



Financing the United Nations and Switzerland's contributions

The activities of the UN are financed through the member states' assessed (compulsory) and voluntary contributions. In **2023, Switzerland paid CHF 96.8 million in assessed contributions**, i.e. annual contributions to the core UN resulting from membership in the organisation: CHF 64.6 million for peacekeeping operations, CHF 31.5 million for the regular budget, and approximately CHF 702'000 for the UN tribunals.

The UN General Assembly negotiates and adopts various budgets:

Regular budget

Operating, personnel and programme costs of the **core UN bodies** (General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Secretariat, International Court of Justice). The budget for 2024 amounts to USD 3.59 billion.

Budgets for peacekeeping operations

Operating, personnel and programme costs of 12 **peacekeeping missions**¹ that are currently deployed with over 78'600 staff. The missions deployed by mandates of the Security Council fluctuate considerably in number and size. The total budget for the budget period July 2023 to June 2024 amounts to USD 6.1 billion.

Budgets of the UN tribunals

The budget of the **UN tribunals** covers the costs of the international residual mechanism for the ad hoc criminal tribunals (IRM). The two temporary tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda were financed from this budget until they were closed at the end of 2017 and end of 2015, respectively. The budget of the IRM for 2024 amounts to USD 60.1 million.

Over the past five years, Switzerland has made the following **assessed contributions** (in Swiss francs)²:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Regular budget	30'487'861	32'305'910	31'628'627	29'295'524	31'514'536
Peacekeeping missions ³	72'975'191	73'821'589	69'162'945	61'007'425	64'596'968
Tribunals	953'127	900'576	879'328	717'161	701'942
Total	104'416'179	107'028'075	101'670'900	91'020'110	96'813'446

¹ It is envisaged that MINUSMA will complete its withdrawal from Mali by the end of June 2024; this will reduce the total number of missions to 11.

² Source: state financial statements of the Confederation.

³ The fluctuations in the amounts of the contributions for peacekeeping missions are mainly attributable to the three different cycles on which the assessment of the contributions is based. The first factor to be considered is the rate set by the UN for each country for a three-year period. Switzerland's rate for the 2022-2024 period is 1.134%. Second, the contributions for peacekeeping missions are set for periods starting on 1 July and ending on 30 June of the following year. Third, the Swiss budget year corresponds to the calendar year. Since 2016, the funds for mandatory contributions to peacekeeping operations have been budgeted on a linear basis, i.e. for 12 months at a time. Irregular invoicing by the UN is handled in the budget execution through accruals and deferrals (without financial implications).

Assessed contributions paid by the member states are determined by a **scale of assessments** set by the General Assembly which is applicable for three years (currently: 2022–2024). The basis for determining the scale of assessments is primarily the GDP of the various member states; other factors such as the level of indebtedness are also taken into account. The contribution rates have a ceiling of 22% and a lower limit of 0.001% for the least developed countries. The financing of peacekeeping operations is based on the scale of assessments for contributions to the regular budget with the difference that the five permanent members of the Security Council pay a higher share, and the least developed countries have a correspondingly lower share to contribute. Switzerland currently pays 1.134% of the UN budget and ranks 17th in the list of contributors to the UN’s regular budget and 14th among contributors to the UN’s peacekeeping operations budget.

In 2023, the 10 largest contributors’ share to the UN’s regular budget was as follows:

	Country	Rate (%)	Contribution (USD)
1	United States	22,000	707'897'008
2	China	15,254	446'229'213
3	Japan	8,033	234'991'429
4	Germany	6,111	178'766'666
5	United Kingdom	4,375	127'983'008
6	France	4,318	126'315'572
7	Italy	3,189	93'288'643
8	Canada	2,628	76'877'565
9	Republic of Korea	2,574	75'297'889
10	Spain	2,134	62'426'455
17	Switzerland	1,134	33'173'196
	Total of all member states	100,000	2'989'651'788

Budgets of the specialised UN agencies

The member states also pay assessed contributions to cover the operating and personnel costs of the **UN specialised agencies** (WHO, ILO, UNESCO, etc.). These are levied directly by the agencies themselves. The specialised UN agencies have budgetary mechanisms that are clearly separate from the General Assembly. Their budgets are generally negotiated by member states every two years.

In addition to the assessed contributions, **voluntary contributions** are the other important source of income. They constitute a substantial part of the overall contribution paid by member states to the entire UN system.

Budgets of UN funds and programmes

Voluntary contributions are particularly important for the **funds and programmes of the UN** (like the UNHCR, the UNDP and UNICEF). They are either general in nature, i.e. regular contributions based on a payment commitment, or contributions tied to specific projects.

In total, Switzerland contributed approximately USD 1.07 billion in assessed and voluntary contributions to the UN system in 2022.⁴

⁴ The website of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) provides a comprehensive overview of the total contributions paid by the various member states to the UN system (assessed and voluntary contributions): <https://unsceb.org/fs-revenue-government-donor>.