

The Geneva financial centre in the Swiss landscape

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The Geneva financial centre occupies a particular position in the Swiss financial landscape. Zurich, home to the large universal banks and to numerous insurance companies, remains the country's principal financial centre. Geneva stands out for its specialisation in international wealth management and in commodity trade finance, as well as for its French-speaking, Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and African clientele. Lugano, the country's third financial centre, maintains close ties with Italy.

The Fondation Genève Place Financière describes a sector resting on three pillars: private and institutional wealth management, commodity trade finance, and commercial and retail banking. It stresses the presence in Geneva of activities such as shipping and inspection services, which together with finance form a cluster that it presents as unique in the world.¹ The combination of wealth management and commodity trading distinguishes Geneva from the other wealth management centres, and it will be the subject of Parts G and H.

The clientele of the financial centre remains highly international. The Foundation's economic survey notes that clients come in particular from Europe, Latin America and the Middle East.² This geographical diversity is both a strength, since it spreads risk, and a demand, since it requires mastery of varied legal, tax and cultural environments.

1 Notes

1. Fondation Genève Place Financière, presentation, cited above. ↩

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2. Allnews, 21 October 2024, cited above. ↩

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