SWITZERLAND GLOBAL ENTERPRISE

Brazil

Business Travel Guide

Compiled by:

Swiss-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce

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ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Documents:	Swiss citizens are exempted from visa requirements to entry in Brazil for Tourism or Business. The total stay in Brazil, including outings and multiple entries, is limited to 90 days every 180 days, and cannot be extended. However, passports must be valid for at least six months and a return ticket may be requested on arrival. See a complete list with the entry visas to Brazil for all nationalities. The Federal Police of Brazil requires an immigration form (entry/exit card) that has to be filled in on arrival (normally distributed on the flight or online version available for print). Half of the form must be retained and shown at the departure. Money above 10,000.00 dollars in cash has to be declared through the Electronic Traveler's Declaration of Goods (e-DBV).
Work visa:	To work in Brazil, a visa is needed. There are different types of visas for different sectors (cultural, temporary work / technical assistance, emergency technical assistance, journalists, missionary work, students, trainees, voluntary work etc.) Please contact the consulate for further information (see all the contacts below in this document). Further information on working in Brazil can be found on the guide 'Working in Brazil' www.swisscam.com.br/en/publicacao/working-in-brazil .

Custom Duties:

Baggage carried by the traveler consisting of a) items for the own use (clothes, shoes, hygiene items), b) books and newspapers c) other items (i.e. gifts) with a value up to US$ 1,000.00, and d) other personal or professional used items, are duty free. Additionally, the limit for purchases at the duty free shop at the arrivals airport in Brazil are US$ 1,000 per traveler.

The value exceeding the exemption quota will be subject to customs duties, calculated at a 50% rate. Further information (in Portuguese): https://www.gov.br/receitafederal/pt-br/assuntos/aduana-e-comercio-exterior/viagens-internacionais/guia-do-viajante/entrada-no-brasil/bens-a-declarar-tributacao-e-calculo-do-imposto.

The following items are prohibited from entering the country, according to the Brazilian federal revenue service (Receita Federal):

- Cigarettes and beverages manufactured in Brazil, intended for sale exclusively abroad;
- Cigarettes of a brand that is not marketed in the country of origin;
- Firearm Replicas;
- Wild animal species without a license and technical advice;
- Aquatic species for ornamental purposes and agriculture, without permission of the competent agency;
- Counterfeit products and / or pirated;
- Products containing genetically modified organisms;
- Pesticides, their components and related;
- Goods that offend morality, traditions, health or public order; and
- Narcotics Substances or drugs.

Should you bring the following items, please go through the “goods to declare” exit:

- Goods which the overall value exceeds the exemption quota;
- Lost goods;
- Cash when totaling more than US$ 10,000.00 or the equivalent in another currency, both at the exit of Brazil and upon arrival in the country;
- Items under control by Health Dpt, Agricultural Dept and Army or subject to restrictions and prohibitions of another agency;
- Goods that cannot be considered as baggage (goods not included in the baggage concept) such as:
    - Products under health surveillance for the provision of services to third parties;
    - Goods that exceed the quantity limits;
    - Goods that the value exceed US$ 3,000.00 subject to special customs regime of temporary admission, this applies only for non-resident in Brazil.

See the complete list of goods to declare here.

Transfer from the airport to the city center:

The recommended mean of transport, whether in the airport or inside the city, are taxis. Please refer to the topic “Local Transport” for more information on taxis and price calculation.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Inoculation:

Vaccination is not mandatory to enter the country, including for COVID-19. However, in order to minimize any health risks, all routine vaccinations should be up to date. The Brazilian Ministry of Health recommends, in particular, yellow fever, polio, measles, rubella, diphtheria and tetanus vaccines.

Dengue, Chikungunya and Zika fever is common over the country. According to the Ministry of Health, the Federal District and the states Minas Gerais, Paraná, São Paulo, Santa Catarina, Goiás, Espírito Santo, Rio Grande do Sul, Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, Amapá, Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul, Acre, Alagoas and Rio Grande do Norte had the highest incidence rate of dengue in 2024, while Minas Gerais, Mato Grosso, Espírito Santo, Goiás, Mato Grosso do Sul, Bahia, Rio Grande do Norte, Tocantins and Pernambuco registered the most number of cases of Chikungunya. The agent is transmitted by day-active mosquitoes and the vaccination for Chikungunya and Zika virus is still being tested. For that reason, it is recommended to wear long sleeved clothing and to use mosquito repellent.

The vaccination for Dengue was approved in 2023 by Anvisa (Brazilian Health Surveillance Agency) and has also been assessed by the European Medicines Agency (EMA), receiving a positive recommendation under the 'EU Medicines for All' program. At present, the vaccine is available in SUS (Unified Brazilian Health System) for people between 10 and 14 years old (as this is the age range with highest rate of hospitalizations due to dengue). As soon as released by Anvisa, vaccination will be also available to elderly people, but for the rest of the age ranges of population, it’s available only in the private health system.

Yellow fever is a risk in certain parts of Brazil, so CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) recommends the yellow fever vaccine for travelers 9 months of age or older to these areas.

Malaria: When traveling in Brazil, you should avoid mosquito bites to prevent malaria. You may need to take prescription medicine before, during, and after your trip to prevent malaria, depending on your travel plans, such as where you are going, when you are traveling, and if you are spending a lot of time outdoors or sleeping outside.

For more information, see yellow fever and malaria recommendations and requirements for Brazil. See also www.who.int/countries/bra/en/ and https://www.who.int/travel-advice.

Hospitals and Insurance:	Medical care is inadequate in most public hospitals and the sanitary conditions are precarious. Therefore, it is advised to use private hospitals. Brazil has an excellent network of private hospitals in the major metropolitan areas. Private medical care nevertheless is expensive, so it is advisable that all visitors purchase medical insurance prior to their arrival.

PUBLIC SECURITY / RECOMMENDED PRECAUTIONS

Safety:

Politically Brazil is a stable country. However, criminality must be considered as an issue. Brazil has high rates of violent crimes such as murders and robberies. Although some regions show decreasing crime rates over the last years, Brazil is still one of the most criminalized countries in the world. Petty crimes such as carjacking, pickpocketing, and express kidnappings are common in the major cities. Most assaults happen in quiet streets, at red traffic lights and crossroads; but also beaches, public transportation and even restaurants have been places for robberies lately.

In big city centers it is therefore advisable not to walk on dark and deserted streets or to go out alone at night. Also unknown places and locations should be avoided if not accompanied by a person of trust.

The following precautionary measures are to be considered:

- do not carry any belongings of value on you that call attention, in general: do not carry anything you are not needing

- only carry photo copies of your documents on you. Alternatively, you can have another form of photo identification, such as a driver's license, and keep your passport in the hotel

- know where you are going, criminality varies strongly depending on the area and district

- only use ATMs in supervised banks and avoid getting money at night time

- if you are carrying a bag, put it in front of you with the strap laterally across your shoulder

- if you should be robbed, do not offer any resistance and do exactly as you are told, often robbers are only interested in one specific item, for example they just want your mobile phone while they are not interested in your watch nor your money

In case of any emergencies the most important phone numbers are:

190 Police and general emergencies

192 Ambulances, Medical Emergency

193 Fire Service

See more information on the FDFA Travel Advice page:
https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/brazil/en/home/travel-advice.html

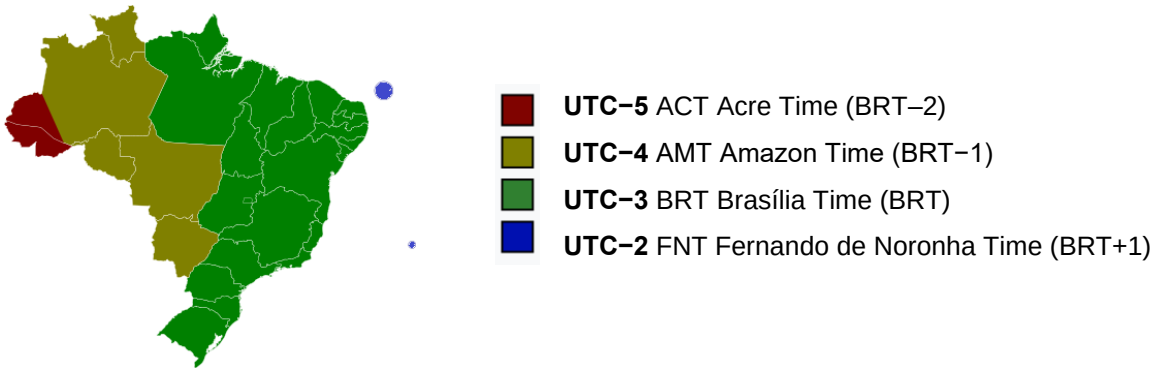
TIME ZONE

Switzerland's single time zone is the Central European Time CET (UTC+1). However, Switzerland observes Daylight Saving Time (DST) and during this period it shifts to Central European Summer Time CEST (UTC+2). Normally Brasilia Time (BRT) is 4 hours behind Switzerland or 5 hours behind during DST in Switzerland. Check the current local time difference between Brasilia and Bern here.

Time difference between Switzerland and

Brasília	Central European Time -4
São Paulo	CET -4
Rio de Janeiro	CET -4
Fortaleza	CET -4
Salvador	CET -4
Belo Horizonte	CET -4

There are four time zones in Brazil.



Local time: In 2019, President Jair Bolsonaro signed a decree that revokes daylight saving time and it is still valid to this day. As Federal Government may decide to practice DST again (or not) for strategic reasons, it is recommended checking local time by city or state: www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/custom.html?continent=samerica

Weather: Although 90 per cent of Brazil is within the tropics, more than 60 per cent of the population lives in areas where altitude, sea winds, or polar fronts moderate the temperature.

Weather forecast: https://worldweather.wmo.int/en/country.html?countryCode=136

BUSINESS HOURS

There are no formal business hours in Brazil. Nevertheless, most of the cities adopt opening hours from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM, some exceptions are listed below.

Banks:	Monday to Friday, 10:00 – 16:00 Automated Teller Machines (ATM's) can be found at most banks, shopping centers, big supermarkets, petrol/gas stations and main avenues.
Offices:	Monday to Friday, 8:00 – 17:00 or 9:00 – 18:00.
Petrol stations:	Petrol stations are allowed to operate 24 hours a day, although not all of them do so.
Shopping centers:	Monday to Saturday, 10:00 – 22:00. The largest shopping centers also open on Sunday from 14:00 – 20:00
Stores:	Monday to Friday, 9:00 – 19:00 Saturdays, 9:00 – 13:00, depending on the district.
Supermarkets:	Monday to Saturday, 8:00 – 22:00. Some also open on Sundays or are open 24 hours.

Government Offices may have specifical working hours; we recommend always verifying on the specific department website before contacting or going to any Government Office.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Public Holidays	2024	2025
New Year's Day	January 1	January 1
Founding of Rio de Janeiro (City only)	January 20	January 20
Founding of Sao Paulo (City only)	January 25	January 25
Carnival	February 12	March 4
Good Friday	March 29	April 18
Tiradentes	April 21	April 21

May Day	May 1	May 1
Corpus Christi	May 30	June 19
Constitutional Revolution (Sao Paulo state only)	July 9	July 9
Independence Day	September 7	September 7
Our Lady of Aparecida	October 12	October 12
All Souls' Day	November 2	November 2
Proclamation of Republic	November 15	November 15
Black Consciousness Day	November 20	November 20
Christmas Day	December 25	December 25

Companies may extend the weekend if a holiday falls on a Thursday or Tuesday. All local holidays can be seen on https://www.feriados.com.br/2025

It is wise to avoid business trips on weeks where national/local holidays are placed, due to atypical traffic, higher booking prices (flights, hotels). We add that, in Brazil, Carnival is a holiday where almost everything is closed, and most people enjoy it traveling or taking some rest and visiting family and friends.

NATIONAL TRADE FAIR CALENDAR

The dates of the main trade fairs can be obtained from: https://www.nfeiras.com/brasil/ .

COMMUNICATION: TELEPHONE AND INTERNET

Telephone:	From Switzerland	00 55 (+city code + phone number)
	From Brazil	00 xx 41 (+city code + phone number)
	Within Brazil	0 xx (+city code + phone number)
	Same city	phone number only
	xx are the phone operators' codes, www.ddi-ddd.com.br/Codigos-Telefone-Operadoras/	
Internet:	It is quite easy to have internet access around the major cities in all hotels and other places, as well as through cell phone plans. The domain for Brazil	

is designated as *.com.br* but many organizations and institutions use *.org.br* (or *.gov.br for governmental organizations).*

CELL PHONES

Approx. 98% of Brazil's cities are covered by 4G mobile networks and around 10.5% are covered by 5G network (mainly capitals and greatest cities). European mobile phones normally work in the country. More information: https://www.expat.com/en/guide/south-america/brazil/9222-phones-in-brazil.html GigaGo website: link

Chip card: You can buy a prepaid international chip card. They are normally sold at international airports in Brazil, but it is also possible to buy it on the internet. Above a list of companies that provide this service:

https://www.worldsim.com/

http://www.onesimcard.com/international-sim-card/universal/

https://gosim.com/

https://travelsim.com/

Mobile phones can also be rented. The companies mentioned below bring the phone to your hotel.

Uniir Telecomunicações	www.uniir.com.br	São Paulo	+55 11 2114 0080 +55 11 99360 9000
Taas Telecom	www.taastelecom.com.br	São Paulo	+55 11 2677 4947

Brazil's country code is: +55

Local SIM card can be bought at: Official stores as VIVO, TIM, CLARO. It's recommended to avoid non-official stores to buy local SIM cards.

Important phone numbers:

In case of any emergencies the most important phone numbers are:

Police	190
Fire department	193
Medical emergency	192

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

The voltage varies throughout the country between 110 volts (the new standard is 127 volts, but most people still say 110v) and 220 volts. All are on 60Hz frequency. Sao Paulo is generally 127 volts but

occasionally 220 volts. Brasilia is 220 volts, Rio de Janeiro is mainly 127 volts. Search here by city to find the correct voltage.

Plugs and sockets: Type N is the official Brazilian standard as illustrated below. Please note that at a first glance, Brazilian type N seems to be pretty much the same applied in Switzerland (J type), but there is no compatibility among them once plugs have a different angle arrangement.

Type N

Other plug widely found throughout the country is Type C:

Source: https://www.iec.ch/world-plugs /

METHODS OF PAYMENT

Currency: The currency in Brazil is the Real (BRL), for each Real there are 100 centavos.

1 CHF = approx. 6.59 BRL (November 2024)

1 BRL = approx. 0.1518 CHF.

Currency calculator: https://www.bcb.gov.br/conversao

Import/export of currencies: Money above 10,000.00 dollars, in cash, has to be declared through the Electronic Traveler's Declaration of Goods (e-DBV).

Cash: Brazilian Reais are usually not readily available at banks in Switzerland and they must be ordered in advance. In addition, the exchange rate (cash) is normally unfavorable in Switzerland, that's why it is recommended to exchange money only in Brazil. The easiest foreign currency to exchange is the US dollar, but Euros and lesser extent Swiss Francs are also welcome.

Very few places accept cash in US$. Foreign currency normally can be exchanged in money exchange offices (called “casa de câmbio”) and not in banks. At arrival, it is worth getting hold of some low denomination notes and coins, as shops and restaurants always are short of change.

Maestro cards: There is also an extensive network of ATMs and at the ones with the Maestro card or VISA card, visitors can use their Swiss cash cards (Maestro or Visa cards) to cash money. It is advisable to use ATMs only inside of supervised banks and this only during the day.

PIX: The instant payment system PIX was launched by the Central Bank of Brazil in November 2020. Available 24 hours every day, users can make payments and transfers through a QR code or an alias (normally a mobile phone number, an e-mail address or the Taxpayer Identification Number (CPF or CNPJ)) and it is not necessary to provide bank account information. Other payment service providers such as some fintechs may offer PIX.

The Central Bank of Brazil is studying the possibility for international transactions, but no deadline has been set.

Credit cards: Almost in all commercial places (hotels, restaurants, night clubs, shops) credit cards are accepted. Most major international credit cards (especially MasterCard, Visa and to a lesser extent Diners and American Express) are accepted in Brazil.

Traveler’s cheques: Traveler’s cheques are more difficult to be exchanged. Normally they are accepted at hotels, banks and money exchange offices (“casa de câmbio”). To avoid additional exchange rate charges, travelers are advised to take travelers cheques in US Dollars.

Make sure you have additional identification when using your credit card or traveler’s cheques (passport, identity card or driver’s license).

Tipping at restaurants and bars are always included in final payment as a service tax (“*taxa de serviço*”).

Acceptance of methods of payment:

	everywhere	almost everywhere	limited	not accepted
Cash (national currency)	☒	☐	☐	☐
Cash (USD or another)	☐	☐	☐	☒
MasterCard	☒	☐	☐	☐
Visa	☒	☐	☐	☐
American Express	☐	☒	☐	☐

Diner	☐	☒	☐	☐
Apple Pay	☐	☐	☒	☐
Google/Samsung Pay	☐	☐	☒	☐
PayPal	☐	☐	☒	☐

DOMESTIC TRAVEL, LOCAL TRANSPORT

Travel and tourist: For general information on Brazil and its tourist attractions, you can visit the following pages:

English: https://visitbrasil.com/en/

German: www.brasilienportal.ch

Travelling to Brazil: Brazil has many international airports, such as Brasília International (BSB), Rio de Janeiro – Galeao (GIG), Sao Paulo – Guarulhos (GRU), Belo Horizonte (CNF), Florianopolis (FLN), Salvador (SSA), Natal (NAT), Recife (REC) or Fortaleza (FOR).

Flight time from Europe to Brazil's Southeast region is about 12 hours and a little over 9 hours or even less to the Northeast region.

Companies flying from Europe to Brazil: Air France, Air Europa, Azul, British Airways, Iberia, ITA Airways, KLM, Lufthansa, Swiss, LATAM and TAP.

Swiss International Airlines (www.swiss.com) serves Sao Paulo with daily flights from Zurich. The direct flight takes approximately 12 hours, back 11 1/2 hours.

Travelling in Brazil

Distances: https://maps.google.com/
http://br.distanciacidades.net/

BY AIR

Unless you have plenty of time, air travel is the best way to get from one city to another. Flights between major cities are frequent. Business visitors intending to visit more than one city should consider a Brazilian Airpass, booked through Swiss travel agents.

Major Companies: Azul (www.voeazul.com.br), Gol (www.voegol.com.br), and LATAM (www.latamairlines.com).

Regional Airlines: Voepass (www.voepass.com.br)

BY SEA

Transportation of passengers by sea is little explored in Brazil. However, it is widely used for international freight transportation.

According to the Cruise Lines International Association Brazil, nine cruise ships traveled in the 2023/2024 season through 15 Brazilian destinations, reaching around 844,462 cruisers, the highest number in the historical series, which began in the 2004/2005 season.

BY ROAD

Buses:

There are good long-distance express bus services between Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro (approx. 6 hours) and to other main towns. Seats can be reserved in advance at www.brazilbustravel.com. These buses are relatively cheap and, if the distance involved is not too long, a good alternative of getting around.

City buses: there are usually plenty of buses in all major cities but for personal security reasons and waiting time we do not recommend their use.

Taxis:

Taxis are the best way of getting around. Taxis in most cities are fitted with red numbered plates and have taximeters. **Radio taxis** can be booked in advance and, although they are more expensive, they offer a better service. Most of the main hotels have 24-hour taxi ranks nearby.

Taxis Comuns (regular taxis) are generally white in Sao Paulo and yellow with blue stripes in Rio. **Taxis de Luxo** (luxury taxis) normally are larger, offering more comfort, safety and better service, which can cost about double the price of a regular taxi. Taxi fares for cabs hailed in the street are payable in accordance with the meter. All meters should now show the precise fare to be paid in local currency (BRL). Certain journeys (e.g. from hotel to airport) may be charged on a fixed-price basis; ask your hotel for advice.

If your journey takes you away from the town center, it is recommended to ask the taxi to wait in case your appointment will not take too long. Expect most drivers to treat you fairly but take extra care in Rio. Bear in mind that Sao Paulo and Rio are large cities and it can take much longer than you think to get around.

In order to have an idea of taxi fares, check: www.taxi-calculator.com

It is possible to use on-demand car booking apps to request taxis and private drivers. The most used apps in Brazil are 99 and UBER. The advantage is that you will be able to know how much it is going to cost your trip and you can pay by credit card or cash.

If you are invited to visit a company in Brazil, they may offer you a Voucher for UBER services; in this case, you can select “voucher” in the payment method. For security reasons, most people also prefer using Uber services (as it is

possible to share the route – in real time - with someone else). It is also possible to select cars to bring your pet with you, or more comfortable/ larger cars – for those with luggage, for example.

Car rental: Cars can be rented at airports and in major cities. It is advisable to choose one of the major national or international firms and ask for a full explanation of the insurance covered on the offer. Some companies offer lower rates if the reservation is made from abroad and in advance. The minimum age to hire a car is normally between 21 and 25 years for foreigners, the driver must have 2 years of experience and the passport of the same nationality of the driver's license. To avoid inconveniences, an international driver's license is recommendable.

As an alternative, most good hotels can arrange a car with an English-speaking driver on a daily basis. Street parking can be difficult, mostly in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, and it may be necessary to pay a street "guard" or a fee for the rotative public parking spot called "Zona Azul" in São Paulo and "Rio Rotativo" in Rio de Janeiro. For security and practical reasons, we recommend parking your rented car in a parking service with insurance.

Speed limit: Speed limits are almost always signaled. If not otherwise indicated, speed limits are the follows:

Urban streets:	80 km/h fast line (vias de trânsito rápido)
	60 km/h slower line (vias arteriais)
	40 km/h communication road (vias coletoras)
	30 km/h local road (vias locais)
Non-urban streets:	110 km/h cars and pick ups
	90 km/h other vehicles

Maps: Political and regional maps can be found on the website www.guiageo.com, street maps of certain cities on www.google.com.br/maps.

Please be aware: roads are not always in the best conditions.

BY RAIL

Inter-city rail services for passengers were discontinued in 1998 following privatization. In the State of São Paulo, the government has plans to restore rail services to the countryside of the state and to the coast. In 2023 the government announced investments in the railway stretch linking São Paulo to Campinas, expected to be in full operation by 2029.

Underground: There are very good underground (Metro) facilities in Sao Paulo and Rio, though the networks are quite limited. More information at: www.metro.sp.gov.br and www.metrorio.com.br

The most commonly used kind of public transport is subway (metrô). The quality of the subway services is good. We usually recommend plan your city routes by Taxi/ Uber service. In case of using subway services, consult a local person (hotel or company hosts) to avoid issues such as pickpocketing or overcrowded trains due rush hours.

Taxi fare for a 15 minutes journey: : in Brazil, the taxi fare is calculated by kilometers; in November 2024, the start fare is about 1 CHF, and the ride fare is about 0,5 CHF per kilometer.

Main ride hailing apps: UBER: https://apps.apple.com/us/app/uber-request-a-ride/id368677368 or https://play.google.com/store/apps/dev?id=7908612043055486674&hl=pt_BR&pli=1.

Main method of payment for taxi and subways: Cash or credit card for taxis. For subway, cash – even though is recommended to buy a transportation card (e.g. "*Bilhete Único*" at São Paulo) to save time. There are many Ticket machines at subways stations, but these may fail sometimes. Prefer the formal Ticket Office.

Car rental (without a driver) can be arranged at numerous companies:

- Movida - link
- Localiza - link
- Unidas - link

Normally in Brazil the driver rent a car. Hire a driver/ transfer service will include their own vehicles, due liability reasons. Otherwise, there are many transfer services available, but we recommend consulting your local contact or destination hotel for suggesting a transfer service, or book it with a tourism agency of your preference.

ACCOMMODATION, TEMPORARY OFFICE SPACE

HOTELS

There are a variety of hotels to choose depending on your budget and needs. Below is a list of web sites that provide information on hotels in Brazil:

www.booking.com

www.decolar.com.br

www.hoteis.com

www.trivago.com.br

Nearly all hotels add a service charge to the bill, usually 10%. Most restaurants also add 10% to 15% to the total of the bill, but must make it clear that they have done so. Brazilians don't normally tip taxi drivers, although they may round the total up.

Some people prefer to stay in Airbnb accommodations for personal reasons. If you prefer to do so, always prefer high-ranked hosts, safe locations and verify if the accommodation has climatization equipment for both warm and cold weather. Even if Brazil is a tropical country, it may occur some low temperatures in some cities during winter season and a non-warmed room may be uncomfortable during your stay. Note that, in Brazil, even in those cities where it is cold the winter, most houses do not have a heating system.

In case you need an office space for limited time or specific meetings, there are many options:

For very formal meetings, consult the hotel where you'll stay; they commonly have rooms available to rent – or sometimes even to borrow for a short meeting/ short period of time.

In major cities (as São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro), there are many coworking places that you can rent for hours/ periods/ days. Most of them have an open space concept, with some cabins or little rooms for more reserved meetings or phone calls.

In case you have an agenda for reserved and / or formal meetings – and the counterpart has not a place for hosting it, there are many options available in the market: little rooms for 2-4 people meetings and greater ones for 8-12 people; places ideal for medical/ health attendances or rooms to host groups, already with reception and coffee service. Closer to big cities centers, more options will be available.

In any case it's advisable to check on Google services places nearby your point of interest - before your trip to Brazil - to verify availability and booking/ payment options.

If you have a company hosting you, check with them some coworking places (some companies use this kind of service for confidential meetings outside its buildings).

LANGUAGES USED FOR BUSINESS

The national language is Portuguese. In Brazilian companies with international activities, English is widely understood, followed by Spanish. As a general rule, the higher you go within an organization, the easier it gets to find Brazilians speaking other languages.

BUSINESS PRACTICES

Business etiquette

First contact:	Brazilians are mostly very warm and friendly. Shake hands every time you meet or take leave of a Brazilian (even if you have met the person previously the same day). Meeting with a group, shake hands with everyone. If you are male, remember that Brazil is a Latin country: expect Brazilian men to stand close to you (for Europeans almost uncomfortably close), to hold your hand or arm for extended periods, and to put their arms around your shoulders and hug you in some cases. These are normal and socially acceptable signs of friendship. Shake hands with Brazilian women on a first meeting, and expect to be kissed (on the cheek, usually more like a kiss in the air) on subsequent encounters. If you are female, both Brazilian men and women will shake hands with you on a first encounter but may kiss you on subsequent meetings and leave-takings.
Forms of address:	In Brazil the main surname (unlike the Spanish) is usually the last. Thus, Dr Paulo Lopes Pereira would normally be referred to as Dr Pereira. However, Brazilians are often known only by their first names, e.g. Dr Paulo. You should also bear in mind that the title Dr is sometimes used as a mark of respect and may have nothing to do with professional qualifications. If you are having difficulties with a person's name, you may inquire about the correct pronunciation, before trying to guess it.
Indication:	Personal relationship is an essential element of business in Brazil, sometimes personal contacts count more than a convincing business plan, that's why referred contacts can open doors and facilitate contact with new business partners.

Meetings:

Allow yourself ample time to get to your appointment since traffic and long distances in major cities like Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro could cause serious delays, especially if it rains or if it is prior to a local holiday or purchasing season. During a business trip, it is recommended to arrange one or two meetings in the morning and depending on the location, maximum two in the afternoon if you want to make it on time. Check beforehand the best alternative path to get to the desired places.

It is not recommended to arrange business meetings in the evening or in between holidays. Besides the heavy traffic and difficulty to find plane tickets, as the majority of Brazilians leave their own cities to travel, you may not be able to find all the contacts you want to meet.

You should arrive at meetings/appointments promptly at the agreed time. If you know that you are going to be late for a business appointment, call and let your contact be informed. Nevertheless, it can happen that you will have to wait for your Brazilian counterparty. Poor punctuality is sometimes a characteristic of Brazilian business culture. As a general rule, the higher a Brazilian ranks, the longer the wait.

Big meetings, seminars and social events normally start 15 to 30 minutes late. Business entertaining is conducted over lunch or dinner. Breakfast meetings are much less common. Sometimes, brunches are used during seminars. Set aside two hours for a business lunch and around three hours for a business dinner.

Swap business cards during introductions. Expect a number of appointments to be cancelled or re-arranged at short notice; on the positive side, you may be able to arrange further meetings at very short notice.

Spend the first few minutes of a meeting in social chat - Brazilians like to get to know you and a little of your background and interests. It is appreciated when foreigners show that they value people and relationships over business. Reluctance on your part to chat may be interpreted by your host as representing a lack of interest in doing business. Resist the temptation to get straight down to business, even if time is short.

Do not expect to do much business on a first visit - Brazilians like to get to know a business partner first, so be prepared that it will probably take several contacts and trips to bring the negotiations to a satisfactory conclusion. A midterm vision is necessary.

Negotiation:

Brazilians normally prefer to negotiate in groups. The group work is more valued than the individual work. Nevertheless, the Brazilian business culture is intensely hierarchical; only the highest person in authority makes the final decision. Therefore, it is indeed important to find the “key person”, it saves time and facilitates negotiations. Brazilians normally conduct business only through personal connections. It is important to show commitment and the desire to establish a long-term business relationship. During negotiations, avoid confrontations and mask frustrations. Brazilians take criticism less issue-related but very personally.

Communication:	Most Brazilians are very polite and will often avoid giving an outright "no". Instead of disagreeing, they will try to find other ways of showing what is preferable. Expect the majority to be completely honest but do not expect them to volunteer information, particularly where they could benefit from you being kept in the dark. If you hit a problem that seems not possible to be negotiated, do not give up: in Brazil, there is usually a way round things “jeitinho”.
After the meeting deadlines:	Usually documents are not signed immediately after an agreement is reached; a handshake and person’s word are considered sufficient. The necessary papers will be prepared and signed later. After a meeting, if your Brazilian counterpart is expected to take the next step, feel free to charge it in case of a delay. In general, Brazilians are not keen on following agendas or deadlines, even if it is something of their interest. Brazilian’s time perception is quite different from the Swiss one.
Business dress:	On clothing, some Brazilian businesspeople dress fairly casually at their office but they generally expect visitors to wear appropriate business attire. When deciding what to wear, remember that in the north-eastern States, suits are rarely worn because of the heat. In the South, however, lightweight suits made of natural fibers are fine for most of the year. A dark lightweight suit will be useful for more formal evening appointments. Dinner jackets are rarely needed. Women wear light cotton dresses in summer. During the winter, light woolen clothing is suitable for southern Brazil and for Rio de Janeiro and the north-east, European summer clothing is appropriate. Brazilian women are very fashion conscious.
Business cards:	Bring a plentiful supply of business cards, since Brazilians tend to be very keen about exchanging them. Not being able to present a business card or a material from your own company could be viewed by your Brazilian contact as unprofessional and eventually hurt your credibility as a legitimate and serious business.
Conversation:	Maintain steady eye contact at all times. People stand closely in front of each other, even when talking. Brazilians tend to be very fast talkers. It is normal for a conversation to be highly animated. During meals, “small talk” is welcomed. Business may be discussed at the conclusion of the meal, when coffee is served. Generally, Brazilians are open to discuss a wide range of subjects, particularly in a business context. Make an effort to learn different words and phrases in Portuguese. Don’t worry about the mistakes; Brazilians will appreciate your efforts even if your vocabulary is limited. Welcomed topics of conversation are: “futebol“ (soccer) as Brazilians are enthusiastic soccer fans, food, your travels and family, positive aspects of Brazilian industry and other aspects of the country’s arts. Try to avoid discussions about class differences, economic problems and politics.
Gifts:	Small gifts are very welcomed by Brazilians. Something typical from Switzerland might be a good idea. Instead of a gift, you might also offer to

treat for lunch or dinner and use this opportunity to learn more about the recipient's tastes.

Other Considerations:

If your Brazilian counterparts have doubts about you, this attitude will not be overcome by presenting them impressive charts, graphs, or other empirical data. Instead, you will have to effectively use your personality, cultural awareness, and other interpersonal skills to win your Brazilian counterparts over to your side.

In general, being a foreigner is a plus. Brazilians like to know about other countries and cultures. Foreign products are often considered to be superior to local ones.

One of the strong points about Brazilians is their readiness to work, if necessary, long hours and their willingness to learn about new technologies and products.

In general, Brazilians perceive Swiss products as reliable, high tech and high quality. The brand “Swiss Made” makes a good impression and facilitates the entrance of Swiss goods in the Brazilian market.

BUSINESS RISKS

According to the World Economic Forum, the 5 great risks for the economic environment in Brazil are: economic downturn, inflation, public debt, censorship and inequality (wealth, income) (link).

Regarding corruption, Brazil is a medium-risk country with a 44.17 score (from 0 to 100), ranked at 85 position (from 196 countries), according to global corruption risks index (link).

For all aspects compounding the credit risk investment in the country, Brazil is also ranked as a medium-risk country, with a 4 classification in a 0-7 scale; more info at OECD link.

The Swiss institution SERV pre-classifies Brazil coverture as “open” for sovereign, banks and corporate risks for short, medium or long term contacts (link); this means that there are no concerns or reservations about providing insurance for business in Brazil. Still according to SERV (link), the risk evaluation for business in Brazil will consider the credit worthiness and the feasibility of the transaction, with no significant restrictions considering the economic environment.

More specifically, the current Brazilian situation for business presents some very known risks, as per ranked by Allianz Group (link):

1. Climate change (weather events of unprecedented intensity, or in places they are not common or expected, affecting Farming Business for example).
2. Business interruptions (e.g. supply chain issues mainly from regional partners or coming from abroad)
3. Cyber incidents (cyber-crimes and IT network/ service disruptions; it is possible to avoid these factors with many prevent actions and caution attitude)
4. Natural Catastrophes (storms and floods; earthquake or hurricanes are not common in Brazil)
5. Theft, fraud, corruption (it is possible to avoid these factors with many prevent actions and caution attitude).

Swiss Export Risk Insurance SERV insures political and *del credere* risks involved in exporting goods and services.

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Dominique Aubert

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& Representation
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Email: dominique.aubert@serv-ch.com

IMPORT OF SAMPLES AND CATALOGUES

After more than 5 years of use in the Brazilian territory, the ATA Carnet can no longer be used as a customs document able to support temporary admission and export operations of goods in the country due to the lack of expression of interest by any national organization to take place of guaranteeing and issuing association, essential for the continuity of the program. The operations with ATA Carnet in Brazil ended on December 31st, 2021. See detailed information here.

Currently Brazil has two temporary admission regimes (i) without import duties and (ii) with proportional duties, according to Normative Instruction 1600/2015. Please refer to chapter 2 of the Brazil Legal Provisions Guide for detailed information.

USEFUL LOCAL WEBSITES, ADDRESSES, EMAIL AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

List of Trade Shows in Brazil	www.ubrafe.org.br
Trade and Investment Guide – Invest & Export Brazil	www.investexportbrasil.gov.br
Credit Rating Database	www.serasa.com.br
Official Government Site	www.brasil.gov.br
Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics	www.ibge.gov.br
National Institution of Industrial Property	www.inpi.gov.br
Brazilian foreign trade statistics	http://comexstat.mdic.gov.br
The World Bank	www.worldbank.org/en/country/brazil
World Trade Organization	www.wto.org/english/res_e/res_e.htm

Business news	https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/internacional/en/ ; https://valorinternational.globo.com/

Customs hotline*	https://www.gov.br/receitafederal/pt-br/assuntos/aduana-e-comercio-exterior	International São Paulo (Guarulhos) Airport: +55 (11) 2445-5547; +55 (11) 2445-5020	email.sp.alfgru@rfb.gov.br; cac.sp.alfgru@rfb.gov.br

* Federal orientation about international orders in Brazil can be found at https://www.gov.br/receitafederal/pt-br/assuntos/aduana-e-comercio-exterior/manuais/remessas-postal-e-expressa/manual-de-encomendas-internacionais (content in Portuguese).

To customs clearance in Brazil, it may be very difficult to obtain information (or even get in contact) with Customs channels. So, it is advisable to contact the courier service hotline in order to obtain precise information and assistance regarding any orders.

ADDRESSES OF EMBASSY AND CONSULATES OF SWITZERLAND

Embassy of Switzerland

Swiss Embassy in Brasilia

Ambassador Pietro Lazzeri

SES - Avenida das Nações, Q. 811, lote 41

70448-900 Brasília - DF

Tel.: +55 61 3443 5500

E-mail: brasilia@eda.admin.ch

www.eda.admin.ch/brasilia

Opening times:

Working days, from 09:00 to 11:30 AM.

Consulate General in São Paulo

Avenida Paulista, 1754 - 4th floor

01310-920 São Paulo – SP

Tel.: +55 11 3372 8200

E-mail: saopaulo@eda.admin.ch

www.eda.admin.ch/saopaulo

Opening times:

Working days, from 09:00 to 11:30 AM.

Consulate General in Rio de Janeiro

Rua Cândido Mendes, 157 - 11th floor

20241-220 Rio de Janeiro - RJ

Tel.: +55 21 3806 2100

E-mail: riodejaneiro@eda.admin.ch

www.eda.admin.ch/riodejaneiro

Opening times:

Working days, from 09:00 to 11:30 AM.

Honorary Consulate in Belém

Rod. Augusto Montenegro, 3146

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66821-000 Belém – Pará

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E-Mail: belem@honrep.ch and riodejaneiro@eda.admin.ch

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Honorary Consulate in Florianópolis

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Honorary Consulate in Salvador

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41940-660 Salvador - BA

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www.eda.admin.ch/riodejaneiro

Honorary consulates info also available at https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/brazil/pt/home/representacoes/embaixada-brasilia/honorarkonsulate.html

ADDRESSES BILATERAL, NATIONAL AND LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

SWISSCAM - Câmara de Comércio Suíço-Brasileira

Av. das Nações Unidas, 12551 - 17º andar – Brooklin.

São Paulo - SP, 04578-903

Tel.: +55 (11) 5641 1230

E-Mail: swisscam@swisscam.com.br

www.swisscam.com.br

ADDRESSES OF THE EMBASSY AND CONSULATES OF BRAZIL IN SWITZERLAND

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Ambassador Cláudia Fonseca Buzzi

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CH - 3007 Bern
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E-mail: brasemb.berna@itamaraty.gov.br

http://berna.itamaraty.gov.br

Consulate General of Brazil in Zurich

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CH - 8006 Zürich

Tel.: +41 79 742 5300

E-mail: geral.cgzurique@itamaraty.gov.br

http://zurique.itamaraty.gov.br

Open: Monday to Friday: 9:00 - 13:00

And Monday to Thursday: 14:00 - 16:00

Consulate General of Brazil in Geneva

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CH - 1201 Genève

Tel.: +41 79 830 3556

E-mail: cg.genebra@itamaraty.gov.br

http://genebra.itamaraty.gov.br

Open: Monday to Friday: 9:00 – 12:00 for information.

Appointments: https://ec-genebra.itamaraty.gov.br/

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