

Bienvenue à Berne!

The Canton of Berne has French speakers, French companies, French schools, French associations, French signage, and French flavor. If you are looking for a French ambience in Switzerland, Berne is precisely where you need to be In Europe.

The canton of Berne is officially bi-lingual. The usage of French in all walks of life is apparent from the street signs to the schools to the support groups and associations. For example, the capital city of Berne has a French-speaking public school that is part of the Swiss system and a private French school at the French Embassy that is part of the French system. The French Women's Group in Berne is a good example of the many successful clubs and associations devoted to French citizens, French language and French themes.

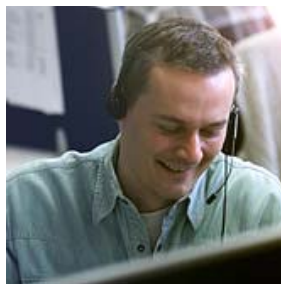
The city of Bienne, as the largest officially bilingual city in Switzerland, perhaps best exemplifies the French influence in the Canton. The 100,000 residents of Greater Bienne have established a strong French-speaking area that is attractive to all kinds of companies wishing to conduct business in French and/or be at the crossroads of both the French and German markets.

Bienne, 20 miles from the city of Berne, is the center of the centuries' old watch-making industry in Switzerland, with world-famous brands such as Swatch, Movado, Omega, Longines, Rado and Rolex housed here in the Canton's second largest city. The precision industry is concentrated here thanks to the watch industry and includes many foreign companies such as Harting, Festo Microtechnology, Saint Gobain Glass and La Montre Hermès.

Bienne is also a stronghold of the communications and IT industries. Switzerland's Federal Office of Communications is located here as well as major firms such as Orange Communications, Sunrise, and IXOS.

Mr. Emmanuel Hannard, Director, Selectron SA (part of the French Schneider Group) remarked that the fact that Bienne is the largest Swiss bilingual city makes it very attractive. "We can communicate in French but we also have access to the German culture and the German way of structuring ideas and applications, which is useful to us when we want to develop the right products and software for that market. It helps to be in an area that is a bridge between southern Germany and France."

Mr. Emmanuel Raffner, Director, La Montre Hermès, a company which has been in the Canton of Berne for 30 years, said that the main two reasons Hermès chose Bienne were: "First to find the know-how and highly specialized workers we needed and second, to be in the presence of very high quality suppliers. We made the choice to use only Swiss components."



French International Companies Located In the Canton of Berne

- Alpha Technique de l'Environnement SA (part of OTV France)
- Carbagas (part of Air Liquide)
- Chaumet Horlogerie SA
- Cipe (Suisse) SA (part of Cipe France)
- Citroën SA
- Colas Suisse (construction, especially railroads)
- Creabeton Matériaux (part of VICAT)
- Fichet Bauche (security equipment)
- La Montre Hermès (part of Hermès Paris)
- Lactalis Suisse GmbH (Groupe Lactalis)
- Le Carbone (carbon and graphite products and their applications)
- Legris (specialists in precision equipment)
- Leroy-Somer (drive systems and alternators)
- Losinger Construction (part of Bouygues)
- Orange Communications (part of France Telecom)
- Peugeot
- Poly-Bauelemente AG (part of Carbo Pic)
- Praxim Medvision (part of Praxim SA)
- PSA Finance
- Sanitas Troesch (part of Saint Gobain)
- Saint Gobain Glass
- Schneider Electric (part of Groupe Télémécanique; power and control specialists)
- Select-Ingrédient SA (part of Activ International)
- Selectron Systems (part of Schneider Electric; automation solutions)
- SNDI (decontamination suits and treatments)
- Someta (indoor activities spaces and clean rooms)
- SunChemical AG (part of Coates Lorilleux)
- TI Torbel Industries (part of Groupe Tordo Belgrano, Tourrette Levens)
- Ugitech Ugine (stainless steel)
- Veolia Umweltservice AG (part of Veolia Environmental Services)
- Vigier Cements (cement)

***A Truly International Location* Other Worldwide Companies in the Cities of Bienne and Berne**

- Advanced Machine & Tool from Seymour, IN
- Atlas Copco from Sweden
- Biovision (world HQ with subsidiary in CA)
- Cemex from Mexico
- Citizen Watch from Japan
- Conduit Europe from Ireland
- CSL Behring from Australia
- eBay from San Jose, CA
- Fafco from Sweden
- Festo Microtechnology from Germany (Festo Group)
- Frito-Lay (Pepsico) from Dallas TX
- GlaxoSmithKline from Philadelphia
- Harting from Germany
- HTT Hauser Tripet Tschudin (part of Hardinge Inc. from Elmira NY)
- IXOS Software International from Germany
- Kraft Foods Schweiz AG from USA
- Luxottica from Italy
- MGI Luxury Group from Lyndhurst NJ, part of Movado Group
- Mikron AG from Switzerland
- MPS Micro Precision Systems from Germany (part of Faulhaber group)
- Nebus, part of Neckermann Gruppe from Netherlands
- Novosan AG from Germany
- Oracle Software (Schweiz) from USA
- QS Holdings Sarl (part of Quicksilver Group, Huntington Beach, CA)
- Rolex from Switzerland
- SAP from Germany
- SCS Schneider from Germany
- Siemens Schweiz from Germany
- Siener Soft AG from Germany
- Sintech HTM from Germany
- Staar Surgical from Monrovia, CA
- Sun Microsystems from Palo Alto, CA
- Sunrise Medical from Carlsbad, CA
- Swatch Group from Switzerland
- Tange (Europe) AG from Japan
- Universal Medical Supplies from Germany
- WEKO from Germany

The Berne Economic Development Agency (BEDA) has offices in Berne and Bienne as well as representatives in the US to serve your needs. BEDA's web site (www.berneinvest.com) has information in English, French and German, the languages commonly used by the business community in the Canton of Berne.

Alan Parter
286 Madison Avenue, 21st floor
New York, NY 10017
P 212 867 1717 F 212 686 8367
alan.parter@berneinvest-agents.com

Denis Grisel, President BEDA
Münsterplatz 3
CH-3011 Berne, Switzerland
P +41 31 633 4120 F +41 31 633 4088
denis.grisel@berneinvest.com