



BIENVENUE
WILLKOMMEN
BENVENUTI
WELCOME
BEM-VINDO
BIENVENIDA
MIRË SE VJËN
DOBRODOŠLI
HOŞGELDİNİZ
KU SOO DHOWOW
BUN VENIT
SZERENCSESEN ERKESZTEK
VÍTEJTE
أهلا وسهلا

NEUCHÂTEL

RÉPUBLIQUE ET CANTON DE NEUCHÂTEL
COMMUNES NEUCHÂTELOISES

NEUCHÂTEL

ANGLAIS | 2020

Welcome to the canton of Neuchâtel



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to the canton of Neuchâtel*

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NEUCHÂTEL



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Welcome to the canton of Neuchâtel

We are pleased to extend our welcome to you, whether you are arriving from another region of Switzerland, from a neighbouring country or from further afield.

The Neuchâtel region, with its lake and high valleys, its magnificent countryside and well-preserved nature, offers a high-quality living environment. Thanks to the advanced technology of its industries and the professional competencies of its labour force, it has earned an enviable reputation. A product made in Neuchâtel is always synonymous with quality anywhere throughout the world.

The canton of Neuchâtel generates a spirit of open-mindedness and applies an intercultural policy, which strives for equality, equal dignity and the well-being of everyone. The diversity of nationalities, religions and cultures is an enriching source for the canton and its population.

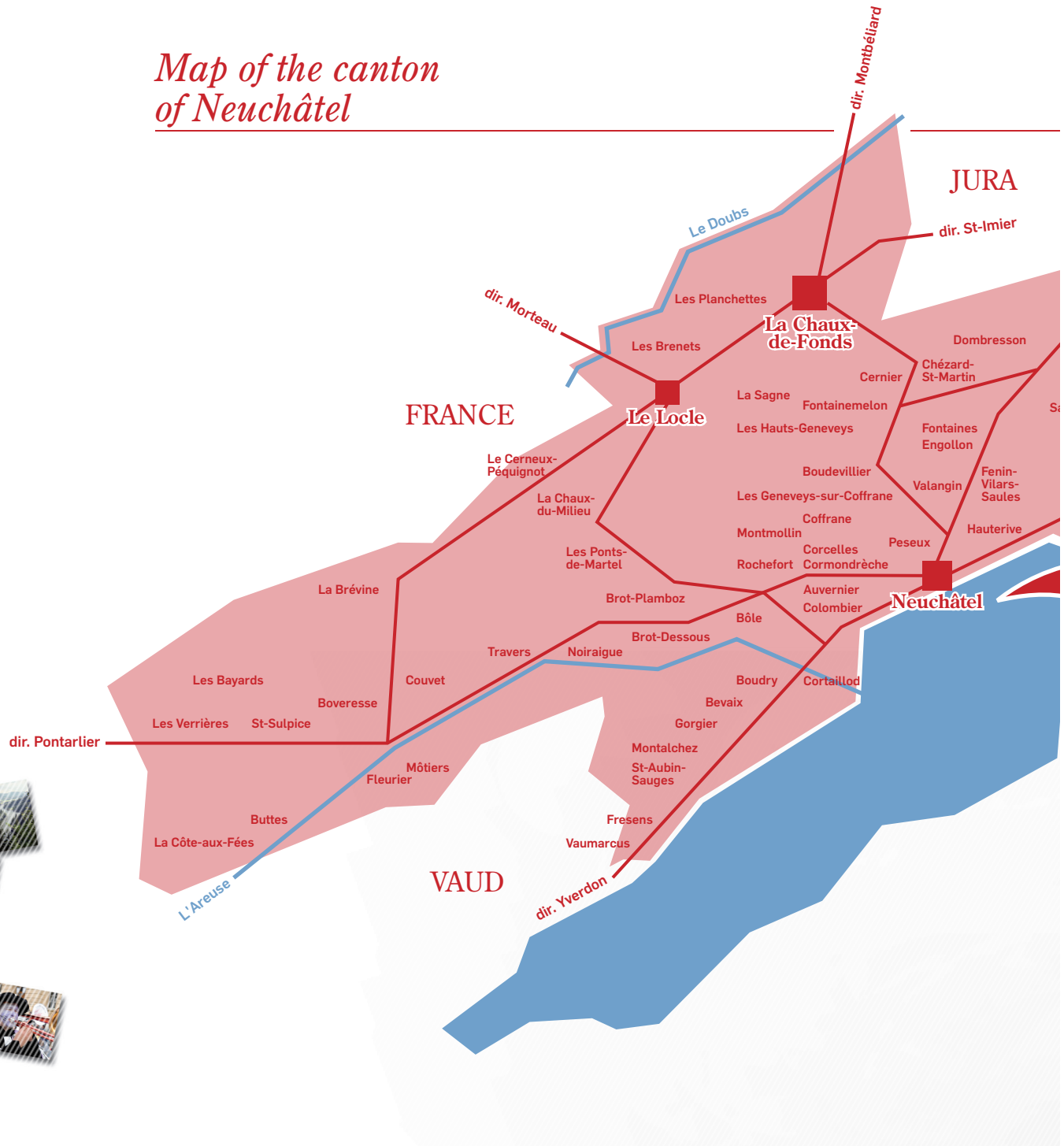
With this brochure we would like to wish you a warm welcome and provide you with addresses and information that should be useful to you.

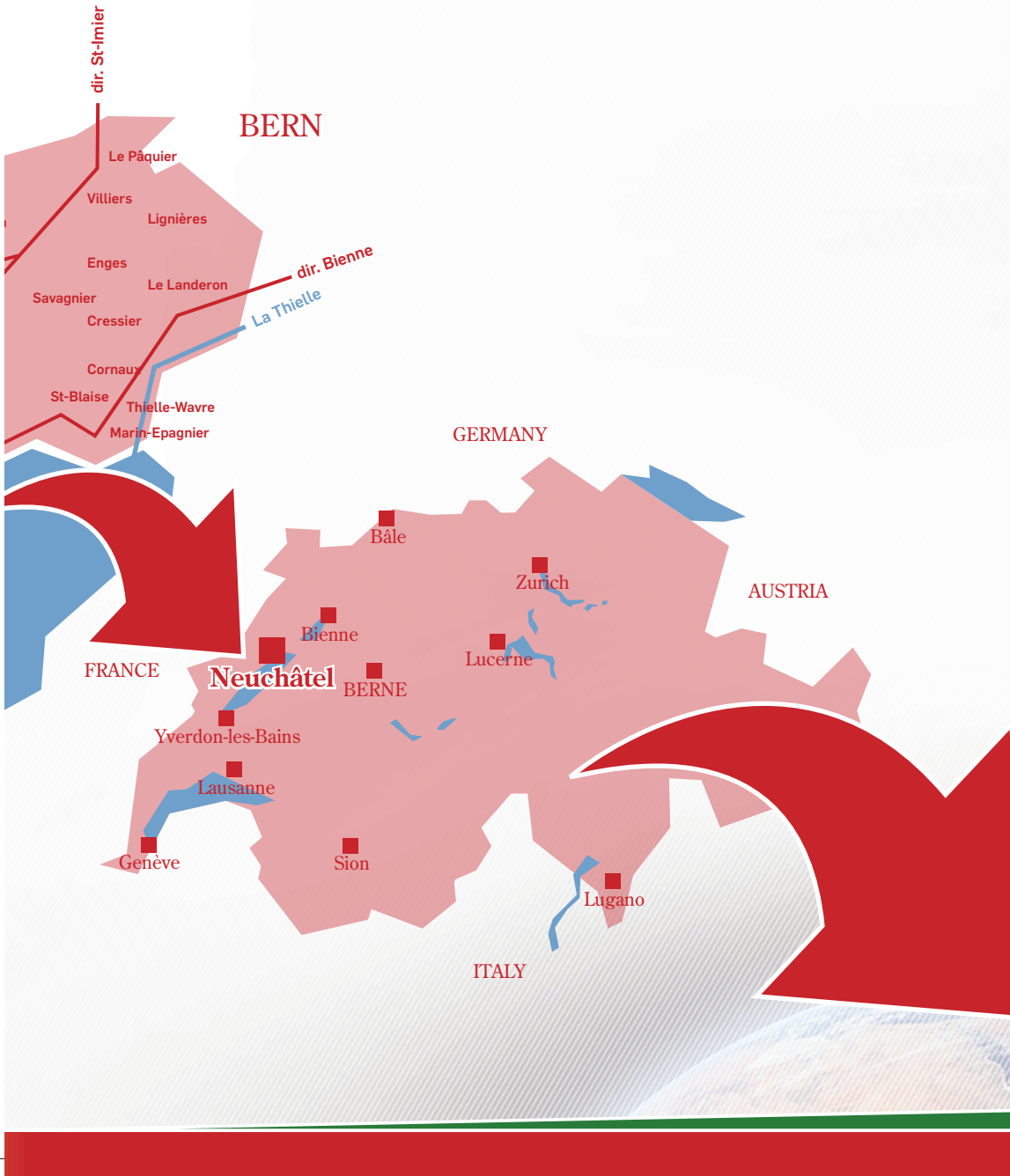
Today we are neighbours; tomorrow we will hopefully be friends.

Government of the Republic and Canton of Neuchâtel
Community for the integration and multicultural cohesion (CICM)



Map of the canton of Neuchâtel





General information

THE CANTON OF NEUCHÂTEL FEATURES

- A surface area of 803 km².
- A total population of nearly 176,000, including about 45,000 foreigners (~25%) from more than 150 different countries
- Is one of the 26 cantons and semi-cantons that together make up Switzerland. It is French-speaking.
- Above all, a canton with a guest-receiving tradition and whose economic, social and cultural history was often influenced by frequent immigrations.

IF YOU REQUIRE ASSISTANCE OR INFORMATION

- First contact the residents' registration office of the commune where you are living.
To obtain information, it is advisable to visit communal offices in person.
- It is also possible to contact the Regional Social Desks (GSR) for any request for social services or advice, or the Office of Multicultural Cohesion (COSM) for advice and information linked to residency in Switzerland

Regional Social Desk
Office of Multicultural Cohesion

www.ne.ch/saso/gsr
www.ne.ch/cosm



Information contacts

OFFICE OF MULTICULTURAL COHESION

The **Office of Multicultural Cohesion** is a cantonal administration service. Its task is to encourage and support the integration of the persons who have settled in the canton. One of its aims is to foster contact and mutual understanding between the different parts of the population of Neuchâtel. The office is also actively involved in the prevention of racism and discriminations, and offers advice and support to projects whose aim is the integration of migrant persons or the prevention of discrimination. The following services are provided:

- An information and counselling centre (advice and guidance, information, administrative assistance, written and spoken translation, mediation, support), in different languages, open to all, and which ensures confidentiality. Qualified professionals offer support through listening and providing sound advice and support regarding the main issues of life in Switzerland (residency and permits, education, work, administration, health, etc.). Counselling services are available in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Neuchâtel and Fleurier.
- Listening, support and advice services for all persons facing racism or discrimination, whether they are victims or witnesses in the situation.
- Information concerning the possibilities for learning French.
- A list of language and cultural courses concerning different countries.
- An address list of the foreign communities of the canton.
- A network of interpreters and translators.

For all questions and more information, contact:

Office of Multicultural Cohesion
(**Service de la cohésion multiculturelle, COSM**)
Place de la Gare 6
2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds

032 889 74 42
www.ne.ch/cosm

USEFUL WEBSITES

- The website of the canton of Neuchâtel offers useful information as well as links to towns, communes and Federal agencies: www.ne.ch
- The following pages www.ne.ch/migrationsetintegration provides you with detailed information concerning questions regarding immigration, integration and naturalisation.
- The website of the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) www.sem.admin.ch provides you with information on the issues of migration, integration and naturalisation at the federal level.



Information contacts

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Police	117
Fire	118
Traffic emergencies	140
La main tendue (association – the helping hand)	143
Ambulances	144
Poisoning	145

LEGAL ADVICE

Rue des Beaux-Arts 11, 1st floor (Wednesdays from 4.00 to 7.00 pm)
2000 **Neuchâtel**

www.oan.ch

Rue du Rocher 1 (Thursdays from 4.00 to 7.00 pm)
2300 **La Chaux-de-Fonds**

www.oan.ch

A volunteer lawyer offers an oral opinion and advice on the required procedure. An amount of CHF 30.- will be asked to cover administrative fees. The persons seeking this service are received in their order of arrival, without prior appointment.

CUSTOM SERVICES INFORMATION

This office provides you with information on all questions relating to the free movement of persons, goods and services in Europe:

Custom Services Information (France)
0811 20 44 44 (mainland)
+33 1 72 40 78 50 (out of mainland)

www.douane.gouv.fr

Customs information office (Switzerland) +41 58 467 15 15



Useful information

RESIDENCE PERMITS

You can obtain information concerning residence permits from your commune or from:

Immigration Department
(Service des migrations)
Rue de Tivoli 28
2003 Neuchâtel

032 889 63 10

www.ne.ch/smig

The **Office of Multicultural Cohesion (COSM)** is also at your service to inform you on the different types of permits for resident foreign nationals and for settled foreign nationals.

VOTING RIGHTS FOR FOREIGNERS

Taking up residence in the canton of Neuchâtel means involving oneself actively in public life and the political environment or show one's feeling of allegiance by acquiring Swiss citizenship.

Presently, all foreigners with a residence permit (C permit) and aged over 18 may:

- Vote and be elected at communal level after being resident in the canton for at least one year.
- Vote on cantonal matters after being resident in the canton for at least five years.

Contact your commune for any further information.

NATURALISATION

Swiss citizenship is acquired by filiation and adoption (acquisition by operation of law), or by naturalisation (acquisition by decision of the appointing authority). It is an important step to become fully integrated into the life of the country. The law provides for two types of procedures:

- Facilitated naturalisation is essentially addressed to persons who are married to Swiss citizens, but the law provides for other specific cases. Facilitated naturalisation comes under the jurisdiction of the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM), which decides alone whether such a request is to be granted or refused.



Useful information

- The ordinary naturalisation procedure must be followed by any person who is interested in acquiring Swiss citizenship and who meets the requirements of the law, as well as by all the persons who are bound by registered partnership with a Swiss citizen.
To apply for ordinary naturalisation applicants must: hold a residence authorisation (C permit), have lived in Switzerland for a total of 10 years with a long-term residence permit, of which 3 over the 5 years preceding the date of request, and have been domiciled in the canton of Neuchâtel for 2 years. Years spent in Switzerland between the ages of 8 and 18 count double, but in all cases, the actual stay must have lasted at least 6 years. For registered partnerships, applicants must have lived in Switzerland for a total of 5 years, of which the year preceding the date of request, and 3 in a registered partnership. Furthermore, the time spent with an asylum seeker status (N permit) or as a student is not taken into consideration. With a F permit (temporary admission), only half of the residency time is taken into account.

The law fixes other criteria and provides for multiple cases. The administrative naturalisation procedure can take up to two years.

Information:

- at your commune of residence
- at the Justice Service – department for naturalisations
Rue de Tivoli 22, 2000 **Neuchâtel**
- at the Office of multicultural cohesion
Place de la Gare 6, 2300 **La Chaux-de-Fonds**

032 889 41 14

www.ne.ch/naturalisation

032 889 74 42

www.ne.ch/cosm

HEALTH INSURANCE

According to the Federal Law on health insurance (hereafter LAMal), health insurance for medical care coverage is compulsory for every person living in Switzerland. Registration comes under individual responsibility and must be done within 3 months after moving. If no insurance company spontaneously announces your registration within this period, the Cantonal Office for Health Insurance (OCAM) will send you a letter to know which health insurance company you have chosen. If this letter is not answered, the **Cantonal Office for Health Insurance** will make a compulsory registration with one of the known health insurance companies, regardless of the premium fees.

When registration is done within the time limit, it is effective from the moment you register at the residents' registration office of your commune. When registration is done after 3 months, the insurance is effective from the registration date and you must pay an extra fee. Exemptions are possible in specific cases, in particular those established within the context of regulations for the coordination of UE/AELE social security.



Useful information

Health insurance companies are required to accept your LAMal registration application, regardless of your age and/or health condition (no health questionnaire). The services provided through compulsory insurance are the same for all companies. It is important to compare the premium offers of the different companies, before choosing an insurance company, as well as the different specific forms of insurance (deductible options, limited choice of service providers, or insurance with bonus, etc.). Premiums may be very different depending on the selected options.

Cantonal Office for Health Insurance
(Office cantonal de l'assurance-maladie, OCAM)
Espace de l'Europe 2
Case postale 716
2002 Neuchâtel

032 889 66 30
www.ne.ch/ocam

TAXES

Every resident of the canton must declare her or his income and fortune acquired in Switzerland and/or abroad. Foreign nationals who do not hold a residence authorisation (C permit) are subject to withholding tax. One should note that the persons who meet these criteria but are married to a Swiss national or a C permit holder are not subject to withholding tax. You can visit the website of the **Tax office** (SCCO): www.ne.ch/scco.

To ensure a healthy job market, guarantee equity with respect to taxes and help the persons in need, the canton of Neuchâtel has reinforced the means used to fight against undeclared work, tax fraud and the misuse of social services ("Reglo (ligit)" campaign). Abuses are not only harmful for society; they can also have dramatic consequences for the persons who cheat:

- Legal action, or even criminal prosecution
- Vulnerability to defend one's rights and risk of debt
- Loss of residency permit for foreigners
- Diminution of the financial means intended for retirement and in case of an accident

www.ne.ch/reglo

Information and advice:

"Declared work" area: Office for labour relations and conditions (Office des relations et des conditions de travail SEMP), rue du Parc 117, 2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds, au 032 889 68 89.
"Paid taxes" area: Tax office (Service des contributions SCCO), rue du Docteur Coullery 5, 2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds, au 032 889 77 77.



Useful information

DRIVING LICENCE

Foreign driving licences are recognised in Switzerland, where they can be used only for private matters for a maximum of one year.

that first year, or to be able to drive in a professional capacity, you must exchange your current driving licence with a Swiss licence at the **Cantonal Vehicles and Navigation service** (SCAN).

The exchange procedure is available on www.scan-ne.ch/permisetranger

Caution: it may differ depending on the country of delivery of your licence, and on the categories you possess.

SCAN

Secteur admin. conducteurs
Malvilliers
Champs-Corbet 1
2043 **Boudevilliers**

www.scan-ne.ch

SCHOOLS

All children are eligible for compulsory schooling in the canton of Neuchâtel.

You can obtain further information from the administration of your commune.

Compulsory education starts at the age of 4 and lasts eleven years.

At the end of this schooling, your child may continue studies or enter into an apprenticeship.

During compulsory schooling, your child can also follow language and cultural courses from your country of origin, organised by consulates and foreign communities.

You can obtain all the details you need from the following address:

Department of Compulsory Education
(Service de l'enseignement obligatoire SEO)
Rue de l'Écluse 67
2001 **Neuchâtel**

032 889 69 20

www.ne.ch/seo



Useful information

PRE-SCHOOL AND EXTRACURRICULAR FACILITIES

To obtain a day care place (0-4 years old) for your child, you must register on the cantonal waiting list AEF at the **Service for public day-care arrangements and specialised education institutions** (OSAE). The registration must be renewed every 3 months, with the child's details (list available on [www.ne.ch/spaj: accueil préscolaire et parascolaire/pour les parents/inscription](http://www.ne.ch/spaj:accueil.pr%C3%A9scolaire.et.para%C3%A9colaire.pour.les.parentes/inscription)).

Any registration modification concerning day care (days of care, change of address, etc.) should be communicated to this service.

To obtain a place in an extracurricular facility (4 years old and over), registrations should be made directly with the direction of the concerned structure or with your commune.

Service for public day-care arrangements and specialised education institutions

**(Office des structures d'accueil extrafamilial
et des institutions d'éducation spécialisée OASE)**

www.ne.ch/spaj

Fbg du Lac 23-25
2000 Neuchâtel

CAREER OPTIONS

The Professional, educational and career orientation centre (OCOSP)

offers support and advice to students, young people and adults who wish to start or reorganise their professional future

032 889 20 20

www.ne.ch/ocosp

JOB SEARCH

The Regional Employment Offices (ORP) – Section ProEmployees

inform and supervise persons who are in search of employment :

www.ne.ch/orp

Neuchâtel Office

La Chaux-de-Fonds Office

Fleurier Office

032 889 68 18

032 889 68 13

032 889 61 50



Useful information

RECOGNITION OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

The recognition of foreign diplomas by a competent authority is necessary for many professions. In Switzerland the authorities responsible for this recognition differ according to the profession.

State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SEFRI) 058 462 28 26
Contact for the recognition of professional diplomas and qualifications www.sbfi.admin.ch/qualification

Article 32 of the Federal regulations on professional training allows adults to obtain a Capacity Federal Certificate (CFC) without having to undertake an apprenticeship, by taking the final apprenticeship examinations, possibly after having followed a preparation course, or by the validation of acquired work experience (VAE).

If you are interested, you should first contact the Professional, educational and career orientation centre (OCOSP). www.ne.ch/ocosp

STUDIES AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Service of post compulsory training and guidance
(Service des formations post-obligatoires et de l'orientation SFPO)
Espacité 1 032 889 69 40
2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds www.ne.ch/sfpo

Interregional Training Centre – Neuchâtel Mountains
(Centre interrégional de formation des Montagnes neuchâteloises CIFOM)
Rue de la Serre 62 032 886 30 00
2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds www.cifom.ch

Professional Training Centre – Neuchâtel Littoral
(Centre professionnel du Littoral neuchâtelois CPLN)
Rue de la Maladière 84 032 717 40 00
2000 Neuchâtel www.cpln.ch

University 032 718 10 00
Avenue du 1^{er}-Mars 26 www.unine.ch
2000 Neuchâtel



Useful information

Professional Centre for the construction trade
(Centre professionnel des métiers du bâtiment CPMB)
Les Longues-Raies 11
2013 **Colombier**

032 843 48 00
www.cpmb.ch

Scholarships and Grants Office
(Office des bourses)
Espace de l'Europe 2
2000 **Neuchâtel**

032 889 69 02
www.ne.ch/bourses

ADULT EDUCATION/ TRAINING

Employment Office
(Service de l'emploi)
Rue du Parc 119
2301 **La Chaux-de-Fonds**

032 889 68 12
www.ne.ch/sempe

Center for professional integration – Neuchâtel
(Centre neuchâtelois d'intégration professionnelle CNIP)
Site Dubied 12
2108 **Couvet**

032 889 69 25
www.cnip.ch

Neuchâtel Open University (UPN)
Rue de la Maladière 84
2000 **Neuchâtel**
Rue de la Serre 62
2300 **La Chaux-de-Fonds**

www.cpln.ch/upn
032 725 50 40

032 886 31 10

Swiss Workers' Mutual Aid Organisation – Neuchâtel (OSEO)
Rue de la Promenade 5
2105 **Travers**

032 886 43 84
www.oseo-ne.ch

Reading and Writing Association
(Association Lire et Ecrire)
Rue du Doubs 103, 2300 **La Chaux-de-Fonds**
Rue Louis-Favre 1, 2000 **Neuchâtel**

032 914 10 81
www.lire-et-ecrire.ch



Useful information

FRENCH COURSES AND KNOWLEDGE OF SWITZERLAND AND THE CANTON OF NEUCHÂTEL

The Office of Multicultural Cohesion can inform and guide you to find French lessons and other useful courses (numeracy, information and communication technologies, etc.).

The office also proposes courses for persons interested in acquiring knowledge on Switzerland and the canton of Neuchâtel, like the "Integration and civic knowledge programme" (PICC) or the course "Living in Switzerland and in Neuchâtel", which are intended for applicants for naturalisation.

For any further information:

Office of Multicultural Cohesion
(Service de la cohésion multiculturelle, COSM)
Place de la Gare 6
2300 **La Chaux-de-Fonds**

032 889 74 42
www.ne.ch/cosm







ne.ch

RÉPUBLIQUE ET CANTON DE NEUCHÂTEL

SERVICE DE LA COHÉSION

MULTICULTURELLE

PLACE DE LA GARE 6

2300 LA CHAUX-DE-FONDS

T +41 (0)32 889 74 42

F +41 (0)32 722 04 04

www.ne.ch/migrationsetintegration