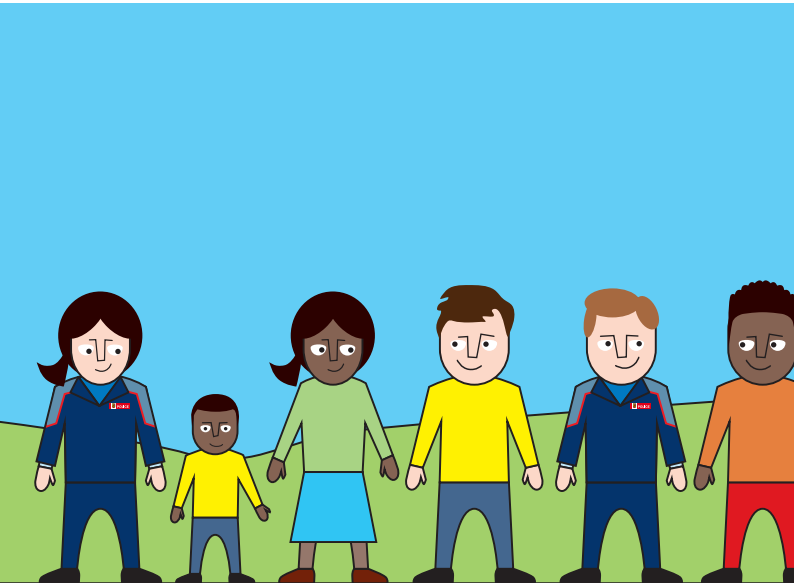




Safe together in Canton Bern

Welcome! People in Switzerland respect each other and the laws that apply here. That's the basis for harmony between people.



How we live in harmony and safety in Canton Bern

People from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds live in Switzerland. Living in harmony depends on everyone observing the law of the land and interpersonal rules. Everyone in Switzerland has rights and obligations prescribed by law.

The most important rights are enshrined in the Swiss Federal Constitution. For example:

- > Everyone is equal before the law.
Discrimination and racism are forbidden.
- > Men and women have equal rights.
- > Everyone is free to practise their religion and faith.





The police in everyday life

The police in Switzerland are fully integrated in everyday social life; they are essential to the safety and security of our country. The police are tasked with keeping everyone in Switzerland safe and secure, enforcing the law and tackling crime. To be able to do this, they sometimes have to check people's identities.

If the police carry out an ID check, you must show your ID document or find some other way of proving who you are.

- > Giving false information is a criminal offence.
- > The police are entitled to take you to the police station for further questioning.
- > The police are entitled to search through your clothing, bags and other items you have with you for the purposes of investigating or preventing a possible crime.

The police have to abide by certain rules and act proportionately.

- > They must provide a specific reason for wanting to check your identity or search you.
- > Police officers in plain clothes must show you their police ID.

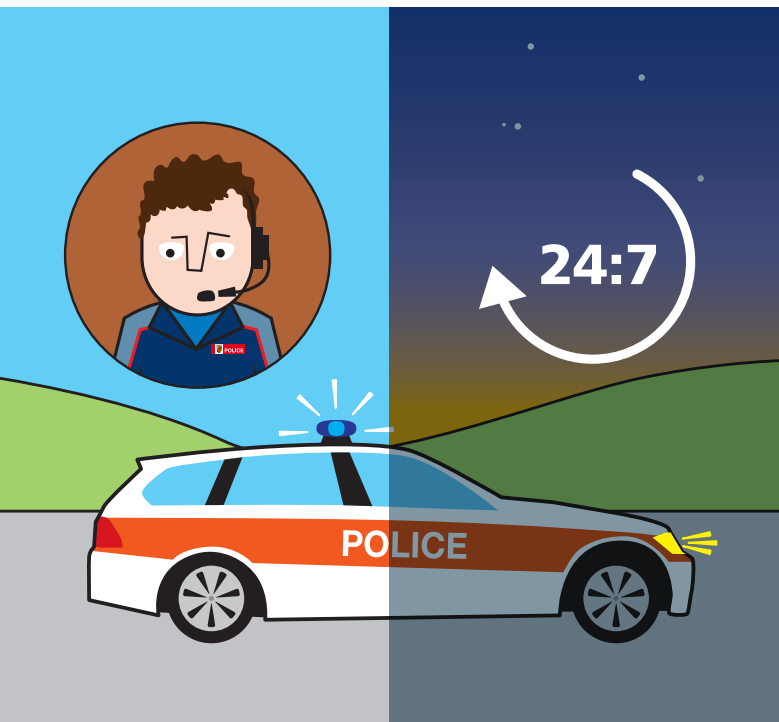
If you feel that the police acted unreasonably when checking your identity or searching you, ask the officer for his or her name and note the date, time and place.

Report the incident to the Canton Bern police complaints desk: beschwerdestelle@police.be.ch or the nearest police station.

In Switzerland, as in other countries, certain behaviour is considered a criminal offence, such as:

- > Sexual harassment of women, girls, boys or men, whether verbal, in gestures or through physical acts, is a criminal offence. If you are harassed, defend yourself and seek help.
- > Our society does not tolerate violence of any kind – not even at home within the family. Anyone can inform the police – including you if you see or hear violence taking place, such as in the flat next door.
- > Where theft or criminal damage is concerned, what is yours should remain yours.

If you are the victim of an offence or if you witness an offence being committed, call the police (tel. 112 or 117, toll-free). We are at your service day and night, 365 days a year.



Important telephone numbers

Emergencies

Police	112 or 117
Police contact number for women (answering machine; a woman police officer will call back)	031 332 77 77
Ambulance / medical services	144

In the event of domestic or sexual violence, you should contact the police or the following advice services:

Opferhilfe Bern (victim support advice, Bern)	031 370 30 70
Opferhilfe Biel (victim support advice, Biel)	032 322 56 33
Lantana (victim support for sexual offences against women and girls, Bern)	031 313 14 00
Vista (victim support for sexual and domestic violence, Thun)	033 225 05 60
Perpetrator intervention programme: Berner Interventionsstelle gegen Häusliche Gewalt	031 633 50 33

Here is where you can find general as well as legal advice:

ISA (information and advice for issues relating to foreign nationals)	031 310 12 72
Legal advice for people in need, Bern	031 385 18 20
Swiss Refugee Council	031 370 75 75
gggfon (information and advice on violence and racism)	031 333 33 40
Asylhilfe Bern (support / advice for asylum seekers)	031 382 52 72
CSP Berne-Jura (support for those in need of help)	032 493 32 21

**Information films on living in harmony may
be found in this and other languages on our website:
www.police.be.ch**

Bern Cantonal Police
Waisenhausplatz 32
3011 Bern

401.647