedish (2,000) This group is composed of expatriates from Sweden working in business. They belong to the Church of Sweden and 19% are nonreligious.

Portuguese (86,000) This group speaks Portuguese and are migrant workers in Switzerland. They are predominately Roman Catholic and 6% are nonreligious.

Tamil (33,000) These are immigrant workers from Sri Lanka. They speak Tamil and 60% are Hindus, 5% Muslim, and some Roman Catholics

Tibetan (676) They are refugees from communist China after 1950. They are Lamaist Buddhists (95%) and have study centers and monasteries in Switzerland.

Turk (53,000) These are migrant laborers from Turkey. They speak Turkish and 99% are Hanafi Sunni Muslims.

USA White (4,057) This group contains expatriates from the USA. Their major denominations are Roman Catholic, Mormon, Seventh Day Adventist, Jehovah's Witness, Church of Christ, and Church of Christ Scientist.

Christianity in Switzerland

Merchants, soldiers, and slaves traveling the imperial highway of Helvetia brought Christianity to Switzerland from Gaul and Italy. The abbey of St. Maurice was built in AD 300 and the abbey of Romainmotiers in AD 400. More monasteries were built in the 12th century through the Cistercian reform, including Einsiedeln.

In 1519, Zwingli began preaching in Zurich and soon became involved in conflict with Anabaptists and Catholics. Anabaptists had formed under the leadership of Conrad Grebel and Felix Mantz in Zurich. Many Anabaptists were persecuted in Switzerland during this time, including Mantz, who was drowned in Zurich. Catholics and Protestants soon were embroiled in struggles for control. In 1526, the Catholics were successful at Baden, but reform continued to spread at St. Gall, Bern, Basel, and Schaffhouse. Fighting broke out among the Defensive Alliance, an organization of the Reformed cantons, and the Christian Union, an organization of the Catholic cantons. Zwingli was later killed at the second battle of Kappel.

Calvin established a Christian community in Geneva in 1536. Geneva became known as the “new Jerusalem” and attracted people being persecuted in Catholic lands. In 1549 and 1587, 8,000 persecuted Huguenots settled in Geneva. After the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, Geneva became home to many more Huguenots escaping King Louis XIV of France. Calvin founded an academy in Geneva in 1559 that had as its primary purpose the training of pastors.

Catholic and Protestant rivalry continued in Swiss political and religious life during succeeding centuries. Currently, in recent years, an ecumenical spirit has developed. Catholicism has become the majority religion since 1970, increasing greater proportionately due to the increase of foreign workers, many of whom are from Roman Catholic Mediterranean countries.

Catholicism in Switzerland

In 1869, the Vatican I council declared the infallibility of the Pope. Many Swiss Catholics decided that this was their opportunity to leave the Catholic Church. They founded what became known as the Old Catholic Church or the Christian Catholic Church. This church has an Episcopal system and is governed democratically. Each parish is free to select its own priest and select delegates to the Synod, the main governing body. The Synod chooses a bishop, who is appointed for life, and the Synod Council is comprised of 5 priests and 6 laity who form the executive and administrative branches of the church. The number of adherents to the Old Catholic church has been declining. In 1930, there were reportedly 37,000 and today that number has decreased to 12,000.

In Switzerland each Catholic diocese is directly dependent on the Holy See in Rome. There is no metropolitan archbishop and no ecclesiastical province. Due to Vatican II, the dioceses have collaborated more. The total number of Catholics in Switzerland totals 3,260,000 people.

Protestant Churches in Switzerland

The principal body is the Federation of the Protestant Churches of Switzerland comprised of the 18 cantonal Reformed churches, the Free Church of Geneva, and the Evangelical Methodist Church totaling 2,836,167 people. The Reformed Cantonal churches are the largest of the three. Each one of the cantonal churches is independent because there is no single unified Swiss Reformed Church. Some of these churches are state churches, some independent, and some have concordant relationships with the state. These churches differ in their liturgies and also their constitutions. Most maintain a synod and synod councils, which exercise the legislative and executive functions for the member churches. Zwinglian influences are more predominant in the German-speaking regions, whereas Calvinism is more predominant in the French areas.

Spiritual unity is maintained through the acceptance of the Helvetic Confession of 1566. The first attempt to unify the cantonal churches was through the formation of the Conference of Swiss Churches in 1858, and in 1920 the present Federation was established consisting of only the Reformed churches. The Free and Methodist churches were later added. Each one of the constituent bodies maintains their independence but delegates part of their authority to the federation and its council.

Of the number of Christians, only 290,330 are classified as Evangelical, according to Barrett. The number of congregations and adherents are as follows:

Name of Group	No. of Congregations	No. of adherents
Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches	1,078	2,850,000
Fellowship of Pentecostal Free Churches	250	25,000
Exclusive Brethren	220	19,500
Methodist	170	14,000
Fellowship of Free Evangelical Congreg.	93	12,000
St. Chrischona Pilgrim Mission	100	10,000
Salvation Army	90	9,200
Evangelical Fellowship	23	8,450
Seventh-day Adventist	57	8,160
Union of Free Miss Congreg.	70	5,500
Evangelical Assem of Fr-sp Swi	41	4,500
Mennonite	14	4,000
Baptist Fellowship	15	2,400

Church Type Groups (Non-Christian)

The Jehovah's Witness Groups

Jehovah's Witnesses have been active in Switzerland since the later part of the nineteenth century, but initially many of their followers were lost to the Friends of Man, which came out of a division of the Jehovah's Witness church. Currently, the Jehovah's Witnesses are growing at a rate of 6 times faster than the Friends of Man. There are 29,600 Jehovah's Witnesses in Switzerland.

Alexandre Freytag, who was baptized in the Reformed church and later converted to Adventism and later to Jehovah's Witnesses in 1898, formed the Friends of Man in 1919. This group was began as a branch from the Jehovah's Witness church. A schism in 1947 by Bernard Sayerce produced the Sayerce branch of the Friends of Man. The Freytag branch of the Friends of Man has 70,000 followers and the Sayerce branch claims 7,000.

The Christian Scientists are also present with 1,500 members.

Church of Later Day Saints (Mormons) have 7,200 members in 37 congregations and one of their temples is located in Switzerland.

Interdenominational Organizations

World Council of Churches (WCC) – The WCC was inaugurated in 1948, based on a decision in 1938 to combine the two movements of Faith and Order, and Life and Work, to facilitate the co-operative work of churches throughout the world. The WCC has its secretariat in Geneva. In 1961, the International Missionary Council was added to the WCC. The principle policy-making bodies are the General Assembly, which has met 5 times since its foundation, and the Central Committee, which meets yearly. The WCC is organized into three program units: Faith and Witness, Justice and Service, Education and Communication. The Faith and Witness program includes the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME).

In 1974, the WCC included 260 Protestant, Orthodox, Anglican, Old Catholic, and Independent member churches in 90 countries. In 1946, the Ecumenical Institute of Bosey was established as a center for study and research and a place of encounter between Christianity and the modern world.

YMCA – The interconfessional World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Association was founded in 1855 and is headquartered in Geneva.
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International Christian Youth Exchange – This group was founded in Geneva in 1946 and works closely with the WCC and national and regional youth movements. Its purpose is to promote exchange visits between youth of different denominations and countries as a means of training them concerning justice and peace in the world.

The Friends of Man is a division from the Jehovah's Witnesses – Johnstone does not mention them, they can be found at <http://www.religion.qc.ca/Fiches/fiche055.htm>

Christian Councils – The Working Community of the Christian Churches in Switzerland began in 1971 and consists of Reformed, Catholic, Old Catholic, Methodist, and Baptist churches, as well as the Salvation Army. Their purpose is to foster ecumenical dialogue and promote common interests in public life.

The Swiss Missionary Council was founded in 1944 and provides contact between various Protestant groups by having co-operative unions of missionary societies serving the German speaking and French speaking churches.

Future Trends

Due to immigration and increased birth rate, the proportionate number of Catholics continues to rise. In 1950, the number of Roman Catholics from other countries that had come to Switzerland was 202,445. This number had increased to 1,877,800 in 1990. This immigration of Catholics explains the fact that the Catholic population exceeds the Protestant percentage. The Roman Catholic percentage is expected to rise, if current immigration continues.

The nonreligious is expected to grow from 7.1% of the population to 8.2% of the population by 2025. Also, the number of Atheists and Muslims are also expected to increase in percentage. Atheists are expected to increase by 25,000 people by 2025 and Muslims by 35,000 people. During this same period, Protestants are expected to decrease by 40,000 people, becoming 39.5% of the total population.

Independent Christians are expected to gain 80,000 people by 2025 making them total 3.2% of the population, up from 2.2% in 2000.

Missiological Implications

With Switzerland's history centered on the Reformation, Counter-Reformation, and religious wars, the people have grown cold to Christianity and view it more as a part of society. There needs to be an awakening of the transforming power of the gospel, to view Christianity as personal and not just another religion.

1. The Church and churches must seek and find ways to present the Gospel in relevant ways and show the biblical teachings are important in everyday living. Many people in Switzerland are viewing Christianity and religion in general as less important to and declining significance in their lives. The survey presented above in the Religion section clearly showed this necessity.

Christians should seek ways to present the gospel to various groups of people in Switzerland in thoughtful and intelligent ways. Switzerland is a highly industrialized and literate country, with highly educated people. They need to know that Christianity is something worth believing and not just a "fairy tale."

2. Christians should include the Christian hope of eternal life in their proclamation in Switzerland. Currently, Switzerland has an increasingly aging population and high life expectancy. They continue to have problems with the aging of the population. This would be an excellent way to share eternal hope with the elderly.
3. Christians should pray for the Holy Spirit to revitalize Swiss churches. A general lack of spiritual vitality has erupted in many of their churches due partly to the entrance of neo-orthodox ideas. The churches in Switzerland need renewal of spiritual life and a commitment to a spirit of cooperation in order to reach Switzerland.
4. The Christians in Switzerland should place priority on the younger generation that must be targeted for evangelization. The younger generation is questioning the authority and the positions of the church and showing increased interest in the occult and eastern religions. If Christians do not reach this group for Christ, the future of Christianity in Switzerland stands in jeopardy.
5. Christians need to increase church planting in areas where evangelical witness is small. In 1998, a survey showed that hundreds of towns were without an evangelical congregation. During 1997-1999, 60 new churches were planted and 10 closed.
6. Christians should seek to overcome the century-long hostilities that continue to exist among the Swiss people. These hostilities have resulted from the religious wars that have been fought in Switzerland. While erasing the effects of these wars and the resulting animosities will be difficult, Christians should pray that religious peace might come.
7. The Churches should consider a sports program or an adventure-related evangelistic effort. The Swiss are interested in sports and outdoor activities. Christians could use sports and/or outdoor activities as a platform for sharing the gospel. This plan could be an effective tool in reaching the younger generation.
8. The Churches and Christians in Switzerland should mount an increasing effort to reach ex patriot refugees who now live in Switzerland. Switzerland has a large number of Kurds, Bosnians, Croatians, Hungarians, Romanians, Czechs, and Tibetan Buddhists have moved to Switzerland to seek refuge. There also people from many countries that are working in Switzerland, included in this group are people from other European countries, the U.S. and Japan.
9. Evangelical Christians seek further ways to work together to ensure the evangelization of Switzerland. The Swiss Evangelical Alliance calls Christians from the free churches and other Christian agencies to a joint commitment to evangelization, prayer, Bible study, and Christian fellowship. Many congregations are using Alpha courses to encourage evangelism. Alpha courses

Alpha Courses
<http://uk.alphacourse.org/>

are ten-week training classes that discuss the Christian faith in a non threatening environment. They are designed to be discussion oriented and discuss issues like “Who is Jesus.” Efforts like this should continue so that Switzerland might be reached.

AEM –
<http://www.aem.ch/wer>.

10. Christians and Churches should encourage the expanding efforts of denominations to establish and push toward goals for evangelism and church starting. The Arbeitsgemeinschaft Evangelischer Missionen (AEM) was formed in 1972 to coordinate missionary outreach. There are 40 mission agencies and over 1,000 missionaries involved.
11. The International Evangelical Christian community should seek ways to help provide biblically sound training for leaders of Swiss churches. This effort might be reached both by joining hands with existing training facilities and starting new ones.