

Switzerland

Recent policy developments

- The New Regional Policy (NRP) was launched in 2008. A working group called “NRP 2016+” was created in 2012 with representatives from the Confederation and cantons, to evaluate the impact of the NRP for the first programming period 2008-15 in view of the preparation of the new multi-year programme 2016-23.
- There have been efforts to promote further inter-cantonal collaboration. Existing inter-cantonal concordats have tended to be mostly bilateral tax treaties aimed at eliminating double taxation, or focused on joint initiatives for physical infrastructure. Around 25% of the NRP funds are set aside for these projects, although cantons frequently do not make full use of the funds.
- In 2011, the Federal Council decided to continue the Federal Agglomeration Policy. It asked the Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE) and the Federal Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) to submit, in 2014, a framework proposal for the agglomeration policy for 2016-19. There are 50 statistically defined agglomeration areas, but each agglomeration area is free to establish its own perimeter and develop an agglomeration programme. Agglomeration areas benefit from an infrastructure fund, largely for transport infrastructure projects, and from a fund for model projects.

Government structure	Municipal-level governments	Intermediate-level governments	Regional or state-level governments
Federation	2 408		26

Regional development policy

Lead ministry(ies) or committees	Federal Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)
Regional development framework	The Federal Law on Regional Policy (2006) set the stage for the New Regional Policy (NRP) 2008-15 period, with a focus on economic development and inter-cantonal co-operation in targeted areas that include: rural and mountainous areas; border regions; and areas with specific structures.

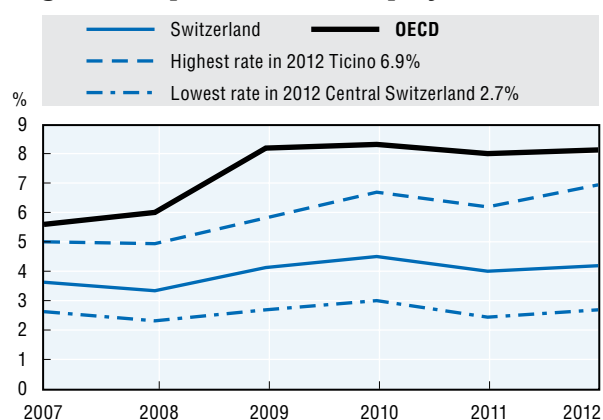
Urban development policy

Lead ministry(ies) or committees	Federal Office for Spatial Development (ARE); SECO
Urban policy framework or strategy	The Federal Agglomeration Policy (<i>Agglomerationspolitik des Bundes</i> , initially 2001, to be renewed in 2014), focuses on city economic attractiveness, quality of life, limiting urban sprawl and maintaining a network of urban areas (polycentrism).

Rural development policy

Lead ministry(ies) or committees	SECO; Federal Office for Agriculture (OFAG)
Rural policy framework or strategy	The Federal Law on Regional Policy (2006) set the stage for the New Regional Policy (NRP) 2008-15 period, with a focus on economic development and inter-cantonal co-operation in targeted areas that include: rural and mountainous areas; border regions; and areas with specific structures.

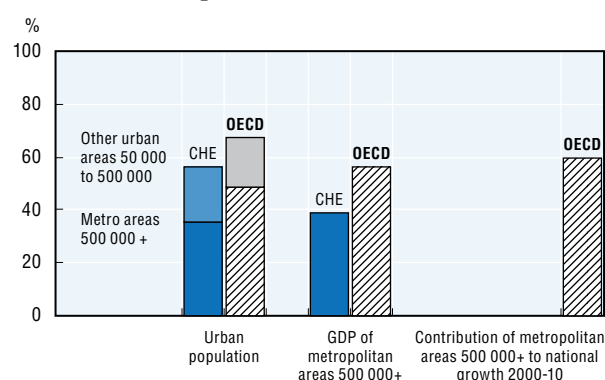
Regional disparities in unemployment trends



The unemployment rate in Swiss regions varied from 6.9% in Ticino to 2.7% in Central Switzerland. The youth unemployment rate reached almost 18% in Ticino.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933108890>

The importance of urban areas

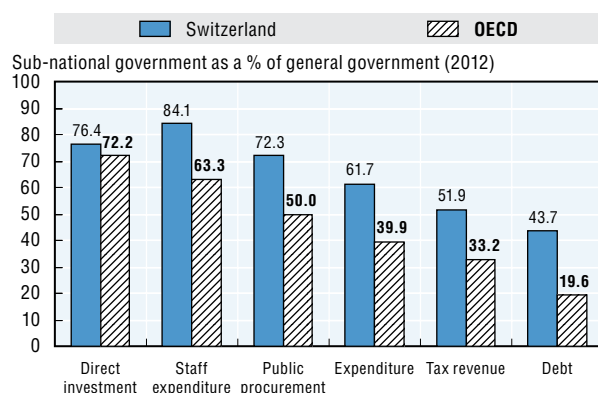


In Switzerland, 56% of the population lives in cities of different sizes. The share of population in metropolitan areas (urban areas with more than 500 000 inhabitants) is 35%, compared to 49% in the OECD area.

Contribution to national GDP growth for Switzerland does not appear in the figure, due to lack of comparable time series over the period 2000-10.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933108909>

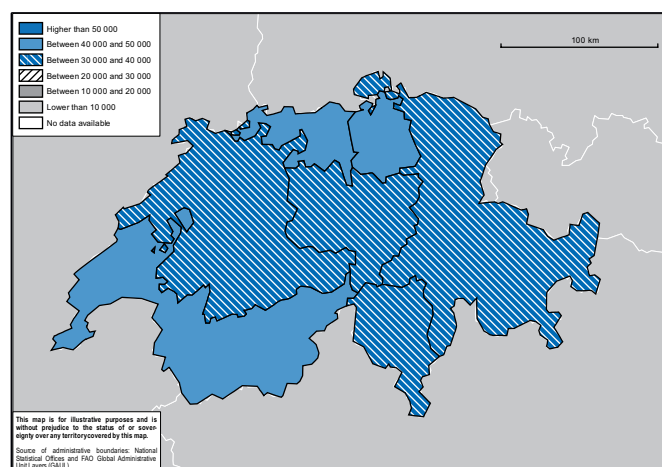
The role of sub-national governments in public finance



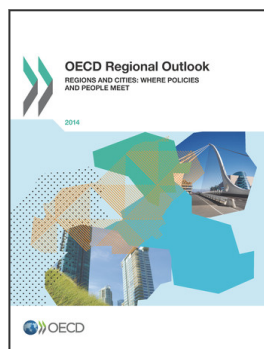
Education and social protection are the two largest spending items for SNGs in Switzerland: together they represent 47% of sub-national expenditure, compared to 39% in the OECD area.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933108928>

Regional differences in GDP per capita levels



Switzerland had the 10th lowest regional disparities in GDP per capita. The Swiss national average of GDP per capita is more than 30% higher than the OECD average.



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