

International Geneva today: organisations, economic weight and turbulence — overview and summary

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

The International Geneva of the twenty-first century is a dense and diversified whole: international organisations, non-governmental organisations, permanent missions, research centres, multinational companies and academic institutions. It employs tens of thousands of people and spends billions of francs in the region every year. Since 2025 it has also been passing through turbulence caused by the funding freezes and restructurings imposed by the great powers. This chapter describes this whole on the basis of the available statistical data, analyses its economic weight and examines the challenges it faces, together with their consequences for the financial centre.

1 In five sentences

1. Geneva hosts some forty international organisations, more than four hundred non-governmental organisations and the permanent missions of almost every State, on the basis of headquarters agreements that confer privileges and immunities on them.
2. The international organisations accounted for 28,730 jobs in 2023, to which must be added the jobs of the missions, the non-governmental organisations and the consulates, for a total of around 36,000, comparable to that of the financial centre. Their expenditure reached CHF 6.4 billion in 2020.
3. International Geneva has specialised in health, labour, refugees, trade and human rights, fields that produce standards, networks and skills of interest to the financial centre.
4. Since 2025, the funding freezes, restructurings and redundancies decided under the influence of American policy have been unsettling

International Geneva today

the balance of International Geneva and threatening part of the local economy.

5. The financial centre draws from International Geneva a clientele, skills and an image, and it must keep that image consistent with its own practices.

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/geneva-international-geneva-today-organisations-economic-weight-and-turbulence-overview