



INFO SHEET N°24

# SIM card & eSIM

## Understanding everything simply

*The little card that connects your phone to the network — and its invisible version, the eSIM.*

*The SIM card is the small chip that allows your phone to make calls and access the internet. In recent years, a new invisible version has appeared: the eSIM. This sheet explains simply what it is, how it works and what to do if you need to change it.*

# Physical SIM & eSIM — what is the difference?



## Physical SIM card

- Small plastic card that you insert into the phone
- 3 sizes: Standard, Micro, Nano (most common)
- You receive it by post or in a shop
- Works in all phones
- Easy to transfer between phones
- Can be lost or damaged



## eSIM (electronic SIM)

- Chip soldered inside the phone
- No physical card — everything done by QR code
- Activation in a few minutes from your phone
- Only on recent phones (since ~2018)
- Allows 2 numbers on 1 phone
- Ideal for travel abroad

 **Simply put:** The physical SIM is like a key you insert. The eSIM is like a built-in lock in the phone — you don't need a key, everything is programmed from within.

## The 3 sizes of physical SIM card

| Format          | Size          | Used on           | Still common?     |
|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Standard (Mini) | 25 × 15 mm    | Old phones        | <b>Rare</b>       |
| Micro SIM       | 15 × 12 mm    | Phones 2012–2016  | <b>Rarely</b>     |
| Nano SIM        | 12.3 × 8.8 mm | All recent phones | <b>✓ Standard</b> |

 **Today,** virtually all phones (Samsung, iPhone, etc.) use the **Nano SIM** format — this is what you receive automatically from all Swiss operators.



# Which phones accept the eSIM?



## iPhone

From iPhone XR (2018)



## Samsung Galaxy

From S20 (2020)



## Google Pixel

From Pixel 3 (2018)



## Huawei

Some models



## Autres Android

Check specs



## Your phone?

Settings → Info



**How to know if your Samsung accepts eSIM?** Go to Settings → General management → SIM card info  
→ If you see "Add mobile plan" or "eSIM", your phone is compatible.



# How to change your SIM card in Switzerland?

## ● Replacing a physical SIM — step by step

### 1 Contact your operator

In a shop, by phone or online — request a SIM replacement (free or ~CHF 10–20 depending on the operator).

---

### 2 Receive the new SIM

By post (2–3 days) or directly in shop (immediate).

---

### 3 Insert the new SIM

Switch off your phone · Remove the old SIM with the tool provided (or a paperclip) · Insert the new one · Switch on.

---

### 4 Activate if needed

Some operators ask you to call a number or confirm online. Your number stays the same.

## ● Activating an eSIM — step by step

### 1 Subscribe to an eSIM offer

Choose an operator that offers eSIM (Swisscom, Sunrise, Salt, Wingo, etc.) — specify that you want an eSIM.

---

### 2 Receive your QR code

The operator sends you a QR code by email or shows it to you in the shop. Never share it!

---

### 3 Scan the QR code

Sur votre téléphone : Paramètres → Connexions → Gestionnaire de SIM → Ajouter un forfait mobile → Scan the QR code.

---

### 4 Activate and enjoy

Your eSIM is active in a few minutes. Your number is working. No physical card needed!



# The great advantage of eSIM — travelling more cheaply

## Two numbers on one phone

The eSIM allows you to have **two numbers active simultaneously** on one phone — your Swiss number AND a local number in the country you are visiting. This is particularly useful for:



### Motorhome travellers

Keep your Swiss number active + subscribe locally (France, Spain, Italy...) without changing SIM.



### Frequent travellers

Buy a local eSIM for each country visited — cheap local internet, without removing your Swiss SIM.



### Cross-border residents

A Swiss number + a French/German/Italian number — ideal for people who work on both sides of the border.



### Savings when travelling

Travel eSIMs (Airalo, Holafly, etc.) allow you to have local internet from €5–10 for a week.



## Swiss operators — SIM or eSIM available?

| Operator    | Physical SIM | eSIM available | How to activate   |
|-------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Swisscom    | ✓ Yes        | ✓ Yes          | In shop or online |
| Sunrise     | ✓ Yes        | ✓ Yes          | In shop or online |
| Salt        | ✓ Yes        | ✓ Yes          | In shop or online |
| Wingo       | ✓ Yes        | ✓ Yes          | Online only       |
| Yallo       | ✓ Yes        | ~ Some offers  | Online            |
| Teleboy     | ✓ Yes        | ~ Some offers  | Online            |
| M-Budget    | ✓ Yes        | ✗ No           | At Migros         |
| Coop Mobile | ✓ Yes        | ✗ No           | At Coop           |

## SeniorPhone tips

- If you have **recent** (after 2020) — check whether it supports eSIM, it is more convenient a **phone** for travel
- If you change operator — **phone number is** (free portability). You keep your **transferable** number!
- In **loss or** of the phone — call your operator immediately to block the SIM. Useful numbers: case **theft** Swisscom 0800 800 800 · Sunrise 0800 707 707 · Salt 0800 700 500 of
- For **motorhome** — the eSIM is ideal: keep your Swiss SIM + add a local eSIM depending **travel** on your destination
- Travel **eSIMs** (Airalo, Holafly, Nomad) give you cheap local internet — ask a family member to help with the first installation
- If in doubt — go to a **Swisscom or Sunrise shop** for free personalised assistance

## Points to watch

-  Never share your eSIM QR code with anyone — it allows your subscription to be activated on another phone
-  Before changing phone — check how to transfer your eSIM (each operator has its own procedure)
-  Les iPhones achetés aux USA sont parfois verrouillés sans Physical SIM — vérifiez avant d'acheter à l'étranger
-  If you lose your phone with an eSIM — block it immediately with your operator

## ✓ Key takeaways

- La Physical SIM = petite carte insérée dans le téléphone. La Nano SIM est le standard actuel.
- eSIM = invisible integrated chip, activated by QR code. More convenient, no physical card.
- eSIM allows 2 numbers on 1 phone — ideal for travellers and motorhome users.
- Your number is transferable free of charge if you change operator.
- In case of loss/theft — block your SIM immediately with your operator.

### This month, SeniorPhone is supported by:

[Space reserved for the monthly sponsor]

*One sponsor per month only — to keep your trust.*

## 🔴 Safety — Essential reminders



### Never share your passwords or codes with anyone

Not by phone, not by email, not by SMS. Your bank, the police and operators will never ask for them.



### Hidden number — do not answer

A hidden number deliberately conceals its identity. Hang up without hesitation.



### Unknown number — avoid answering

Let it ring, wait for a voicemail, call back only if necessary. Never call back a 0900 number.



### Fake police or fake banker — hang up and call 117

The real police and your bank will NEVER ask you to hand over money or your PIN by phone.

*This banner appears on every SeniorPhone sheet — because your safety is our absolute priority.*

