

# Chile

## Business Travel Guide

Compiled by:

### Swiss Business Hub Chile

Santiago, July 2021

#### ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Swiss citizens need a passport (at least 3 months valid after departure) to enter Chile. Upon arrival, you will receive a tourist card ("tarjeta de turismo"), which entitles you to stay for a maximum of 90 days and must be handed in upon departure. In order to work in Chile, a working visa is required, which is issued by the Chilean Embassy in Berne or in Chile directly by the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Ministry of Interior at [www.extranjeria.gob.cl](http://www.extranjeria.gob.cl) (Spanish).

All international flights arrive at Arturo Merino Benítez airport in Santiago (SCL) <https://www.nuevopudahuel.cl/>. Most of the hotels in Santiago are about 30 minutes away from the airport by taxi.

Transfer from the airport to the city center:

- The airport is under construction during 2017-2022, resulting in more difficult access and longer transfer times. Ideally, you should be at the airport at least 2-3 hours before the travel time.
- Official taxis can be found at the airport. The costs for the airport-center transfer are about 27'000 - 30'000 CLP (about 35 CHF). There is also a bus (Turbus: [http://www.turbus.cl/turbus/opencms/03\\_Aeropuerto](http://www.turbus.cl/turbus/opencms/03_Aeropuerto)) to the center of Santiago (e.g. metro station Los Heroes) for 1'900 CLP (about 2.30 CHF).

#### HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Mandatory and recommended vaccinations: no general requirements. Please refer to: <https://chile.gob.cl/chile/ingreso-a-chile-desde-el-exterior> for up-to-date information about the COVID-19 pandemic and respective requirements.

Mandatory medical insurance: Non-resident foreigners must have a health insurance that provides coverage for international medical care in the event of contracting COVID19 in Chile. The minimum

amount of health benefits must be USD 30'000 and cover emergency medical assistance, hospital care, repatriation for medical reasons or death, including coverage for any expenses arising from COVID19.

Other mandatory health requirements: Please refer to <https://chile.gob.cl/chile/ingreso-a-chile-desde-el-exterior> for up-to-date information about the COVID-19 pandemic.

Medical care in Chile's private hospitals is modern and efficient. However, outside the capital, medical care is not guaranteed everywhere due to the large distances and low population density. Many hospitals require a cost guarantee before treating patients. First aid should, in principle, be provided without financial guarantee.

If you are dependent on certain medications, your first aid kit should contain a sufficient supply. Information on the import of medicines for private use can be found on the website of the Chilean Customs Authorities at [www.aduana.cl](http://www.aduana.cl) (Spanish and English) or at the competent foreign office in Berne.

In the Altiplano, the symptoms of altitude sickness should not be underestimated.

## **PUBLIC SECURITY / RECOMMENDED PRECAUTIONS**

Please take note of the constantly updated travel and safety information of the EDA, which you can find on the website of the Swiss Embassy in Santiago under Travel Information:

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/fdfa/representations-and-travel-advice/chile.html>

In general, Chile is a stable and safe country. Thefts happen but violent crimes/robberies are rare and centered mostly in the poorer neighborhoods.

Chile is in an earthquake area and has about 80 active volcanoes. Earthquakes can cause tsunamis in addition to ravages in the countryside. In summer, forest fire danger exists in many places. During heavy rains, dried-out riverbeds in the desert or in the Cordillera valley can turn into raging rivers or mudslides in no time at all.

**Observe the warnings and instructions of the local authorities, e.g. barriers to active volcanoes, warning signs, and tsunami evacuation routes in coastal cities or evacuation orders.**

For current information, measures and restrictions regarding pandemics (e.g. COVID-19) visit the Ministry of Health's website: [www.minsal.cl](http://www.minsal.cl).

Register your trips abroad so that you can be contacted in times of crisis.

<https://www.itineris.eda.admin.ch/>

## **TIME ZONE**

Chile runs on Chile Standard Time (CLT) which is UTC-4. Depending on the season, Chile has between four to six hours time difference to Switzerland. From April to September the difference is four hours, from October to March six hours. Due to the different dates of switching to summer- and wintertime in Chile and Switzerland, in March/April and September/October, the time difference is at five hours. For more information: <https://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/>

## BUSINESS HOURS

|                    | Weekdays    | Saturdays   | Sundays and<br>Nationals Holidays                    |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|--|
| Government Offices | 09:00-14:00 | closed      | closed   |
| Banks              | 09:00-14:00 | closed      | closed   |
| Shops              | 08:00-21:00 | 08:00-21:00 | 08:00-21:00 or closed<br>(depends on the<br>holiday) |

## PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Please check <https://www.feriados.cl/> for an overview of the Chilean holidays.

## NATIONAL TRADE FAIR CALENDAR

The dates of the main trade fairs can be obtained from: [https://www.eventseye.com/ferias/c3\\_ferias\\_chile.html](https://www.eventseye.com/ferias/c3_ferias_chile.html). However, there might be other trade fairs and congresses. Please get in touch with the Swiss Business Hub to obtain more information.

## COMMUNICATION: TELEPHONE AND INTERNET

Chile's country code is: +56

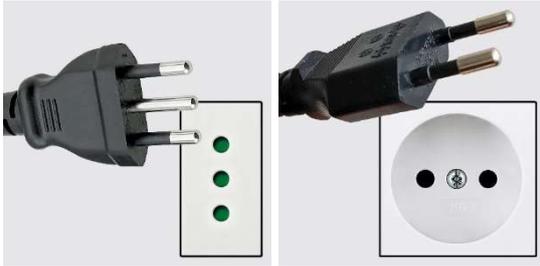
Local SIM card can be bought at: Claro, Entel, Movistar or WOM.

### Important phone numbers:

|                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| Police            | 133 |
| Fire department   | 132 |
| Medical emergency | 131 |

## ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

In Chile, the power plugs and sockets are of type C and L. The standard voltage is 220-240 V and the standard frequency is 50 Hz.



## METHODS OF PAYMENT

National currency in Chile is the Chilean Peso (CLP).

Exchange rate as of July 15, 2021: CHF 1 = CLP 823.

When entering or leaving the country with USD 10'000 or more in cash or other monetary instruments, the money must be declared in writing to the custom office.

In Chile, debit and credit cards are almost everywhere accepted. In restaurants, a tip of 10% is customary.

Acceptance of methods of payment:

|                          | everywhere                          | almost everywhere                   | limited                             | not accepted             |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Cash (national currency) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Cash (USD)               | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| MasterCard               | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Visa                     | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| American Express         | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Diner                    | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Apple Pay                | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Google/Samsung Pay       | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## DOMESTIC TRAVEL, LOCAL TRANSPORT

Santiago has a well-developed and constantly growing network of public transport ("Transantiago" - buses and metro, [www.transantiago.cl/](http://www.transantiago.cl/)), which at peak times (7.30-9.30 and 18.00-20.30) is very busy and only partly air-conditioned in the Metro. To use the public transport system, you need to buy a so-called BIP-card, which you can charge paying with cash at any metro station and that will be charged for each trip (CLP 700-720). For shorter trips within Santiago, taxis are a good alternative. The city taxis (in Santiago black-yellow) are equipped with a taximeter. In the rare case that it is not turned on automatically, you should kindly advise the taxi driver or agree on a fixed price in advance. UBER ([www.uber.com/es-CL/](http://www.uber.com/es-CL/)) and CABIFY (<https://cabify.com/chile/santiago>) are further transport alternatives.

When traveling outside of Santiago, there are not only national flights but also intercity buses ([www.recorrido.cl](http://www.recorrido.cl)) or rental cars (most international agencies are represented in Chile).

Main method of payment for taxi and metro: Cash

## ACCOMMODATION, TEMPORARY OFFICE SPACE

The usual internet platforms like Booking.com or Airbnb provide short and midterm accommodation.

WeWork has several office spaces in Santiago for temporary rental of office space.

## LANGUAGES USED FOR BUSINESS

Spanish is the official language of Chile. Knowledge of Spanish is almost indispensable for a successful transaction, especially since not all business people and senior government officials speak English.

## BUSINESS PRACTICES

### **Tips for initiating business contacts:**

To establish a first business contact, it is generally useful in Chile to be introduced by a friend or colleague. In order to do business successfully, it is essential to network actively and regularly. It is also common to invite an existing contact to private events.

### **Scheduling Meetings:**

Dates should ideally be agreed two weeks in advance. However, since Chilean business people have a rather short-term agenda, it is essential to confirm the appointment one-two days in advance. Furthermore, it should be noted that Chilean business people are not always punctual; appointments are usually handled with up to 15-minute margin (giving notice if the delay is more than 10 minutes).

### **Business attire:**

In general, Chileans wear a suit (often without a tie). A well-groomed appearance is placed as of great value in Chile.

### **Introducing yourself:**

Chileans are not only interested in your business acumen but also like to know some of your private background (family, hobbies, etc.). It is customary to speak with "tu" (not "usted"). However, this should typically come from the business partner. The greeting between women and men is often accompanied by a kiss on the cheek (pre-COVID).

### **Building trust and personal relationships:**

After the first contact, you should not expect any concrete business. The general getting to know phase is first in the foreground. The Chilean hierarchies often fail to make direct decisions until the topic has been discussed with the upper levels.

### **Offering and accepting gifts and invitations:**

Chileans are very hospitable and might quickly invite you to private gatherings. However, sometimes this is just a phrase and not meant literally. Bringing and receiving small gifts is accepted. Real invitations should be followed in order to establish a relationship with the business contacts.

### **Sensitive topics:**

Pinochet dictatorship, politics in general, religion, abortion, Mapuche conflict

## BUSINESS RISKS

Chile has a score of 24/100 (100 being high risk) in the Global Corruption Index (<https://risk-indexes.com/global-corruption-index/>) making it the second least corrupt country in Latin America.

Legal certainty is very high for Latin America according to several rankings like the Ease of Doing Business Index by the World Bank.

In the following link you'll find the CRC risk classification of Chile by the Swiss Export Risk Insurance (SERV): <https://www.serv-ch.com/coverpractice/list#>

SERV insures political and *del credere* risks involved in exporting goods and services.

[Products for exporters](#)

[Product for service providers](#)

[Products for financial institutions](#)

The full range of services and products offered by SERV can be obtained at [www.serv-ch.com](http://www.serv-ch.com).

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## IMPORT OF SAMPLES AND CATALOGUES

Please refer to our Factsheet about customs in Chile: <https://www.s-ge.com/en/overview/customs-regimes-chile>

## USEFUL LOCAL WEBSITES, ADDRESSES, EMAIL AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Please refer to the document "Chile: Basic Addresses".

## ADDRESSES OF EMBASSY AND CONSULATES OF SWITZERLAND

**Embassy of Switzerland & Consulate**

Av. Américo Vespucio Sur 100, piso 14  
Santiago, Las Condes

Chile

Tel +56 22 928 0100

Email: [santiago@eda.admin.ch](mailto:santiago@eda.admin.ch)

Website: [www.eda.admin.ch/santiago](http://www.eda.admin.ch/santiago)

**Opening times:**

Monday – Friday, 10-12 o'clock

## ADDRESSES BILATERAL, NATIONAL AND LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Cámara Chileno-Suiza de Comercio, CCHSC  
Santiago, Chile  
General Manager: Constanza Cardenas Aguirre  
Mobile: +56 9 5728 4935  
Email: [constanza.cardenas@swisschile.cl](mailto:constanza.cardenas@swisschile.cl)  
Website: [www.swisschile.cl](http://www.swisschile.cl)

## ADDRESSES OF THE EMBASSY AND CONSULATES OF CHILE IN OR FOR SWITZERLAND

### Embassy & Consulate of Chile

Eigerplatz 5  
12 floor  
3007 Berne  
Tel.: +41 31 370 00 50 (Mon-Fri, 14-15 o'clock)  
Email: [berna@consulado.gob.cl](mailto:berna@consulado.gob.cl)  
Website: <https://chile.gob.cl/berna/>

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