

2015/2016 Edition

Biel/Bienne

Introducing Switzerland's largest bilingual city and watchmaking center of the world



Biel/Bienne – Center for bilingual quality of life, precision engineering and innovative ideas

Stadt Biel
Ville de Bienne



Quality of life

In Biel/Bienne, your dream home comes at an affordable price compared with other cities: apartments in the city's lively old town, contemporary lofts in the vibrant city center, detached houses in leafy areas, and luxury apartments overlooking Lake Biel and the Alps. The cost of living and taxes are kind to your pocket, too.

Children start to learn both languages at day-care centers and day schools. Language learning at a young age is not just pie-in-the-sky here – it's a daily reality! Biel/Bienne's «Sport-Culture-Studies» program is a true ace in the city's pack, enabling talented youngsters to further their skills through a perfect match of school and sport, music or dance.

Welcome to Biel/Bienne

«The city of Biel/Bienne offers a wide range of opportunities for living, working and investing. For example: its fantastic location in the Three Lakes Region / Swiss Jura, at the heart of Europe's two most important language areas. A city that speaks two languages – an everyday reality that fosters openness, respect for other ways of thinking, and linguistic skills. Or its reputation as the world's foremost watchmaking center, a center for precision engineering, and a city for communication offering forward-looking job opportunities. Find out more about Biel/Bienne in this publication, or visit: www.biel-bienne.ch»

Erich Fehr, Mayor



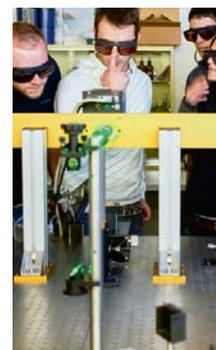
Biel/Bienne old town: A real delight – just waiting to be discovered. Come and browse awhile!



Festival du Film Français d'Helvétie – Every year, a cultural highlight for film lovers

Culture marked by the Biel/Bienne mentality

The particular approach to life created by the mixing of two mentalities inspires people active in culture and the arts to produce unconventional ideas and creations. The conventional art scene is also represented, in its full range. Culture from Biel/Bienne regularly takes top spot in national and international awards.



Berne University of Applied Sciences (BFH): Development center for qualified specialists and innovations

Innovation for the future

The various colleges and educational institutions provide a wide range of opportunities for training qualified specialists. Berne University of Applied Sciences (BFH) will concentrate its technical disciplines in the new Biel/Bienne campus right next to the main station. This site will constitute an innovative high-tech center of excellence for automotive engineering, energy systems, electrical engineering, communications, IT, machine engineering, medical informatics, micro and medical technology, and building and architecture.



The European Beach Volleyball Masters Tournament on the shores of Lake Biel – entertainment for thousands, with great games and a relaxing atmosphere

Full scope for sports enthusiasts

Switzerland's unique TISSOT ARENA stadium complex for football, ice hockey and curling (as of summer 2015) and around 90 other sports facilities are here for all sports lovers. Nature, with the lake, the vastness of the Seeland region, and the Jura, complements this range with its unique diversity – all within easy walking distance from every front door.



Precision for the world

The presence of Manufacture des Montres Rolex S.A. and the HQ of Swatch Group, the world's biggest watch group (Omega, Longines, Tissot, etc.), make Biel/Bienne the world's watchmaking center. Skilled precision work derived from watchmaker's workshops has a tradition here. It adds value in many other areas, too, such as medical technology, the automotive industry and telecommunications.



The world's biggest watch brand



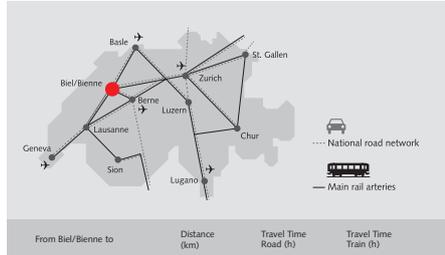
The world's biggest watch group

Urban development with a vision

As the city's largest landowner, Biel/Bienne has access to land reserves in excellent locations, especially around the train station and in Gurzelen and Bözingenfeld. It is thus able to lend its active support to urban development projects strategic in nature.

SAVOIR-VIVRE

For both transport and language...
Biel/Bienne enjoys a central location.



From Biel/Bienne to	Distance (km)	Travel Time Road (h)	Travel Time Train (h)
Zürich / Zürich Airport	117 / 123	1.20 / 1.18	1.10 / 1.30
Geneva / Geneva Airport	154 / 152	1.39 / 1.31	1.24 / 1.33
Basle / Basle Airport	91 / 99	1.02 / 1.06	1.04 / 1.25
Berne / Berne Airport	42 / 54	0.31 / 0.41	0.31 / 1.10

- Urban area: 21.21 km²
- Altitude: 437 – 875 m above sea level (Magglingen Fed. Inst. of Sport lies within Biel/Bienne city limits)
- Population: 54,971 (as of 31.12.14)
- ~ 60% German-speaking and ~ 40% French-speaking
- Area served: 150,000 people
- Tenth largest municipality in Switzerland
- Center of the Three Lakes Region / Jura

A family-friendly city

- Biel/Bienne provides excellent child care services and is continually adding to its offer, so parents in Biel/Bienne can decide to pursue both family and career.
- Here's an overview:
- Play groups 19
 - Day-care centers 18
 - Day schools 16
 - Kindergartens 60
 - Primary schools 14
 - Secondary schools 6
 - Sport-Culture-Study 7
 - Grammar schools 2
 - Vocational colleges 4
 - Universities 5
 - Music school 1

City for culture

- Biel/Bienne has a broad cultural offering with excellent locations:
- Museums 5
 - Culture for young people 6
 - Cinemas* 11
 - Event locations 51
 - Clubs, bars, bistros Numerous
 - *Including multiplex cinema in the TISSOT ARENA, as of fall 2015)
 - The following facilities:
 - Fine arts 15
 - Theater 18
 - Film and video 6
 - Music 28
 - Literature / Libraries 14
- Cultural highlights include: 2014 Swiss Sculpture Exhibition, Festival du Film Français d'Helvétie, Pod'Ring Culture Week, Biel/Bienne Photography Exhibition, Robert Walser Prize, Schubertiade 2015. For information on the latest events: www.biel-agenda.ch.

City for sport

- A selection of sports highlights: 100 km Run, Biathlon, 2013 Swiss Gymnastics Festival, 2014 and 2015 European Beach Volleyball Masters Tournament and 2016 European Beach Volleyball Championships.
- Water sport, cycling and inline paradise
 - Skiing at Les Prés-d'Orvin
 - Magglingen Federal Institute of Sport
 - Swiss tennis
 - About 170 sports clubs
 - Switzerland's unique TISSOT ARENA stadium complex, for football, ice hockey & curling (as of summer 2015) and some 90 other sports facilities.

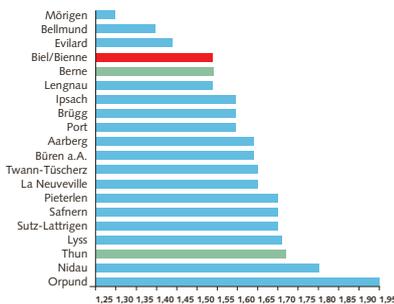
Shopping and browsing

Bahnhofstrasse and Nidagasse pedestrian zones invite you to browse and shop at leisure. Biel/Bienne old town entices you with its speciality and rarity shops and with its colorful street markets. And everywhere you go, you will find bistros, brasseries, cafés, bars and restaurants that invite you inside for a break.

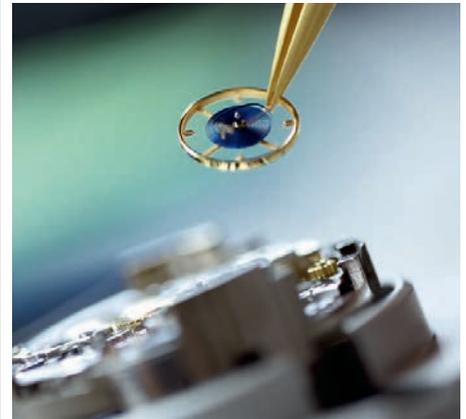
Advantageous tax system for private individuals in Biel/Bienne

Comparison of the largest towns and cities in the Canton of Berne and of the region's municipalities, 2015

Source: City of Biel/Bienne Statistisches Dept.



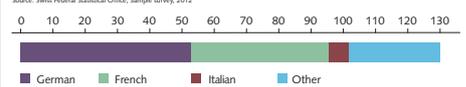
SAVOIR-FAIRE



Precision expertise: A watch movement is created at the Manufacture des Montres Rolex S.A., in Biel/Bienne

Attractive, versatile labor market

Distribution of the resident population by language (in %). Respondents could name more than one main language, hence total exceeds 100%.



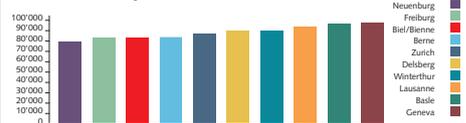
Internationality: Export regions in the Canton of Berne

Export volume in CHF billion. Source: Swiss Federal Customs Administration, Statistics, 2013



Above average favorable tax situation for companies

Direct federal tax, cantonal and municipal taxes (in CHF). Calculation example: Share capital CHF 2 million, net earnings CHF 400,000. Source: Swiss Federal Tax Administration, 2013



Above average quantity of labor supply in the precision engineering industry

Percentage share held by the precision engineering industry in the entire secondary sector, measured in full-time equivalents.

*Precision engineering, industry defined in acc. with the following NOGA general classification (SFSO). Relevant branches from groups 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31-33

Source: Swiss Federal Statistical Office, STATENT 2011



Economic development – in real terms

The city's economic development department will offer pragmatic and efficient support to your investment project. With our real estate database we will be glad to assist you in finding the right commercial property. Please contact us.

More info

For an overall picture of Biel/Bienne, please visit our website: www.biel-bienne.ch. Your contact for personal information:

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