

Money and Taxes

My money
Taxes in Switzerland
Debts
Living with little money

My money

In Switzerland, it is important to have a bank or postal account. This means you can manage your finances, receive your salary and pay your bills. Many people use debit or credit cards to make their purchases. We also use the Twint app when we don't have any cash.

Having an account

In Switzerland, almost everyone has a bank or post office account. Generally, the employer pays salary into this account.

Opening an account is free. But then there are different fees for managing the account. Interest rates and services differ from one bank to another. For this reason, it is important to compare the different offers.

To open an account, you must present a passport or other identification document. Sometimes the banks ask for other documents.

For example, a certificate of residence.

For US citizens opening an account is more difficult because of the special regulations in the USA.

Banks have the right to refuse customers.

Debit cards and credit cards

Typically, when someone opens a bank or post office account, they receive a card so that they can withdraw cash from ATMs or pay at most stores. This card is a debit card (e.g. Maestro).

Credit cards are also available.

Debit or credit card: what's the difference?

With a debit card, you pay with the money in your account.

With a credit card, you pay with money from a bank.

You must repay this money afterwards.

Fees for cards (debit or credit) can be very different from one bank to another. It's worth comparing offers.

These cards can also be used abroad.

Paying bills

In general, you receive your bills by post (with a QR-bill) or by email. You may also receive them directly to your account, but for that you need to validate them (e-bills). There are several ways to pay them:

- Via e-banking: many people pay over the internet. This is secure.
- With Twint, an app that you load to your mobile phone: you can scan the QR-bill and pay.
- At the counter: you can pay directly at the post office counter using the QR-bill.
- By post: you can send your payment orders to your bank or post office.

When you receive the same bill on a regular basis (e.g. to pay your rent), you can set up a standing order for payment.

Or you can allow money to be automatically withdrawn from your account. This is called an authorisation for direct debit.

In general, you have 30 days to pay your bills.

But sometimes the deadline is shorter.

If you don't pay, you often receive a reminder. Then you can be prosecuted.

Sending money abroad

To send money abroad, you can do so through your bank or the post office. You can also use a money transfer company.

Sending money is not free of charge. There is a cost, which may be higher or lower depending on the transfer company used.

Always find out if this transfer company really exists in the country you are sending money to.

If you are unsure, do not send money through this company.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.bonjour-jura.ch/en/money-and-taxes/my-money

Taxes in Switzerland

The amount of taxes payable varies from one canton to another and from one municipality to another. For private individuals, the most important taxes relate to income (salary and other money received), wealth and VAT.

The tax system (or fiscal system)

To finance the country's services, the Swiss authorities collect taxes. In Switzerland, there are several different authorities: the Confederation, the cantons, the municipalities, and also the national churches. The authorities collect the money in two different ways:

- by direct taxes paid by individuals. These taxes are calculated on the income and wealth of each person.
- by indirect taxes, such as VAT, tobacco tax or mineral oil tax. This tax is paid when you buy these goods. The tax is included in the price of the goods.

The cantons and municipalities decide their own rates for direct taxes. It is for this reason that there are differences from one municipality to another. Married couples are taxed jointly. They file a single tax return for both.

Taxation at source

In Switzerland, some people do not receive a tax return. Their taxes are deducted directly from their wages. This is called taxation at source.

The system of taxation at source is mainly used for:

- foreigners living in Switzerland who do not have a C permit.

Please note: people who have **no C permit** but who are **married** to a Swiss person or a person with a C permit are not affected by taxation at source.

- foreigners who work in Switzerland but live abroad (e.g. cross-border commuters).

How does it work?

Taxation at source is deducted directly from the employee's salary each month. This is done by the employer, who declares the employee to the tax authorities and pays the tax on their behalf.

The amount of the tax depends on various things:

- income;
- marital status (single, married, etc.);

- number of children.

If the situation changes (e.g. you get married or give birth), you should inform your employer promptly. This may change the amount of tax.

Do you pay your taxes at source?

You can declare expenses!

If you pay certain expenses (e.g. a pension contribution – pillar 3a), you can declare these expenses. To do this you apply at a later date to the Service des contributions (Tax Office) for subsequent ordinary taxation. This is called subsequent ordinary taxation (SOT).

You can apply until 31 March of the following year. You will then receive a form to complete.

Mandatory SOT in the Jura

In the Canton of Jura, some people who are taxed at source are obliged to file a subsequent ordinary tax return.

These are people who have:

- taxable assets (e.g. money in accounts)
- or other income in addition to salary (e.g. rent

from a rental property).

If this is the case for you, you should write to the Service des contributions (Tax Office). You will then receive a form.

And then?

Once the declaration has been submitted, you will receive:

- a statement showing much you still have to pay (or what has already been paid);
- an invoice or a refund depending on the situation.

Then you will have to file a tax return every year, even if you are taxed at source.

Where can I get help?

All information can be found on the Service des contributions (Tax Office) website.

Ordinary taxes

People with a Swiss passport or a C residence permit are taxed on a regular basis. They must complete a tax return each year. Then they pay their taxes by means of an invoice.

You will receive the return by mail. You have several options for completing it:

- on a paper form;
- on Jura-Tax, downloadable from the internet or on a CD;
- or at the virtual counter of the canton of Jura.

Filling out tax forms is not easy.

It is advisable to seek help when completing a return for the first time. Or if you own real estate (houses or buildings), for example. The Impôts.easy platform explains how to complete your tax return with concrete examples.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.bonjour-jura.ch/en/money-and-taxes/taxes-in-switzerland

Debts

If you don't pay your bills on time, this can be serious. Do you have financial worries? Debt counselling centres offer help.

Reminders and notices of prosecution

If you do not pay a bill on time, you usually receive a first reminder.

If you still do not pay the bill after the first reminder, you sometimes receive a second reminder.

The creditor (the person to whom the money is owed) can start legal proceedings at any time.

This is called a collection procedure.

In this case, the debtor (one person who owes money) receives a notice of prosecution from the Office des poursuites (Debt Enforcement Office). Notice of prosecution is subject to a fee.

The costs are advanced by the creditor and must then be paid by the debtor.

If the debtor believes that the proceedings are unfair, they may file an objection with the Office des poursuites (Debt Enforcement Office).

Please note: If you are being prosecuted, the authorities may deduct money from your salary, or take something of value from you.

In addition, notices of debt enforcement are registered under your name in the debt enforcement register. This can cause problems when looking for an apartment, for example. Even when you have paid for the debt enforcement, the notice remains in the debt enforcement register for some time.

Debts

Having debts means having to give money back to a person or a company.

Do you have debts or financial worries? You can go to a helpdesk: a debt reduction service.

Here an expert will look at the situation with you. They will work with you to find a solution.

Caritas offers debt reduction assistance on: 0800 708,708.

This help is anonymous. You don't have to give your name. The service is free of charge.

The Fédération romande des consommateurs (Consumer Federation for French-speaking Switzerland) also offers a debt reduction service, which costs CHF 10 in the Canton of Jura.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.bonjour-jura.ch/en/money-and-taxes/debts

Living with little money

The cost of living in Switzerland is quite expensive. This is why it may sometimes be useful to buy things that are second hand (already used). People with little money may receive financial assistance. They can shop in stores that have lower prices.

State support

In general, people living with little money are entitled to state aid. It is possible to receive assistance (subsidies) for health insurance premiums or scholarships. In some situations you may receive money from social insurance or social assistance.

Support from charities

Various charities help people in financial difficulty.

For example: Caritas Jura, the Croix-Rouge (Red Cross), Secours d'hiver (Winter Relief), Mimosa Jura or the Armée du Salut (Salvation Army).

Their support takes various forms, such as information, advice, direct financial assistance or food offers.

Find help easily with JU-lien.org

On the website Ju-lien.org (FR) you can find the financial support available in the Jura. This site also offers a free and confidential information service. Online or by phone (079 677 37 65), you can have a free and confidential interview with a professional.

Second-hand (used) items

COMM9 by Caritas (FR) offers cheap second-hand items.

These are things already used but in good condition.

There are COMM9 stores in Delémont, Porrentruy and Saignelégier.

Second-hand articles can also be found on the internet and social media.

Solidarity groceries

If you have little money you can shop in solidarity-based grocery stores. You can buy food and necessities for everyday life at cheap prices.

To do so, you must register directly with the following associations: "Les cartons du cœur (Boxes from the Heart)", "Table couvre-toi (Table Cover Yourself)" and "Au P'tit plus (A Little More)". Not everyone has the right to go to solidarity-based grocery stores.

You must meet certain conditions.

The Culture Card: sport / culture / training

With the CarteCulture (CultureCard), people living with little money can get cheaper prices for sporting, cultural and training events.

To receive the card, you must apply to Caritas.
Caritas provides all the necessary information.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.bonjour-jura.ch/en/money-and-taxes/living-with-little-money