



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA
General Secretariat GS-FDFA
Presence Switzerland



**SWITZERLAND
SEEN FROM
ABROAD**
2025 ANALYSIS

Key points in brief

- **Balanced overall picture of Switzerland's international perception:** In 2025, Switzerland's image abroad was balanced on the whole. No positive or negative narratives were strong enough to dominate perceptions of Switzerland. Amid political and economic tensions, the way Switzerland was portrayed in foreign media ranged from somewhat critical to clearly positive, depending on the topic. This gave rise to a multifaceted and nuanced depiction of the country. In terms of both tone and scope, foreign coverage was in line with the previous year. Switzerland enjoyed a very positive image among the general public abroad in 2025 and was one of the countries with the best reputation worldwide.
- **Key events in international media coverage of Switzerland:** Media perceptions of Switzerland abroad were particularly influenced by external events, with the exceptionally high punitive US tariffs on Swiss imports prompting the greatest media response in 2025. The dynamics surrounding the announcement, introduction and subsequent partial lifting of the tariffs dominated coverage on Switzerland for months. Media reports portrayed Switzerland both as an economically exposed country and as a pragmatic problem-solver. The Blatten landslide also received a great deal of global media attention. Switzerland therefore attracted foreign media attention primarily when its resilience, crisis management and problem-solving capacity were challenged and put to the test.
- **Very positive image of Switzerland among the foreign population:** In a survey conducted in the summer, Switzerland enjoyed an excellent overall reputation among the public abroad in 2025. According to the Anholt Nation Brands Index, it was one of the five best-rated nations in the world, achieving top results in particular in the areas of governance, political stability and quality of life. The Swiss are perceived abroad as likeable and competent. As in previous years, Switzerland's image in the area of culture and sport was more low-key.
- **Reservation due to the Crans-Montana fire disaster:** This analysis of Switzerland's image as seen from abroad in 2025 remains subject to the potential impact of the devastating fire in Crans-Montana on New Year's Eve, which claimed the lives of many young people from Switzerland and various other countries. The tragic event not only sparked widespread international shock and concern, but also an extraordinary level of media interest, which may have influenced the perception of Switzerland abroad. Because the cut-off period for this analysis is the end of the year, these effects are not yet covered here. This report assesses Switzerland's image up until this juncture and constitutes a reference point for categorising future changes in the international perception of Switzerland.

Presence Switzerland

As a unit within the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), Presence Switzerland is responsible for Switzerland's communication abroad. To help safeguard Switzerland's interests around the world, Presence Switzerland systematically analyses Switzerland's image abroad and implements communication measures tailored to specific target audiences. The communication tools used by Presence Switzerland encompass a range of activities. These include the execution of thematic campaigns, digital initiatives, and representing Switzerland at world expos. Presence Switzerland also manages the House of Switzerland at major international events, and oversees the implementation of communication projects, welcoming delegations to Switzerland, and media relations. The Federal Council regularly sets out the strategy for Switzerland's communication abroad.

Contact

FDFA, Presence Switzerland, Effingerstrasse 27, 3003 Bern, prs@eda.admin.ch

Table of contents

Key points in brief	3
Overview	5
Switzerland through the eyes of the foreign media	7
US trade policy	9
The Swiss financial centre	13
Switzerland's European policy	17
Direct democracy and Swiss politics	18
Security policy, neutrality and good offices	21
Environment and society	27
Major cultural and sporting events in Switzerland	28
Switzerland's image among populations abroad	30
Switzerland's image abroad in 2025	37

Overview

How was Switzerland perceived abroad in 2025? Which issues, events and narratives attracted attention in connection with Switzerland and how did they shape media coverage beyond the country's borders? This analysis by Presence Switzerland explores these questions.

National images are strongly influenced by entrenched stereotypes and are generally slow to change. However, this inertia is increasingly at odds with the current international environment, which is shaped by growing uncertainty and sometimes confrontation. The tone of public discourse has also become harsher. But particularly for smaller and medium-sized countries, which only have limited levers of influence, soft power based on a positive and stable image – understood as the ability of a country to exert influence and make an impact through attractiveness, trust and credibility – remains central. In an environment in which the rules-based international order faces erosion, a positive image can be a stabilising factor, for example helping to cushion disruptive developments in the economic sphere.

This report analyses Switzerland's image abroad from two key perspectives. The first one focuses on how Switzerland was covered in the main foreign media outlets and on social media. It examines the contexts in which the country featured in event-driven international news, the dominant patterns of interpretation and the overriding tone. But media attention follows its own laws: it is selective and generally favours exaggerated, conflictual or emotionally charged content. As a result, it does not reflect what is happening in the country as a whole or the nuanced perception of broad sections of the population. The second part of the report therefore analyses the perception of the public abroad. It is based on data from the 2025 Anholt Nation Brands Index (NBI), a representative survey conducted regularly in 20 countries that compares the image of a total of 50 nations based on various perception dimensions.

The issues that shape Switzerland's international image in any given year depend heavily on the global context. 2025 was once again characterised by geopolitical tensions, uncertainties in global trade and an increasing fragmentation of the international order. In this context, foreign media interest focused on Switzerland's political positioning, its economic resilience and its international role. Domestic political developments and major international events also influenced media perceptions.

Against this backdrop, Switzerland's image abroad in 2025 was balanced on the whole. No positive or negative narratives were strong enough to dominate the way Switzerland is seen. As in the previous year, foreign media coverage of Switzerland featured a mixture of criticism and praise. Both the scope and the tone of the media coverage were comparable overall. In particular, the issue of the exceptionally high punitive tariffs imposed by the US on Swiss imports brought Switzerland a great deal of media attention, some of it critical. What was striking in this context was the intense media debate about the role of the Swiss private sector in customs diplomacy. One of the key themes relating to the financial centre was UBS's handling of the plans to tighten banking regulation. In the area of the environment, the Blatten landslide received the most media attention. Switzerland's role as host of major international events generated positive media coverage. The staging of the Eurovision Song Contest in Basel was widely praised abroad, reinforcing the image of a cosmopolitan and friendly Switzerland that knows how to present itself on the international stage. The repeated media coverage of Swiss good offices – for example at high-level talks in Geneva – also helped to cement the country's positive image. This mixture of isolated criticism and a generally positive response is typical of the way that Switzerland was seen by foreign media in 2025.

According to the survey conducted in summer 2025, Switzerland had an extremely positive reputation among the public abroad, which was stable compared to previous years. It also scored very well in comparison with structurally similar countries. Its governance and political system were viewed particularly favourably, and it was also seen as an attractive place to live and work. This image was further bolstered by the view of the Swiss people as likeable and well-qualified. As in previous years, the picture was somewhat more muted in the areas of culture and sport.

This analysis of how Switzerland was seen internationally in 2025 comes with an important caveat. In the early hours of New Year's Day, a devastating fire broke out in Crans-Montana, claiming the lives of many, mostly young people from Switzerland and various other countries. The tragic event prompted widespread shock and sympathy at home and abroad and overshadowed the start of 2026. It will take a long time to come to terms with this tragedy. However, there are already indications that this incident, which also prompted a huge media response, may have influenced the way Switzerland is seen by the world. Despite this, the fact that it occurred on New Year's 2026 means that its impact will not be examined in our analysis here. This report assesses Switzerland's image before this watershed moment – and provides a reference point for categorising future changes in the way Switzerland is seen internationally.

Switzerland through the eyes of the foreign media

**«The alpine nation
that spent centuries
perfecting the art of independence
is learning, against its will,
the price of isolation
in an age of economic war-fare
and aggressive mercantilism.»**

**Foreign Policy, USA
11.11.2025**



**«Of all the countries
that expected to be immune
to President Trump's tariffs,
Switzerland was at the top
of the list.»**

**The New York Times, USA
04.04.2025**

**«Die Schweiz setzte auf die USA
statt auf die EU – das rächt sich jetzt
im Zollkrieg»**

**Der Standard, Österreich
10.08.2025**

US trade policy

Few topics featured as heavily in foreign media coverage of Switzerland in 2025 than the impact on it of the US government's protectionist trade policy. Reports focused on reactions to the announced and subsequently implemented punitive tariffs on Swiss imports, their economic consequences and international perceptions of Switzerland in the context of the negotiations with Washington. The announcement of US tariffs on imports from numerous countries at the beginning of April not only dominated the global news, but also foreign reporting on Switzerland. Following the announcement of the planned tariff rate for Switzerland, many articles highlighted that Switzerland was one of the most affected countries and would be significantly harder hit than the EU, for example. Many media outlets interpreted this as a failure of Switzerland's previous strategy of distancing itself from the EU on trade policy to guard against harsh US punitive measures, which had been viewed with scepticism by its neighbours in particular.

Early on, foreign media repeatedly analysed the impact of these high US tariffs on important **Swiss export industries** – including the watchmaking industry, the pharmaceutical sector and mechanical engineering. Economic consequences such as exchange rate reactions, a possible shift of production abroad and the decline in export momentum also received media attention. Over the course of the year, many media repeatedly questioned whether closer ties with the EU could provide Switzerland with a more stable economic policy foundation in future. The experience with the US tariffs was frequently interpreted as a possible turning point in Switzerland's foreign economic policy strategy.

Reporting on this topic reached a new high when the **39% tariff on Swiss goods came into effect** on 1 August 2025. The unusually high tariff made international headlines. The world's leading media outlets saw the US government's move as particularly drastic for export-orientated Switzerland, reporting that the country had been caught off guard by the decision and was left reeling. Some media analyses also speculated about a possible mishandling of diplomatic relations. Various reports suggested that Switzerland had relied too heavily on special treatment from the US, leading it to react too late to the threat of tariffs. The telephone conversation between Swiss President Karin Keller-Sutter and US President Donald Trump shortly before the announcement of the tariffs and the subsequent, initially unsuccessful attempts by the Swiss delegation to renegotiate the tariff rate also received widespread media attention.

The conclusion of a **memorandum of understanding between Switzerland and the US** to reduce US tariffs to 15% in November once again sparked considerable media coverage abroad. The agreement was regarded internationally as an economic liberation for Switzerland. At the same time, the reports also focussed on the terms of the agreement – including Switzerland’s announcement of investments totalling USD 200 billion in the US. Amid the emerging domestic political debate, some foreign media reports questioned whether Switzerland had gone too far in accommodating the Trump administration. In addition, many media outlets **criticised the way in which the agreement came about**. The role of a delegation of Swiss business leaders, who had met with President Trump a few weeks earlier, proved particularly controversial. Even at the time, foreign media viewed the meeting with scepticism. Although it was emphasised that this was not an official government mission, various media questioned whether it was appropriate for economic players to represent Switzerland’s key interests alongside government officials.

The prominent role of the private sector in the negotiations with the US sparked an ongoing discussion in the media about the boundary between economic lobbying and political influence. The role of the delegation of business leaders also sparked controversy due to the **expensive gifts presented** to President Trump during the meeting – a personalised gold bar and a Rolex desk clock. Several reports pointedly referred to these gifts as a dubious means of exerting influence, suggesting they were ethically questionable. In Germany, where the criticism was particularly harsh, some articles went as far as accusing Switzerland of “state-sanctioned corruption” and “capitulation to Trump”. The symbolism of this episode was widely interpreted in the media as reflecting a strategic **dilemma between state integrity and economic pragmatism**.



**«The Gold Bar Diplomacy
That Won Switzerland
a Trade Deal With Trump»**

The Wall Street Journal, USA

14.11.2025

**«Der Zoll-Deal mit Trump
ist ein Armutszeugnis für die Schweiz.
Die Regierung hat vor
der Macht des Geldes kapituliert
und einer Handvoll Wirtschaftsführern
das Heft des Handelns überlassen.»**

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Deutschland

16.11.2025

**«Nach dem Untergang der Credit Suisse
zieht die Schweizer Regierung
in der Bankenregulierung die Zügel an.»**

**Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Deutschland
06.06.2025**

**«No matter how well UBS performs,
its future is overshadowed
by a host of misfortunes,
with the ATI scuffle
and the Swiss government's efforts
to hike the bank's capital
demands uppermost.»**

**Bloomberg, USA
30.10.2025**

 **UBS**



The Swiss financial centre

In 2025, international coverage of the Swiss financial centre was dominated by the political and legal **review of the emergency takeover of Credit Suisse by UBS**. Reports focused on the various implications and challenges arising from the CS collapse for Switzerland and for the merged major bank. The Federal Administrative Court's judgment on the write-down of AT1 bonds, for example, attracted some media attention, with articles describing in detail the court's finding that FINMA lacked the legal basis for the complete write-down. In this context, many reports discussed possible compensation claims running into the billions and raised the question of whether UBS or the Swiss state would ultimately have to pay. The resulting uncertainty was repeatedly classified as a risk for the bank and the Swiss financial centre.

Reporting on the financial centre also centred on the debate surrounding Switzerland's **future banking regulation**. The proposals presented by the Federal Council in early summer to increase the capital requirements for systemically important banks were seen as a drastic consequence of the collapse of CS. At the same time, many media reports emphasised that these were provisional measures that could be watered down in the political process. Much of the coverage centred on UBS's viewpoint rejecting the proposals as a threat to its international competitiveness, and on the bank's intensive lobbying activities. Speculation about a possible relocation of UBS's head office to the US in response to the new capital requirements also met with widespread interest, prompting various media outlets to raise the question of the significance of the bank's Swiss originating status.

Specific **challenges facing UBS** as the legal successor to Credit Suisse were also the subject of international reporting in various contexts. Repeated mention was made of the renewed allegations of CS's cover-up of its Nazi ties and an ongoing investigation by the US Senate Committee into missing Holocaust assets. Other CS legacy legal issues, including proceedings in the US for aiding and abetting tax evasion, and a conviction by an EU court for participating in a cartel, featured only moderately in foreign media coverage. UBS, on the other hand, occasionally made headlines due to its own legal proceedings – for example in connection with a settlement with the French government for supporting French citizens in tax evasion, which resulted in UBS agreeing to pay millions in penalties and compensation.

Other financial institutions only featured sporadically in foreign media. There was coverage of the enforcement proceedings initiated by FINMA against the bank Julius Baer due to high losses in connection with the Signa Group and of a FINMA investigation into the bank Reyl linked to suspected anti-money laundering gaps. Meanwhile, HSBC's Swiss unit reportedly ended business relationships with a number of Middle Eastern clients after breaches of anti-money laundering regulations came to light. The management shake-up at Julius Baer, a cyberattack on UBS and Pictet, and the ongoing consolidation within the Swiss banking sector also garnered media interest.

Various reports in foreign media also looked at the **state of the Swiss financial centre** in general. It received mixed assessments. While most coverage emphasised that the location continues to be characterised by institutional reliability and political stability, various reports noted that it is under pressure, particularly due to uncertainties in connection with legal proceedings, planned regulatory reforms and ongoing reputational damage in the wake of the CS collapse. In light of the above, several pieces projected that Switzerland would lose some of its attractiveness as an international asset management location, highlighting the growing competition from other financial centres.



**«In Swiss they trust,
though the banks are not
as cool as before»**

***The Economic Times, Indien
25.06.2025***

**«A proudly independent
European nation
confronted with
a stark political choice»**

**Financial Times, UK
01.07.2025**

**«Rational ist vielen Schweizern
durchaus bewusst,
dass sie ihren Wohlstand
in erheblichem Mass der engen
Verflechtung mit Europa verdanken.
Emotional sträuben sie sich aber
gegen eine engere Anbindung.»**

**Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Deutschland
12.02.2025**

#SwissEUrelation



Switzerland's European policy

In 2025, relations between Switzerland and the European Union received only moderate media attention abroad in terms of volume of coverage, although they featured regularly. The **agreement reached in December 2024 in the negotiations between Switzerland and the EU** to stabilise and further develop the bilateral approach attracted a certain amount of attention at the start of the year. Analyses of the political significance of the agreement appeared primarily in neighbouring countries, with some comments in this context also pointing to a deeply rooted Euroscepticism among the Swiss population. The articles also frequently emphasised that the agreement was yet to be ratified and had to overcome the hurdle of a potential referendum. The economic impact of a possible failure of the agreement was a topic of discussion in the German media in particular.

As the year progressed, foreign media occasionally picked up on **current domestic political debates** surrounding the agreement. Mention was made, for example, of the threat voiced by Swiss People's Party (SVP) representatives that individual cantons could secede if the agreement was approved, as well as the 'Compass Initiative' launched by a group of Eurosceptic entrepreneurs, which seeks to raise the bar of acceptance. Another recurring topic that could potentially impact relations with the EU was the SVP initiative to cap Switzerland's population at 10 million. Known as the 'Sustainability Initiative', it seeks to limit immigration and, if necessary, to terminate the free movement of persons, which would jeopardise the bilateral agreements. Various foreign media emphasised that although the Federal Council, Parliament and the business community were against the initiative, its success at the ballot box could not be ruled out.

In addition to the political and economic aspects of a possible advancement of relations with the EU, concrete cooperation projects were mentioned positively – such as the agreement on Swiss participation in the research programme **Horizon Europe** and cooperation with Poland as part of the **second Swiss contribution** for selected EU member states. In light of the tariff dispute with the US, several foreign media outlets ultimately raised the question of whether this would lead Switzerland to seek closer ties with the EU. A number of reports noted that from Switzerland's perspective the EU is again moving to the core of economic policy considerations.

Direct democracy and Swiss politics

As in previous years, various federal referendums attracted a great deal of foreign media attention, although the response varied depending on the topic. The **JUSO inheritance tax initiative**, which was voted on in the autumn, received particularly widespread attention. Coverage focussed primarily on the feared economic consequences of acceptance – such as a possible exodus of wealthy taxpayers. There have also been various discussions as to whether this initiative could change Switzerland’s image as a safe haven for high-net-worth individuals. On the basis of the polls conducted prior to the vote and the subsequent clear rejection of the initiative, the media spoke of a clear commitment by the electorate to a wealth-friendly tax policy.

Other proposals, such as the ‘Civic Duty Initiative’, the abolition of the imputed rental value or highly specific local issues such as the Zurich vote on banning petrol-powered leaf blowers, also attracted media attention. The rejection of the ‘Environmental Responsibility Initiative’ was mainly picked up by European media and was mostly discussed in factual terms. The vote on digital identity (e-ID) received some attention in the UK as the government there recently unveiled plans for a similar project.

Switzerland’s political system itself was also a recurring theme in international reporting. Foreign media coverage on Switzerland repeatedly highlighted the opportunities for the public to participate in political life, the trust in institutions and the involvement of a wide range of societal stakeholders in the government. The Swiss **model of direct democracy** was explicitly cited several times as an example, and the Glarus Landsgemeinde was mentioned in particular as a positive illustration of grassroots democracy in action. Meanwhile, individual comments drew attention to potential **challenges for the system**: for example, direct democracy can sometimes lead to economic risks that are difficult to calculate – such as in connection with the inheritance tax debate and the bilateral negotiations with the EU.




**«Et surtout,
de votation en votation,
les citoyens helvétiques
font preuve
d'une maturité exemplaire.»**

**L'Éxpress, Frankreich
01.12.2025**

**«Unser Nachbarland, die Schweiz,
hat [...] das derzeit
wahrscheinlich beste
Demokratiesystem weltweit.»**

**Der Standard, Österreich
22.02.2025**





«Die Schweiz wird sich bald die Frage stellen müssen, welche Rolle sie in einem sich auch sicherheitspolitisch neu sortierenden Europa einnehmen möchte.»

**Süddeutsche Zeitung, Deutschland
14.03.2025**



**«Auch die Schweiz
kann sich als Loch im Donut
nicht mehr sicher fühlen.»**

**Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Deutschland
03.03.2025**

Security policy, neutrality and good offices

Amid global geopolitical tensions and security policy challenges, Switzerland also became the focus of foreign media attention at certain points in 2025. The reporting covered a wide range of topics. In view of the changing threat situation in Europe, **Switzerland's security and defence policy** and its role within the European defence system were a topic of discussion on multiple occasions. Some leading German media outlets labelled Switzerland a 'free rider' in terms of security policy, claiming it relies on its neutrality without making a significant contribution to Europe's collective security. President Karin Keller-Sutter's comments on controversial passages from US Vice President JD Vance's speech at the Munich Security Conference were also interpreted in the German media as one-sided praise and came under fire in some quarters. Foreign media outlets reported more objectively – albeit less prominently – on the planned closer cooperation with the EU in arms procurement and Switzerland's participation in the Military Mobility project launched under PESCO, the EU defence initiative.

The structural weaknesses of the **Swiss Armed Forces** were also discussed. The resignation of Federal Councillor Viola Amherd and other key leaders in the DDPS and the army at the beginning of the year was seen by some leading European media as a sign of a leadership crisis within Switzerland's defence policy institutions. Difficulties with defence procurement also attracted media attention – in particular the cost increase for the F-35A fighter jets ordered from the US. The price increases demanded by the US for the jets and the resulting domestic political discussions were mainly picked up by the media in neighbouring countries. The debate on **relaxing the rules for the re-export of Swiss-made war material** also attracted some attention. The planned amendment to the War Material Act was primarily seen as an economic policy measure to bolster the ailing Swiss defence industry and an associated more pragmatic interpretation of neutrality.

The Ukraine war remained the central point of reference for the media debate on **Swiss neutrality** in 2025. Although media interest in Switzerland's stance on the Ukraine war declined in comparison to previous years, Russian media continued to report regularly on the accusation that Switzerland had lost its status as a neutral and credible mediator by adopting Western sanctions and organising the Summit on Peace in Ukraine at the Bürgenstock resort without Russian participation. At the same time, media around the world reported on Swiss diplomatic initiatives – including the unofficial talks between Russian and US representatives on Swiss soil, Switzerland's offer to organise a meeting between Presidents Putin and Trump and the proposals made by various parties to hold a possible Russian-Ukrainian summit in Geneva. Although Russia repeatedly rejected mediation offers, Geneva was repeatedly mentioned in the media as a possible venue for peace talks.

Switzerland's good offices – which include helping to resolve international conflict through facilitation and mediation, exercising protecting power mandates, and taking on the role of host state – elicited a mixed response in the media. On the one hand, various reports spoke discussed how Switzerland's host state role could dwindle in importance, referring to increasing competition from other diplomatic centres. On the other, Geneva attracted huge media attention due to the high-level trade talks between the US and China held in the city and the peace dialogue on Ukraine initiated by the US in November. Although Switzerland's role was rarely front and centre, foreign reporting repeatedly drew attention to International Geneva as a traditional place of dialogue during a period of major challenges, strengthening Switzerland's image as a relevant diplomatic location.



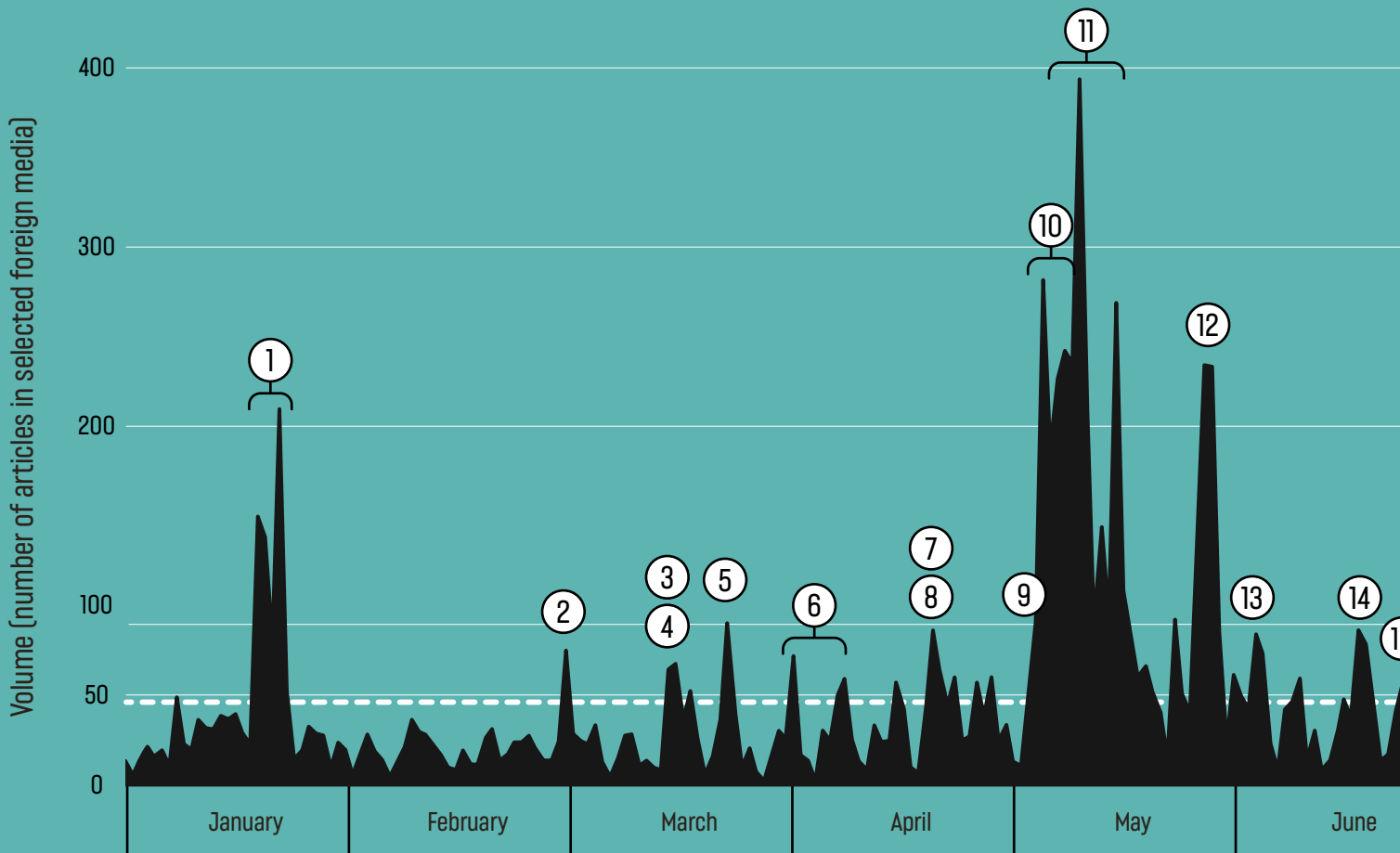


***«Geneva once again
finds itself hosting high-stakes
trade talks between
the world's biggest economies.»***

***The Economist, UK
07.05.2025***

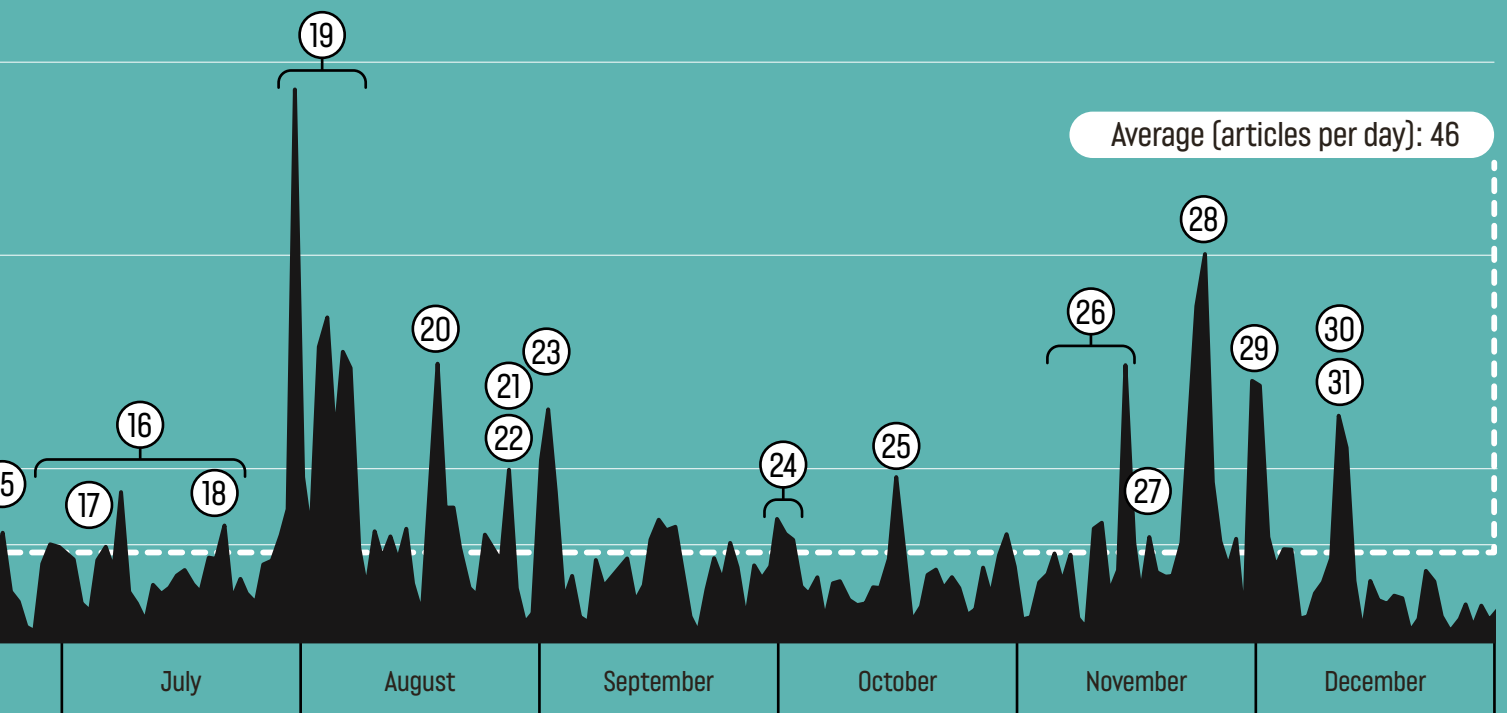
Infographic 1

Trends in foreign media coverage of Switzerland in 2025

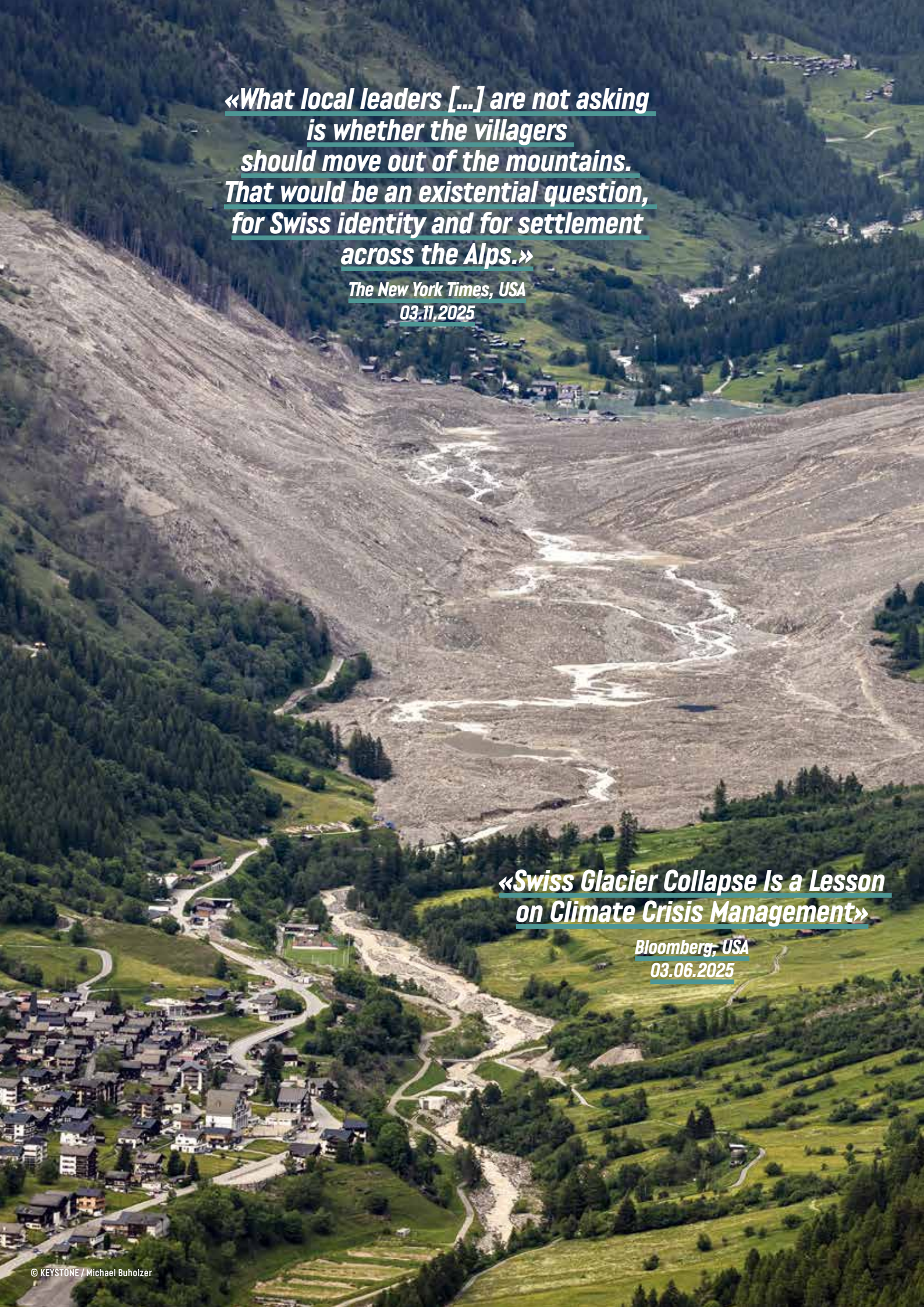


Chronological listing of key Swiss-related events in the foreign press. The numbered events have been selected and explained further in the report based on their volume and significance.

- 1 World Economic Forum (WEF)
- 2 Federal Criminal Court: start of appeal proceedings against former football officials Sepp Blatter and Michel Platini
- 3 Banking regulation: reports on possible implications for UBS
- 4 Death of Swiss writer Peter Bichsel
- 5 Federal Criminal Court: appeal judgment in case against Sepp Blatter and Michel Platini
- 6 US tariffs: reports on the impact of planned tariffs against Switzerland
- 7 US tariffs: reports on the impact of planned tariffs against Switzerland
- 8 Klaus Schwab steps down as Chair of the WEF Board of Trustees
- 9 UBS/CS: settlement in US tax dispute
- 10 US tariffs: announcement and holding of talks between the United States and China in Geneva



- | | |
|--|--|
| 11 Eurovision Song Contest (ESC) in Basel | 22 Federal Criminal Court: appeal judgment against Sepp Blatter and Michel Platini becomes final |
| 12 Landslide hits Blatten (VS) after glacier collapse | 23 Nestlé dismisses CEO |
| 13 Banking regulation: Federal Council's proposal | 24 Reports on accelerating glacier melt in Switzerland |
| 14 SNB: Key interest rate cut | 25 Job cuts at Nestlé |
| 15 Reports on the impact of climate change on the Swiss Alps | 26 US tariffs: Swiss business representatives meet President Trump; gold gifts; signing of a letter of intent between Switzerland and the United States to reduce US tariffs |
| 16 UEFA Women's EURO 2025 in Switzerland | 27 UBS/CS: exploratory talks on possible relocation of UBS head office to the United States |
| 17 Access restrictions at Porrentruy public swimming pool (JU) | 28 High-level talks in Geneva between the United States and Ukraine on possible peace negotiations |
| 18 UBS/CS: EU General Court ruling over Credit Suisse cartel case | 29 Federal vote: inheritance tax initiative |
| 19 US tariffs: announcement of a 39% tariff rate for Switzerland; Federal Council delegation in Washington, DC | 30 Yodel inscribed on UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list |
| 20 Geneva discussed as potential venue for possible meeting between Zelensky and Putin | 31 Nemo returns ESC trophy |
| 21 Rioting in the Prélaz district of Lausanne | |

An aerial photograph of a mountain valley. A large, light-colored debris flow (moraine) dominates the center of the valley, with a winding stream of water cutting through it. In the foreground, a village with several buildings is visible, surrounded by green fields and forests. The background shows steep, rocky mountain slopes.

**«What local leaders [...] are not asking
is whether the villagers
should move out of the mountains.
That would be an existential question,
for Swiss identity and for settlement
across the Alps.»**

**The New York Times, USA
03.11.2025**

**«Swiss Glacier Collapse Is a Lesson
on Climate Crisis Management»**

**Bloomberg, USA
03.06.2025**



Environment and society

In 2025, Switzerland also attracted foreign media attention several times in connection with natural disasters, the effects of climate change, issues of cohesion and social tensions. The **glacier collapse caused by a landslide above Blatten in the canton of Valais** attracted a great deal of international media attention in early summer. Foreign media reported on the incident in detail – from the early evacuation and the extensive destruction of the village to the gradual easing of the situation. Some reports praised the effective early warning system and the way the Swiss authorities handled the crisis. Numerous articles linked the disaster directly or indirectly to climate change and focussed on Switzerland as an example of the challenges posed by the global climate crisis. Reports by several leading international media outlets painted a compelling picture of climate-induced changes in the Alps – such as thawing permafrost and the associated geological risks in mountain regions. Amid the discussions about the reconstruction of Blatten, several reports also addressed fundamental questions about the sustainability of Alpine forms of settlement and the **importance of mountain life** to Swiss identity. Reports particularly focused on the progressive retreat of Swiss glaciers, often referring to it as a tangible sign of global warming. Some media outlets reported on Switzerland's permafrost temperatures – the highest since records began – as evidence that the country is particularly affected by climate change.

In addition, the violent **riots by young people in the Prélaz neighbourhood of Lausanne** attracted widespread media attention in the late summer. The riots broke out after a fatal accident involving a teenager with a migrant background who was fleeing from the police. Some of the reports emphasised the unusual scale of the violence by local standards and expressed surprise that even Switzerland, which is considered stable and peaceful, faced such fierce protests against police violence. Foreign media also picked up on the **restrictions on access to the outdoor swimming pool in Porrentruy**, where the local authority only allowed Swiss nationals and those with permanent residence or a residence permit to enter. Reporting on the measure was predominantly factual. On social media and in isolated articles, the decision was both welcomed and seen as a sign of growing social tensions.

Major cultural and sporting events in Switzerland

Switzerland received a great deal of praise and a very positive overall response in the foreign media for its role as host of two internationally recognised major events in the fields of music and sport. The **69th Eurovision Song Contest (ESC)**, which was held in Basel following Nemo's victory in 2024, attracted a great deal of media attention. Individual reports on the competition were published in the run-up to the event, including some in-depth profiles of the host city. From the opening ceremony to the final, the event attracted an enormous amount of media coverage. In addition to the artists' performances, controversies and protests surrounding Israel's participation also garnered a certain amount of media attention. The actions of the Swiss organisers did not come under particular scrutiny, although some reports praised Switzerland for managing to stage a smooth event in Basel despite the protests. Both the city on the Rhine and Switzerland as a whole received a great deal of praise in the foreign media for the professional organisation, hospitality and the **engaging way the country was portrayed**. Many articles emphasised that Switzerland had presented itself as a friendly and versatile host country during the ESC.

By comparison, the media coverage of the **UEFA Women's EURO 2025** – the European Women's Football Championship held in eight Swiss cities – was lower in terms of volume, but equally positive. In addition to match reports and sporting analyses, numerous articles also covered the host country and its venues. Foreign media particularly lauded the involvement and enthusiasm of the public, the buzzing atmosphere in the fan miles, the good organisation, the event's overall appeal and ultimately also its impact on tourism. At the same time, some criticisms were also levelled, such as Switzerland's high prices, minor infrastructural shortcomings and the development of women's football in Switzerland, in some cases described as sluggish. Overall, however, Switzerland came across as a **dedicated and successful host** and several foreign media highlighted the fact that the tournament had given women's football a further boost.

«**Magnificent country.
Magnificent entertainment.**»

**The Times, UK
18.05.2025**



**«Euro 2025 :
carton d'audience
et de billetterie,
ambiance dans les rues ...**

**Pari réussi
pour la Suisse»**

franceinfo, Frankreich

12.07.2025

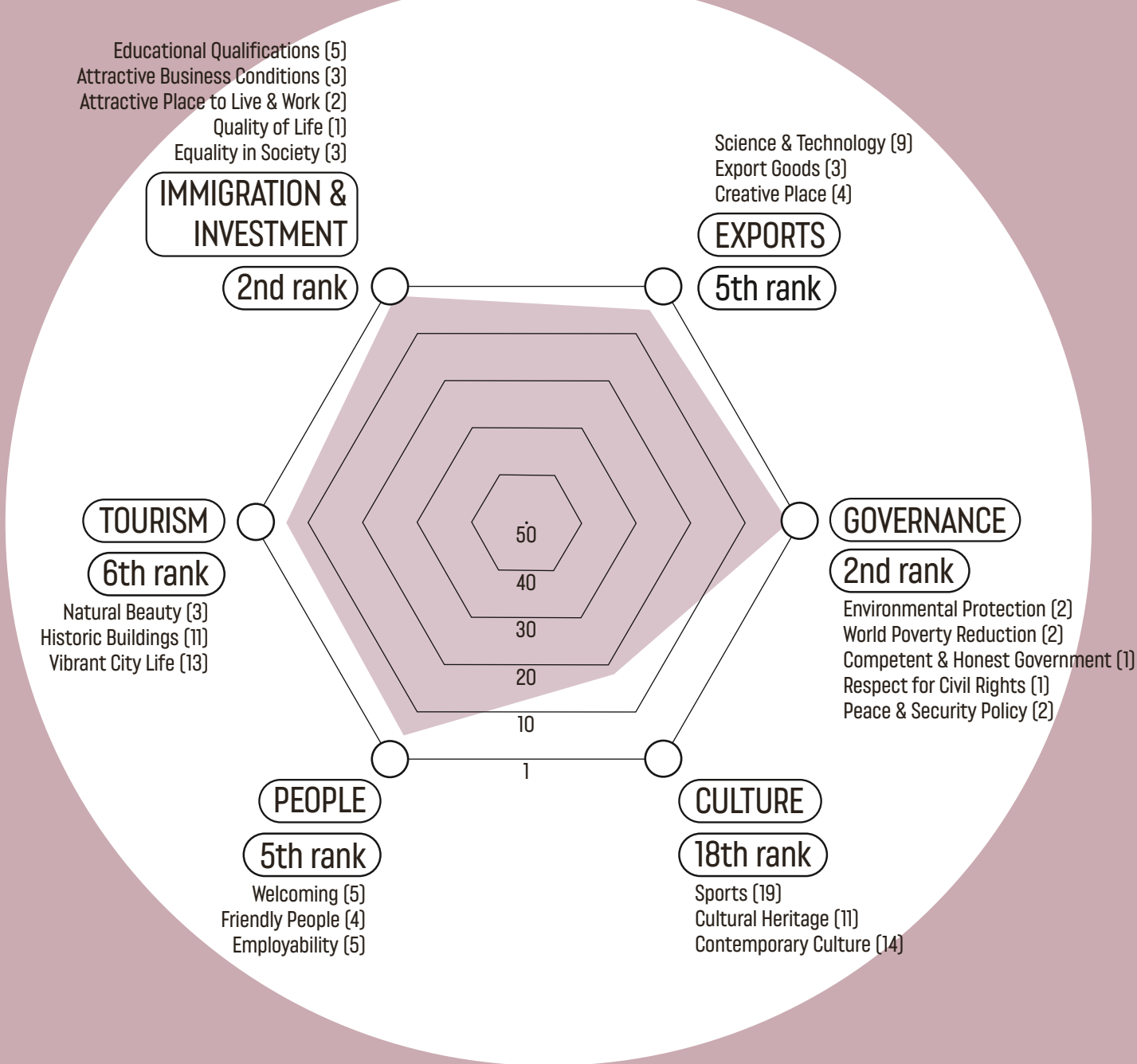


Switzerland's image among populations abroad

Infographic 2

Switzerland's image according to the Nation Brands Index 2025

NBI Total: 5th rank



The chart shows Switzerland's ranking in the NBI's six dimensions of perception, as well as in each of their respective indicators. Example: under 'governance', Switzerland ranks first based on the public opinion of 20 countries because it is perceived as a nation with a competent government (1st); a respect for civil rights (1st); and a global commitment to peace and security (2nd), environmental protection (2nd), and poverty reduction (2nd).

Analysing foreign media reports provides valuable insights into how Switzerland is portrayed abroad. Having said that, editorial and social media in particular react strongly to current events. The image they convey is therefore often a snapshot that may fluctuate significantly. More deeply rooted public attitudes develop much more slowly, remain more stable and therefore do not necessarily tally with the current topics of media coverage. Meaningful reputation monitoring therefore looks at both levels: only a combination of media analyses and **the views of the general public** can provide a nuanced overall picture of how Switzerland is perceived abroad.

Longer-term attitude patterns among the general population are best captured by opinion polls. The Nation Brands Index (NBI) provides a sound basis for this (see info box on page 41). Based on representative samples and standardised surveys, the NBI annually measures the power and appeal of a total of 50 country images as viewed by the public in 20 countries. The survey allows Switzerland's image to be compared with that of other countries and highlights its particular strengths and weaknesses in this regard. It is conducted regularly, allowing developments in reputation to be tracked over time. To determine the country's image, the index takes into account **six dimensions of national competence**: exports and innovation; governance; culture and sport; people; tourism; and immigration, investment and quality of life. In each of these dimensions, respondents are asked about 3–5 specific attributes. Based on the scores obtained from the responses, rankings are created for each individual attribute, each dimension and for the overall image of all countries assessed. The respective ranks thus show how Switzerland is perceived in comparison to the 49 other countries analysed with regard to an individual attribute, a dimension or the overall image.

According to the results of the survey conducted in summer 2025, Switzerland ranked fifth out of the total of 50 countries assessed in the NBI. As in previous years, it was one of the nations with the best overall image worldwide and was the best-ranked small or medium-sized country. On the whole, Switzerland also had a **very positive and largely balanced perception profile** in the individual sub-dimensions of the NBI. In five of the six dimensions surveyed, it was among the ten best-ranked countries (see infographic 2). Switzerland performed particularly strongly on the governance dimension. Ranking second overall (behind Canada) and topping the list on two of the five attributes, the country was seen by the public abroad as being competently and honestly governed and having strong respect for the rights of its citizens. Switzerland also achieved very good ratings on peace and security, environmental protection and the fight against poverty. Another pillar of Switzerland's positive image was its appeal as a place to live and work and its high quality of life. Here too, Switzerland achieved an excellent second place behind Canada, driven by its top rating for quality of life and its perception as an attractive place to work. Switzerland ranked fifth in the exports and innovation dimension, with Swiss products enjoying great popularity abroad. Science and technology also received solid – albeit slightly more muted – assessments. Switzerland also achieved fifth place in the people dimension, with

the Swiss being considered likeable and well qualified. In terms of tourism, Switzerland's sixth place rank was largely driven by its landscape, which is seen as attractive. Only in the dimension of culture and sport did Switzerland fare slightly less well, ranking in the upper mid-tier at 18th place.

In this dimension, the difference between short-term media sentiment and long-term public attitudes described above is thus clearly evident. At 18th place, Switzerland is exactly in line with its long-term average of the last 15 years in this dimension. The fact that Nemo won the Eurovision Song Contest for Switzerland in 2024, showcasing Swiss cultural creativity, and that Basel hosted the competition in spring 2025 (just before the NBI surveys were conducted in the summer) made no meaningful difference to the perception of Switzerland's cultural relevance abroad, despite the extremely positive media response in both cases. This illustrates that although media highlights attract attention in the short term, deeply rooted image attributions usually take much longer to change.

As robust as country images generally are, the current NBI ranking also reflects the changing conditions in the field of soft power. Growing international tensions and the internal political upheaval in various countries – which are also reflected in public discourse – are also having an impact on the general public's perceptions. This results in unusually strong fluctuations in reputation, as shown by the increasing volatility of the rankings. Against this backdrop, **Switzerland's consistently high and stable ranking** is particularly striking. It points to an image built on solid foundations, which is less characterised by short-term developments and more based on trust built up over the long term. Switzerland has consistently been among the ten most admired countries in the world in the NBI ranking since 2010. Japan topped the current overall NBI rankings for the third time in a row. It is followed by other established industrialised nations such as Germany, Canada and Italy (see infographic 3). As mentioned above, the top ten has seen some major shifts in recent years. Following the election of Donald Trump as US President, the reputation of the US declined significantly from 2017, falling from first place down to tenth by 2020. The image of the US recovered slightly after Trump lost the 2020 presidential election. However, at the start of Trump's second term in office, the US fell to 14th place in 2025. Meanwhile, Spain made it into the top ten for the first time. The shifts in Switzerland's ranking over the last three years – in particular its rise from seventh to fourth place in 2024 – were primarily due to changes in other countries and less to changes in Switzerland's own image. If we also look at the scores on which the ranking is based for 2025, Switzerland's score is very close to Italy's. The slight drop in rank compared to the previous year should therefore not be over-interpreted.

Differences between the countries assessed and deviations in their ratings compared to the previous year can also indicate where Switzerland's image is strongest and where changes are becoming apparent. For this reason, the **country-specific NBI ranks for Switzerland** over the past two years are analysed in more detail below (see infographic 4). It should be noted

that although the NBI provides indications of changing perceptions in individual countries, it does not allow any conclusions to be drawn about what causes these changes. Well-founded explanations of the causes can only be derived from further context-related analyses or through supplementary research methods.

An analysis of the country-specific ratings shows that although Switzerland had a clearly positive image in all 20 countries surveyed in 2025, its very strong overall position in the NBI was not reflected to the same extent everywhere. Switzerland was rated best in Germany, where it once again achieved second place in summer 2025. It also achieved excellent results in Turkey, Russia and Poland, where it was ranked third. This is particularly noteworthy in the case of Russia, as the Russian government has repeatedly criticised Switzerland, saying it is no longer neutral and credible in the context of the war in Ukraine. This narrative, which is also widespread in the media, has evidently done little to detract from Switzerland's positive image among the Russian people. Most Western European countries also ranked Switzerland among the top ten nations, albeit not consistently in the top spots, while the assessments in Latin America were slightly more positive on average.

Changes were also seen in some countries compared to 2024. However, year-on-year rises and falls in the ratings were roughly balanced. Switzerland recorded significant image gains in Poland and Saudi Arabia, where it climbed three places in each case. Positive developments were also apparent in Russia, Brazil, Canada and the UK. By contrast, there was a slight downward trend in perception in the Asia-Pacific region – in South Korea, Japan, China and Australia – as well as in France and the US. Switzerland's rating in South Africa deteriorated relatively sharply, dropping four spots and slipping to 11th place. It therefore ranked outside the top ten both in the US and in South Africa, where it received ratings lower than any of the other countries surveyed.

Overall, the country comparison shows that Switzerland's image **is broad-based and remains very strong internationally**. In many countries, the positive perception is stable or even improving slightly. However, isolated negative swings – such as the one in South Africa – show that even a very strong country image cannot be taken for granted and may face occasional challenges. Such developments should therefore be seen as impetus for targeted reputation monitoring and continuous cultivation of the country's image.

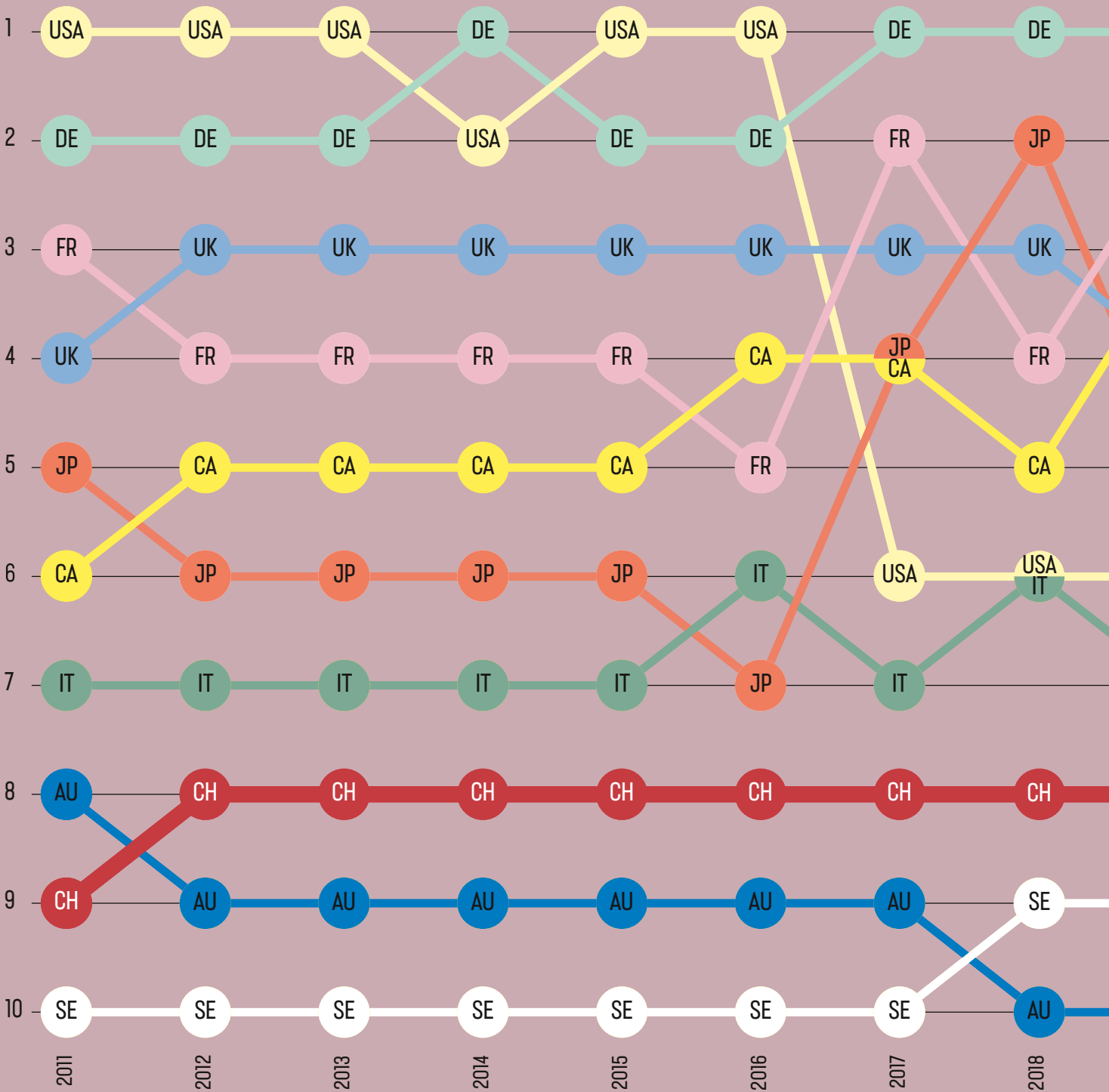
The Anholt Nation Brands Index

The Anholt Nation Brands Index (NBI) gauges the reputation of 50 countries among the general public on an annual basis. Six dimensions are taken into account to determine a country's image: exports and innovation; governance; culture and sport; people; tourism; and immigration, investment and quality of life. NBI surveys are conducted in 20 countries. In each of these panel countries, around 2,000 people aged 18 or over are surveyed online. In 2025, the NBI was based on a total sample of some 40,000 interviews. The surveys were conducted in the following countries between July and August 2025: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Turkey, the UK, and the US.

Infographic 3

NBI top ten rankings since 2011

Rank (out of a total of 50)

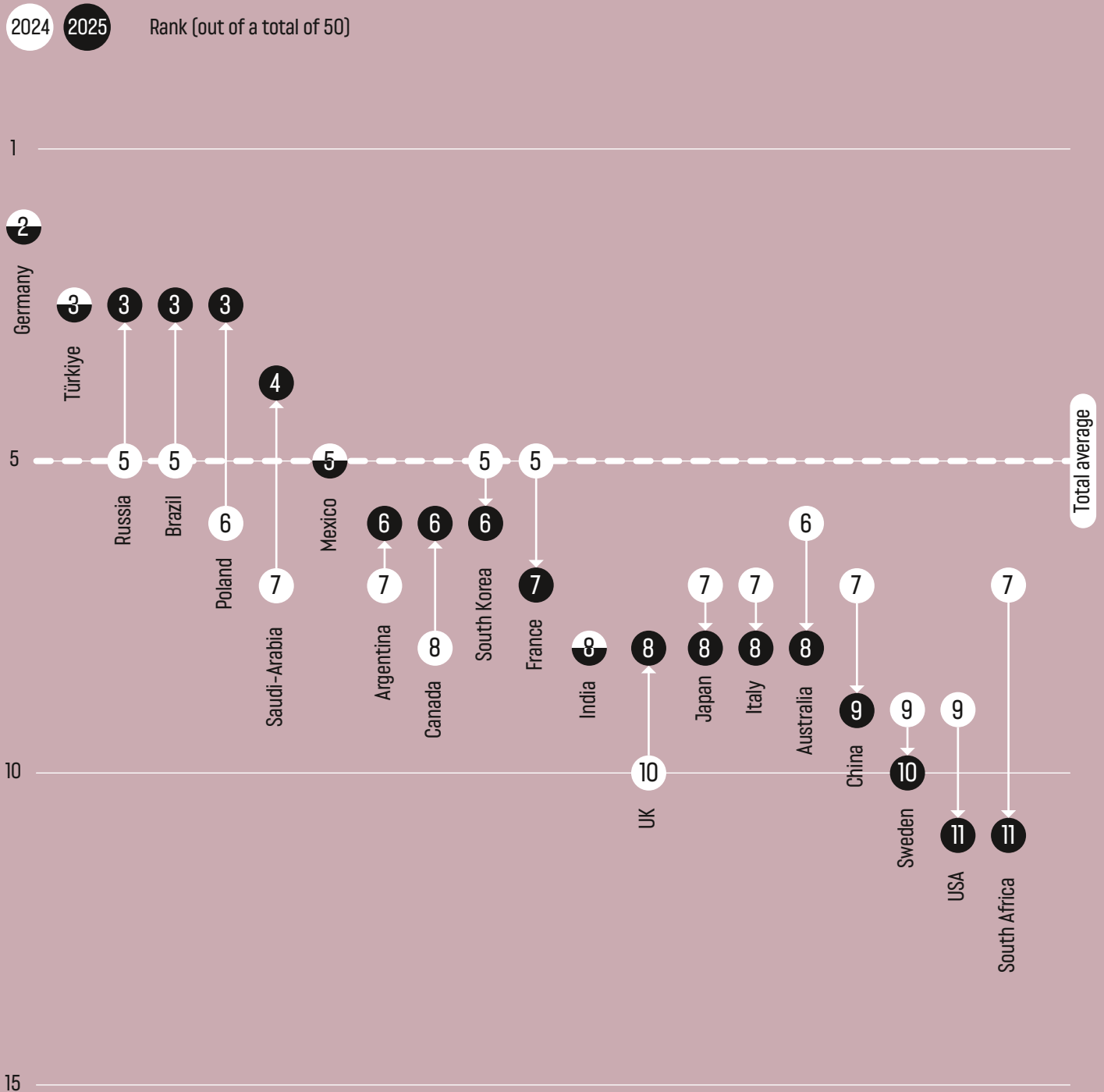


Overview of the development in overall rankings of the ten most favourably viewed countries in the Nation Brands Index since 2011. Japan currently leads the ranking, and in 2025 Switzerland holds a very strong 5th place. The survey assesses the image of 50 countries.

Source: Anholt Nation Brands Index 2025
 N₂₀₂₅ = 40'000

Infographic 4

Switzerland's overall ranking among countries surveyed for the NBI in 2024 and 2025



The chart compares Switzerland's overall ranking in 2024 and 2025 among the 20 countries surveyed for the NBI. Example: In 2025 Switzerland had the second-best image among the German public. It already ranked second in Germany in 2024.

Source: Anholt Nation Brands Index 2024 and 2025
 N₂₀₂₄ = 38'000, N₂₀₂₅ = 40'000

Switzerland's image abroad in 2025

The present analysis shows that Switzerland's image abroad in 2025 was balanced on the whole. No positive or negative narratives were strong enough to dominate the way Switzerland is seen from abroad. It was a year of complex impressions, in which the way Switzerland was portrayed in foreign media varied between somewhat critical and clearly positive, depending on the topic. Although Switzerland's image came under pressure in certain instances, it was able to maintain its fundamentally positive reputation in the international arena.

The volume and intensity of foreign media coverage in 2025 was at a similar level to the previous year. Switzerland did not receive an above-average amount of attention, but it was regularly reported on in connection with relevant political, economic and social topics – with a more positive or more critical tone depending on the context. For example, it came across on the one hand as a politically stable country with a high quality of life, but on the other as a country that is strongly affected by external developments and is in the process of defining its path and its role at international level in an increasingly challenging global context. Against this backdrop, the narrative of Switzerland being heavily dependent on external developments and events also emerged in various contexts in foreign reporting – for example in connection with the protectionist US trade policy or the glacier collapse above Blatten. The country was not portrayed as weakened or powerless across the board, however. Various foreign media outlets also interpreted Swiss (foreign) policy, its economic model and society as pragmatic, adaptable and solution-oriented.

The mixed media portrayal was particularly evident in the context of US trade and tariff policy. Some of the reporting painted a picture of an economically vulnerable Switzerland that was caught off guard by the behaviour of the US and ended up playing a reactive role. Other reports viewed the subsequent agreement with the US as an economic liberation, even if the circumstances around its realisation were sometimes the subject of controversy. The final assessment and the impact on perceptions of Switzerland will probably also depend on the definitive outcome in this matter. Only then will foreign media coverage show whether Switzerland is primarily seen as a skilful negotiator or as an actor with limited room for manoeuvre at the mercy of economic pressure.

The image of the Swiss financial centre was also mixed. In the foreign media, Switzerland was portrayed as a location that is still important but is in a state of flux and is being forced to adapt. Having said that, its role as an important financial centre was not fundamentally called into question. Switzerland was perceived by the majority as a country that is making serious efforts to come to terms with the collapse and emergency takeover of Credit Suisse, but still faces unresolved legal and regulatory challenges in this regard.

The media also emphasised the fact that Switzerland is particularly affected by climate change. In particular, the accelerated retreat of Swiss glaciers has repeatedly been reported abroad as a clear sign of global warming. In connection with the landslide that buried the Valais mountain village of Blatten, sparking huge international media interest, several articles painted a

picture of a Swiss society that faces fundamental questions about the future of life in the Alps and its own identity.

In contrast to Swiss media, the topic of bilateral relations with the EU received relatively little coverage abroad. Where the topic was picked up, the media reports usually portrayed Switzerland as a country that is sometimes polarised in terms of domestic politics and is facing a landmark decision. The limited media interest in 2025 could also be linked to uncertainty about the outcome of a possible referendum on the 'Stabilisation and further development of Swiss–EU relations' package, to which regular reference was made. In connection with the inheritance tax initiative, foreign media also occasionally addressed the uncertainties associated with the system of direct democracy. Overall, however, Switzerland's political system was widely praised and often held up as exemplary. Switzerland came across as a politically stable country with a strong democratic culture in which the population is involved in important decisions. However, events such as the riots by young people in Lausanne and the restrictions on access to the outdoor pool in Porrentruy were interpreted as signs that social tensions were growing even in Switzerland, a country that is usually described as quiet and peaceful.

Finally, Switzerland clearly benefited from the media coverage generated by its role as host of major international events. The coverage of the Eurovision Song Contest in Basel and the UEFA Women's Euro conveyed the image of a friendly and cosmopolitan country to the world. The repeated mention of International Geneva as a place of dialogue also contributed to this, even if Switzerland's specific role often remained in the background.

The survey on how Switzerland is perceived by the general public abroad in mid-2025 also revealed a very positive picture. The fifth place overall in the 2025 Nation Brands Index showed once again that Switzerland is one of the best-rated countries worldwide and has been for several years. Analysing individual country ratings also revealed that Switzerland's good image enjoyed broad international backing. The country was perceived particularly positively in the dimensions of governance, as a place to live and work and in terms of its quality of life. Honest and competent government, respect for civil rights and a very high degree of political stability characterised the image of Switzerland among the public abroad. As in previous years, exports, innovation and the perception of the Swiss people as well-qualified and likeable also contributed significantly to Switzerland's positive image in 2025.

In terms of Switzerland's positive image abroad in 2025, we can therefore speak of continuity in a changing world. However, as mentioned at the beginning, this final assessment for last year comes with a major caveat. The start of 2026 was overshadowed by the catastrophic fire in Crans-Montana, which may also have marked a turning point for the way Switzerland is seen abroad. Once the necessary time has passed, this analysis will help us better understand this tragic event's impact on the perception and image of Switzerland abroad.

