

## Zug as a business location: an overview

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The canton of Zug is one of the smallest in Switzerland, yet it has become one of the country's best-known business locations. Companies and families from Asia, the Middle East and Africa often encounter the name early in their planning. This article explains what makes Zug attractive and where its limits lie.

### 1 A small canton with an international profile

Zug lies in central Switzerland, between Zurich and Lucerne, on the shores of Lake Zug. The canton comprises the city of Zug and a number of surrounding communes, each with its own character and its own local tax multiplier. Over several decades the canton has pursued a consistent policy of moderate taxation, efficient administration and openness towards international companies, and this policy has shaped its economy considerably.

As a result, the canton hosts a high concentration of internationally active companies relative to its size. English is widely used in business, and many employees and their families come from abroad.

### 2 Moderate taxation as a long-standing feature

The tax burden on companies and individuals in Zug is among the lowest in Switzerland. Taxes in Switzerland are levied at federal, cantonal and communal level, and Zug's cantonal and communal rates are comparatively modest. Details of corporate and personal taxation are covered in separate articles in this section, since the effective burden always depends on the individual situation.

### 3 Commodity trading, holding companies and life sciences

Zug is one of the Swiss centres of international commodity trading, alongside Geneva and Lugano. Trading, shipping and financing functions of large and medium-sized groups are located here. The canton has also long been used for holding and regional headquarters companies that manage participations across several countries.

In addition, a number of life sciences and medical technology companies have established themselves in and around Zug, often with management, distribution or intellectual property functions. The proximity to research institutions in Zurich and elsewhere in Switzerland supports this cluster.

### 4 Crypto Valley

Since the mid-2010s, Zug has become known as "Crypto Valley", a term that today describes a wider Swiss ecosystem of blockchain and digital asset businesses. The federal regulatory framework, in particular FINMA's practice and the federal legislation on distributed ledger technology, applies equally throughout Switzerland. Zug's contribution lies above all in its early openness and in the community of specialists that has formed there.

### 5 Proximity to Zurich

The city of Zug is connected to Zurich by frequent rail services, and Zurich Airport is within comfortable reach. Many companies therefore combine a registered office in Zug with access to Zurich's labour market, banks and advisers. For many investors, this combination is one of the main reasons for choosing Zug.

### 6 What pays off in practice

- **Start with the business model.** Low taxes only bring lasting benefit if real activities, people and decisions are located in Zug.
- **Compare communes early.** The local tax multiplier and the availability of office space differ within the canton.
- **Plan for banks and permits.** Opening accounts and obtaining work permits for non-EU staff often take longer than the formation of the company itself.

## 7 How Ressos Legal helps

I advise companies, entrepreneurs and families from Greater China, Asia, the Middle East and Africa on whether Zug suits their plans and how to structure the move. [Contact me](#) for a first conversation.

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