

# Scouting Facts: Switzerland

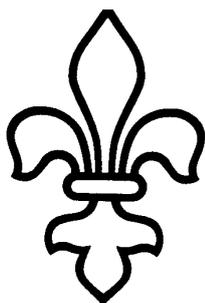


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## Guiding and Scouting in Switzerland

In Switzerland, Scouting started in 1910. The first groups of Guides were founded one year later in 1911. Already in 1913, a couple of cantonal associations founded the Swiss Scout Federation and in 1919, the foundation of the Federation of Swiss Girl Guides followed.



## The Swiss Guide and Scout Movement (SGSM)

In 1987 the Federation of Swiss Girl Guides and the Swiss Scout Federation joined to build a mixed association, called the Swiss Guide and Scout Movement (Pfadibewegung Schweiz / Mouvement Scout de Suisse / Movimento Scout Svizzero). In 2007, the SGSM has about 45'000 members, organized in more than 700 groups. Most of the groups have both female and male members.

The federal assignment programme puts an emphasis on the training of its leaders. In Switzerland, the leaders usually are between 17 and 25 years old. The SGSM offers approximately

fifteen different training courses, each designed for a certain function.

The association is engaged in the integration of children and adolescents with migrational background. Several programmes intend to support local groups in integrating foreigners in their activities. The SGSM is also supporting projects to protect the environment.

Furthermore, the SGSM maintains several partnerships with other Guide and Scout Associations from different parts of the World, notably with the Girl Guides of Burkina Faso and the Girl Guides of Romania.

## The four sections

The Swiss Guide and Scout Movement divides its members into four sections:

1. Bienli & Wölfe (Bees & Wolves): aged 7 - 11 years (cp. Brownies & Cub Scouts)
2. Pfadi: aged 11 - 15 years (cp. Guides & Scouts)
3. Pioniere: aged 15 - 17 years (cp. Ventures)
4. Rover: aged 17 years and older (cp. Rovers)

## The Programme

Guide and Scout activities in Switzerland are based on seven distinctive approaches: enhancing the personal progress, respecting our law and promise, living in a group, cultivating rituals and traditions, participating in a responsible manner, living in nature and playing.

## The Scout Association

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Emphasizing these approaches shall enhance each person's personality, the relation to its body, to other people, to the world and the environment and finally the relation to God/spirituality. Thus, the main goal of the SGSM is to strive for a holistic development of its members.

In the Brownie and Cub Scout section, the emphasis of the programme lays on games and tales, while in the Guide and Scout section, group-experience is fundamental. The Venture programme is centred on a project chosen and developed by the adolescents themselves. Rovers choose their own activities with the aim of discovering new aspects and new ways of life, dealing with specific environmental problems and helping to raise young people's awareness for the problems in the today's world. Furthermore most members of the Rover section are engaged as leaders in other sections.

Due to a tight cooperation with the "youth and sports"-programme of the Swiss government, games and sports have a rather high significance in the programme of Swiss Guides and Scouts, especially in camps.

### The Uniforms:

Brownies & Cub Scouts: turquoise shirt, group-scarf, belt with the head of a wolf or a bee on the buckle.

Guides & Scouts: Khaki shirt, group-scarf and a belt with a fleur-de-lis or a trefoil on the buckle.

Ventures: Khaki or red shirt, group-scarf and belt with a fleur-de-lis or a trefoil on the buckle.

Rovers: Green shirt, group-scarf and a belt with a fleur-de-lis or a trefoil on the buckle.

### The Mottos

Brownies & Cub Scouts: Mis Bescht (doing my best)

Guides & Scouts: Allzeit Bereit (be prepared)

Ventures: Zäme Wyter (advance together)

Rovers: Bewusst handeln (act consciously)

### The Promise:

With your help, I promise to do my best:

or

With the help of God and with your help, I promise to do my best:

- to continuously study and reflect upon the values of the Guide & Scout law.
- to search for the meaning and goal of my own life.
- to be actively involved within the community in which I live.

### The Law:



### Switzerland:

Switzerland has about 7.5 million inhabitants. It is one of the multilingual countries in Europe. The Swiss, particularly those who work with visitors in one way or another, usually speak several languages. The national languages of Switzerland

are German (Central and north-eastern Switzerland), French (Western Switzerland), Italian (Southern Switzerland) and Rumantsch (South-eastern Switzerland).

Many international organisations have their headquarters in Switzerland, and the offices of the World Scout Bureau are located in Geneva.

#### **International Guide & Scout Centres:**

Switzerland is also the home of two international Guide or Scout World Centres, both located in the heart of the Swiss Alps.

Kandersteg is the home of WOSM's International Scout Centre, called KISC ([www.kisc.ch](http://www.kisc.ch)). The KISC regularly hosts international Scout camps and training events. It annually receives more than 6000 guests from many countries, as well as more than 20'000 participants for its activities. The Centre was officially opened in 1923. Originally, it housed labourers working on the Lötschberg tunnel near Kandersteg.

Very close to Kandersteg, one of the four WAGGGS World Centres is located outside the town of Adelboden. The Centre, called 'Our Chalet', is a purpose-built Swiss chalet ([www.ourchalet.ch](http://www.ourchalet.ch)). Founded in the year 1932, it is the oldest World Centre owned by the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.

In both Centres, members and non-members alike are welcome. Besides providing exquisite facilities for skiing, mountaineering and camping, the Centres offer an excellent chance to meet people from different countries and cultures. Furthermore both Centres provide the opportunity to be engaged as a seasonal volunteer staff-member.

For further information on Guiding and Scouting in Switzerland visit:

<http://www.pbs.ch/en>

Further information on the country may be obtained from:

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