

Chile

Business Guide

Compiled by:

SWISS – CHILE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CAMARA CHILENO SUIZA DE COMERCIO

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ENTRY AND DEPARTURE

Swiss citizens need a valid passport to enter Chile, which is valid for at least 3 months when leaving Chile, so they can stay in the country for up to 3 months without a visa. Upon arrival you will receive a tourist card ("tarjeta de turismo"), which entitles you to stay for a maximum of 90 days and must be handed in upon departure. In order to work in Chile, a working visa is required, which is issued by the Chilean embassy in Bern or in Chile directly from the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Ministry of Interior at www.extranjeria.gob.cl (Spanish and English).

TRAVEL INFORMATION AND SAFETY

Please take note of the constantly updated travel and safety information of the EDA, which you can find on the website of the Swiss Embassy in Santiago under Travel Information <https://www.eda.admin.ch/countries/chile/de/home/reisehinweise/vor-ort.html>

Chile is in an earthquake area and has about 80 active volcanoes. Earthquakes can cause tsunamis in addition to ravages in the countryside. In summer, forest fire danger exists in many places. During heavy rains, dried-out river beds in the desert or in the Cordillera valley can turn into raging rivers or mudslides in no time at all.

Observe the warnings and instructions of the local authorities, e.g. barriers to active volcanoes, warning signs, tsunami evacuation routes in coastal cities or evacuation orders.

Register your trips abroad so that you can be contacted in times of crisis.
<https://www.itineris.eda.admin.ch/>

In addition, the EDA helpline is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year: **+41 (0) 800 24-7-365**

TRADE LANGUAGES

Spanish is the official language of Chile. Knowledge of Spanish is almost indispensable for a successful transaction, especially since not all business people and senior government officials speak English.

OFFICIAL HOLIDAYS

The official holidays in Chile are available at the following link: www.feriados.cl

HEALTH

Medical care in Chile's private hospitals is modern and efficient. However, outside the capital, medical care is not guaranteed everywhere due to the large distances and low population density. Many hospitals require a cost guarantee before treating patients. First aid should, in principle, be provided without financial guarantee.

If you are dependent on certain medications, your first aid kit should contain a sufficient supply. Information on the import of medicines for private use can be found on the website of the Chilean Customs Authorities at www.aduana.cl (Spanish and English) or at the competent foreign office in Bern.

In addition to other diseases, the lethal Hanta virus is found in unhygienic conditions from Santiago southwards. You should only enter for longer periods closed rooms or sheds with respiratory protection and disinfect with chlorine before you get in them. In the Altiplano, the symptoms of altitude sickness should not be underestimated.

TIME ZONE

Chile is currently 3 hours UTC/GMT. It should be noted that on 13 de May 2018 - Daylight Saving Time Ends, watches are switched back to winter time. Due to the switch to summer time in Switzerland, there are 6 hours difference in this time and 5 hours between March-May and August-October. For more information: <https://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/>

POWER SUPPLY

220V AC, 50 Hertz. Some devices require a travel adapter. Sockets are designed linearly (with three in-line power sockets), so simple double plug are best applicable.

CASH

Official currency is the Chilean Peso (1 CHF = 630 CLP). USD is almost exclusively accepted in hotels as a means of payment. Otherwise, everywhere cash and almost everywhere credit cards are accepted. There are ATMs throughout Santiago and every major city in Chile, but not in all villages. At ATMs, a maximum of 200,000 CLP (about 317 CHF) can be withdrawn each time. For each purchase, a withdrawal fee must normally be paid in accordance with the conditions of the home bank.

Currency exchange offices can be found throughout Santiago. For the import and export of foreign currency, there are no restrictions, but from 10,000 US \$ the import must be declared.

TRANSPORT

All international flights arrive at Arturo Merino Benítez airport in Santiago - SCL <https://www.nuevopudahuel.cl/> . Most of the hotels in Santiago are about 20-30 minutes away from the airport by taxi. Official taxis can be found at the airport and these are not expensive compared to Switzerland (fixed rate fixes). The costs for the airport-center transfer are about 24'000 - 28'000 CLP (about 38 CHF). If you have UBER or a Cabify App you can use that too to move around.

The airport is under construction during 2017 - 2018, resulting in more difficult access and longer transfer times. Among other things, an internal bus has to be taken from the parking lots, which can extend the arrival time by at least 15 to 30 minutes. Ideally, you should be at the airport at least 2 -3 hours before the travel time.

Basically, Santiago has a well-developed network of public transport ("Transantiago" - buses and metro, www.transantiago.cl/), which at peak times (7.30 - 9.30 and 18.00 - 20.30) very busy and only are air-conditioned to a small extent. For shorter trips within Santiago, taxis are a good alternative. The city taxis (in Santiago black-yellow) are equipped with a taximeter. In the rare case that this is not turned on automatically, you should kindly advise the taxi driver or agree on a fixed price in advance. UBER (www.uber.com/es-CL/) and CABIFY (<https://cabify.com/chile/santiago>) are further transport alternatives.

When traveling outside of Santiago, there are not only national flights but also intercity buses (www.recorrido.cl) or rental cars (most international agencies are represented in Chile).

HOTELS

Chile has numerous four and five-star hotels. Foreigners without a permanent residence in Chile do not have to pay VAT (19%) if they pay by cash or by USD in cash. To receive the benefit, you must show the immigration certificate, which one receives entering the country.

COMMUNICATION

The area code for Chile is +56, for Santiago 22 (0056-22-). The telephone connections are generally reliable. A cheap option for longer stays is the purchase of local "prepaid" SIM card ("prepagado").

Internet access is available in almost every hotel. There are also public WIFI spots and several Internet cafés in Santiago.

ADDRESSES AND OPENING TIMES OF SWISS EMBASSY AND CONSULATE

Américo Vespucio Sur 100, 14. Stock
Las Condes, Santiago
Tel.: +56 2 2928 01 00
Fax: +56 2 2928 01 35
Mail: san.vertretung@eda.admin.ch
Web: www.eda.admin.ch/santiago

Opening hours: From Monday to Friday between 10:00 and 12:00.

The Embassy can be reached by public transport using Subway Line 1, Escuela Militar Station.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CONNECTION OF BUSINESS CONTACTS

To establish a first business contact, it is generally useful in Chile to be introduced by a friend. In order to do business successfully, it is essential to network actively and regularly. It is also common to invite an existing contact to private events.

Dates should ideally be agreed 2 weeks in advance. However, since Chilean business people have a rather short-term agenda, it is essential to confirm the appointment 1-2 days in advance. Furthermore, it should be noted that Chilean business people are not always punctual, appointments are usually handled with up to 30-minute margin (which is in case of late, ideally after 10 - 15 minutes notice).

After the first contact, you should not expect any concrete business. The general getting to know phase is first in the foreground. The Chilean hierarchies often fail to make direct decisions until the topic has been discussed with the upper levels.

It is customary to speak with "you". However, this should typically come from the business partner. The greeting between women and men is often accompanied by a kiss on the cheek. A well-groomed appearance is placed as of great value in Chile.

SWISS – CHILE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Swiss Embassy works closely with the Swiss-Chilean Chamber of Commerce and supports them at events. The Chamber of Commerce offers various services for its members and Swiss companies, which can be found on the following website: www.swisschile.cl/ .

FURTHER INTERESTING INFORMATION ABOUT LIVING AND WORKING IN CHILE:

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/publikationen/de/eda/auslandschweizerinnen-und-auslandschweizer/leben-und-arbeiten-in-ausland/dossier-chile.html>

<http://www.trekkingchile.com/leben-arbeiten-chile/de/index.php>

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