

The Basel insurance cluster

*Dr Alexander Ressos, TEP
Attorney-at-Law (Switzerland), Solicitor (Hong Kong),
Solicitor (England & Wales)*

Insurance in Basel is more than one large group. The city is home to the head office of the merged Helvetia Baloise group, to regional offices of other Swiss and foreign insurers, to brokers serving the pharmaceutical and chemical industries, and to health insurers. The Basel health insurer Sympany, which emerged from earlier regional sickness funds, is one of the medium-sized health insurers of Switzerland.¹ Pension funds of the pharmaceutical groups, which Part G and Chapter IV discuss, also manage large portfolios from Basel.

The insurance cluster is supported by a network of professional services. Actuarial consultancies, auditing firms with insurance practices, law firms advising on insurance regulation and claims, and loss adjusters operate in the city. The University of Basel contributes through its faculties of business and economics and of law, while the universities of applied sciences in northwestern Switzerland train professionals in finance and risk management.² The Bernoulli tradition, which Part D traced as the mathematical foundation of insurance, thus continues in the training of the actuaries and risk managers on whom the industry depends.

The exact number of people employed in insurance in Basel is difficult to determine, because statistical sources classify employment by location of establishment and some employees of Basel-based groups work elsewhere. Cantonal and federal statistics nevertheless show that insurance accounts for a significant share of employment in the Basel financial sector, comparable to that of banking.³ The weight of insurance in the Basel financial centre has grown relative to banking over the past two decades, as the private banks have declined while the insurance group has expanded.

1 Notes

1. On Sympany (Basel), its origins in regional sickness funds and its position in the Swiss health insurance market, see its annual reports. To be verified. ↩
2. On teaching and research in insurance and risk management at the University of Basel and the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland (FHNW), see their study programmes. To be verified. ↩
3. On employment in insurance in the canton of Basel-Stadt, see the business structure statistics (STATENT) of the Federal Statistical Office and the publications of the Statistisches Amt Basel-Stadt. Figures to be verified. ↩

For general information only. This article does not constitute legal or tax advice, does not replace advice on an individual case and creates no lawyer-client relationship. It reflects the legal position as of September 2026.

Online version: helveticaregister.com/basel-the-basel-insurance-cluster