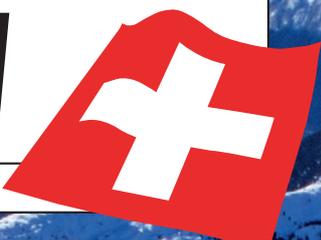


THE MAGAZINE FOR THE SWISS ABROAD

S W I S S

REVIEW

DECEMBER 2012 / NO.6



**The end of the idyll:
Consequences of climate change**

**Switzerland as a tax haven:
The middle classes are bleeding**

**Everyone's a pilgrim:
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At what point does greed begin?

THE TONE OF THE DEBATE over taxation in Switzerland is becoming increasingly vitriolic and the exchanges often highly personal. The increased tax competition within the country is leading certain politicians to question the proven system of solidarity between the cantons and communes. The citizens of one canton are being crudely labelled slackers and profiteers by politicians from another. That is not just distasteful, it is alarming. There is barely a mention of the fact that in terms of the fiscal quota – tax revenues and social expenditure – Switzerland is performing exceptionally well by international comparison at five per cent below the average for OECD countries. Nobody likes paying tax but many people believe the limit as to what is acceptable with regard to tax cuts has been reached in Switzerland. It is becoming increasingly evident that huge tax reductions will at some point result in cutbacks to state services. This will also mean greater social disparity with the number of those living in poverty also rising in Switzerland. Yet, despite this, further tax cuts are going to be made. This is the conclusion reached by our editor René Lenzin. His analysis of tax policy in Switzerland can be read on page 17 onwards.

Swiss tax policy is not just a domestic issue as it is also tarnishing our nation's image abroad, albeit more among politicians than business leaders. The latter will nonetheless almost certainly take great interest in the referendum to be held on 3 March next year. After five years of being passed back and forth, the "popular initiative against fat-cat bonuses" is now to be put to the vote. One might (and should) consider the fundamental issue: when does striving for profit – undeniably the basis of our market economy – become avarice and thus indecent? This is a highly complex issue and one on which debates



in the referendum campaign are unlikely to focus. This is because the initiative is not targeting the restriction of salaries, bonuses and other payments directly, but simply seeking more shareholder rights. However, the question as to the point at which greed begins is not off the table as it may well finally become an issue when the initiative "1:12 – For fair salaries", submitted in March 2011, is decided at referendum.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to an important election for the Swiss abroad. The members of the Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA) will be re-elected in the first half of 2013. We have enclosed a leaflet with this issue of "Swiss Review" that we hope provides the answers to any questions you may have concerning these elections. You will find the leaflet attached to the middle of the magazine so that it can easily be removed. I urge you to take part in the CSA elections as the legitimacy of the Council of the Swiss Abroad depends heavily on how much support it receives from the Swiss abroad.

BARBARA ENGEL

4	Mailbag
5	Books: Joël Dicker, a young, highly talented author from Geneva
6	Images: Heavenly creatures in the works of Paul Klee and other artists
9	Climate change: What is in store for us
14	"Capital", an exhibition on money and wealth
16	The Tinner case: Switzerland at the centre of a nuclear smuggling affair
20	Fat cats, urban sprawl and family policy – all subject to referendum in March
21	Literature series: Hugo Marti
22	Following the Camino de Santiago – pilgrimages have become a mass phenomenon
24	Swiss who breed and race top sled dogs
26	OSA news
28	Notes from Parliament
30	Echo

Cover photo: At 24 kilometres in length, the Great Aletsch Glacier between Valais and the Bernese Oberland is the largest glacier in Europe. It has lost almost 30% of its volume since the 1970s. Experts expect it to melt completely before the end of this century. Photo: Keystone / Georg Gerster

The Church in crisis

I am not an authority on Swiss ecclesiastical issues. But one thing is clear to me: what is happening today is simply the fruit of seeds sown long ago. Decades ago I had the dubious pleasure of witnessing how figures who shape cultural life discarded and even vilified their native cultural heritage and tradition with incomprehensible recklessness – biting the hand that feeds them, as it were – in exchange for empty theoretical notions that they could barely understand, such as the adulation of Mao and Ayatollah Khomeini. This individualist culture has increasingly moved towards a rejection of tradition as cultural identification. The renouncement of the Church today is

also an indication of this, and a worrying one at that.

ARYE OPHIR, K-YAM, ISRAEL

Return to Switzerland

We have lived in Dubai for nine years as Swiss abroad. Our eldest son, who is 19, is now returning to Switzerland to study and to attend military training school. He requires a “certificate of good conduct” for this. He was told by officials in Switzerland that this had to be obtained from the Dubai police force and then attested at the consulate. At the consulate it was explained to him that this could only be done once he had obtained confirmation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the official signatory was actually

authorised to issue a certificate. The consulate would then attest the certificate of “good conduct”.

We had always assumed that it was the noble duty of a consulate to help us Swiss abroad to verify such documents. We have now discovered that we as citizens, who are far less well connected and trained in administrative matters, have to do this ourselves. The consulate then merely signs the result of these efforts. It makes you wonder when a ministry of foreign affairs abroad has to provide a Swiss representation with an attestation on one of its own officials so that a foreign document can allow a young Swiss citizen to carry out compulsory mili-

tary service. What will we have to do for officials next?

TONI WIRZ, DUBAI, UAE

Everyone is under suspicion

The tax agreements between Switzerland and other states will put every Swiss citizen abroad under suspicion of tax evasion. Is this mistrust justified? The Austrian financial authorities have never shown any interest in my account statements in Austria. And the Swiss banks are timidly retreating. A sledgehammer is being used to crack a walnut. Who is the offender here?

MAX BÜHLMANN,
VIENNA, AUSTRIA

Focus on education

I read your articles on education in the last issue of “Swiss

Review” with interest. I completed an apprenticeship as my initial training. The vocational school-leaving qualification was only introduced a year later. This did not disadvantage me professionally at first. Higher education courses in Switzerland were also open to me. I have been living in Luxembourg for seven years now. While I have had little difficulty in finding a good job, the question of what my apprenticeship and further qualifications are worth is continually raised in a career context. Your report says that the average number of people with school-leaving qualifications in OECD countries is twice as high as in Switzerland. I now understand the lack of understanding shown by employers in the EU towards job applicants without school-leaving qualifications.

I can also see how important it is to take higher education courses in order to reach the level of CAS (Certificate of Advanced Studies) and MAS (Master of Advanced Studies). Certain doors in the world of employment may otherwise remain closed, not due to a lack of specialist skills but because of inadequate qualifications. You can think what you will of the “Bologna” system but there is no way around it. Career opportunities in the EU and, for that matter, the world are only fully accessible with recognised qualifications.

STEFAN VON ARX, LUXEMBOURG

Bologna is not to blame

One of the main objectives of the Bologna reform was to make university degrees internationally comparable. This goal has not and will not be achieved. This is because the reform only governs de-

gree titles. Details concerning how demanding a degree should be have not been stipulated. Most universities have reviewed their existing study programmes and established a cut-off point after three years, maintaining that this is the bachelor level. A quality control system is supposed to exist, but in practice this only compares courses in the same country with one another.

A further objective of the Bologna reform was to increase the international mobility of students. Students are also encouraged to study for a shorter period. It is obvious that fast-track degrees will tend to follow established paths. These only include a period of study abroad in a few cases. Doing the entire degree at a university abroad following the paths established there is a more likely option. This will ideally be in the student's own mother tongue to speed up the process. This makes Switzerland an attractive study destination for Germans, French, Austrians and Italians. It is simply the case that a small country does not have as many citizens as a large one.

DR. DAVID N. JANSEN,
NIJMEGEN, THE NETHERLANDS

Shocking attitude

Mr. Hermann Meierhans' letter in the latest “Swiss Review” with the title “Shocking attitude” is shocking in itself. What does he know about the Tea Party? And why a degrading comment on both the TP movement and the traditional role of a woman in raising children? Does he believe that modern society has benefited from farming out the upbringing and care of children to nannies, babysitters, nurseries and libraries, etc.?

ARMIN KUNKLER, BONIFAY, USA

A thriller in the best tradition

SWISS NOVELS almost never make the shortlist for the prestigious French “Prix Goncourt” award. The last to do so was “L'Ogre” (The tyrant) by Jacques Chessex in 1973. This year, it was Jöel Dicker of Geneva. At the tender age of 27, he has produced a real masterpiece in the form of his second book “La Vérité sur l’Affaire Harry Quebert” (The truth about the Harry Quebert affair), published in August. This 670-page tome is a breathtaking journey, from start to finish. Dicker's novel, which tops the fiction charts in French-speaking Switzerland and has received rave reviews in France, has the atmosphere of an American film noir, with a keen sense of the characters' psychology and of the mastery of suspense.

New York, early 2008. Marcus Goldman, a writer in his 30s, has become rich and famous with his first novel, but is struggling to find inspiration for the next, while his editor is pressuring him to deliver his manuscript. He turns to his mentor and former teacher Harry Quebert, also a highly acclaimed writer, and travels to New Hampshire, where Quebert lives. The move makes no difference; Goldman fails to find the elusive creative spark. After returning to New York, he learns several months later that Harry is accused of murdering a 15-year-old girl who disappeared in 1975, and whose body the police have discovered buried in his garden. Quebert had an affair with the girl, which inspired his masterpiece “Les Origines du Mal” (The roots of evil).

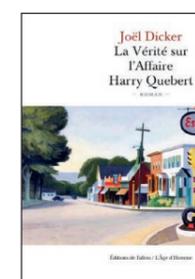
Goldman decides to carry out an investigation to exonerate his friend and find out the truth of what happened 33 years earlier. The chapters count down from 31 to 1 before the truth is finally revealed. The varied use of suspense, flashbacks, twists and character biographies heightens the tension of the plot. The novel is set against the backdrop of the US in 2008, with election campaigning in full swing,

and with all its media and judicial failings.

Dicker knows the US well: as a child, he spent his summers in New England, and has since travelled a great deal in the country. His work is both a lesson in humility and a tale of forbidden love or love triangles, and also dissects the creative process. Each chapter begins with a conversation between the master, Quebert, and his student, Gold-

man. “Your second chapter is extremely important, Marcus. It has to be incisive, powerful. (...) Like boxing. You're a right-hander, but in the guard position you always have your left fist in front: the first jab strikes your opponent, followed by a sequence with the right that knocks him out. That's what your second chapter should be: a right to the jaw for your readers.” And that's exactly what we find in “La Vérité sur l’Affaire Harry Quebert”: the feeling of a boxing match over more than thirty rounds, from which we are unable to turn away. This is a book that you won't be able to put down.

ALAIN WEY



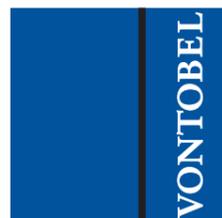
Jöel Dicker: “La Vérité sur l’Affaire Harry Quebert”; Éditions de Fallois / L’Âge d’homme, Paris, 2012; approx. CHF 48 / EUR 30.

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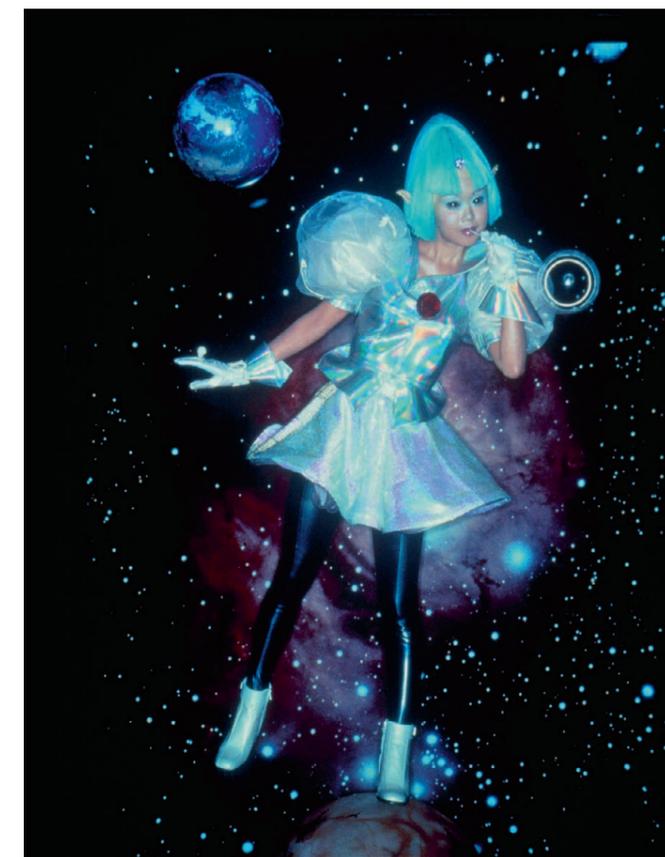
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Messengers from above

Angels, those celestial beings who proclaim God's will to man on earth as heaven-sent messengers and who protect us yet always remain invisible, hold a particular fascination for artists. They have been painted by Rafael, Botticelli, van Gogh, Gauguin and Hodler, to name but a few, as well as, of course, by Paul Klee, who produced 97 well-known depictions of angels. 85 of them are now on display at the Zentrum Paul Klee in Berne. These include the "New Angel", probably Klee's most famous work. The exhibition also features angels from photography, film and video art from the start of the 20th century to the present day, containing work by Charlie Chaplin, Duane Michals, Wim Wenders and Pierre et Gilles.

EXHIBITION AT THE ZENTRUM PAUL KLEE IN BERNE UNTIL 20 JANUARY 2013. THE EXHIBITION (WITHOUT THE PHOTOGRAPHY, FILM AND VIDEO SECTIONS) WILL THEN MOVE ON TO THE MUSEUM FOLKWANG IN ESSEN (1 FEBRUARY TO 14 APRIL 2013) AND THE HAMBURGER KUNSTHALLE (26 APRIL TO 7 JULY 2013).



(Images above and below, from left to right)

Paul Klee, New Angel, 1920, 32

Oil transfer and watercolour on paper on cardboard, 31.8 x 24.2 cm, Collection of the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, gift of John and Paul Herring, Jo Carole and Ronald Lauder, Fania and Gershom Scholem

Paul Klee, Poor Angel, 1939, 854

Watercolour and tempera on primer on paper on cardboard, 48.6 x 32.5 cm, Private collection, Berne

Paul Klee, Angel of the Star, 1939, 1050

Coloured paste and pencil on paper on cardboard, 61.8 x 46.2 cm, Zentrum Paul Klee, Berne

Duane Michals, from the series "The Fallen Angel", 1969

Silver gelatin print on cardboard, 8.9 x 13.1 cm, Ann and Jürgen Wilde Foundation, Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich

Eija-Liisa Ahtila, Marian Ilmestys - The Annunciation, 2010

3-channel projected HD installation, 32 min 10 sec; Courtesy of Marian Goodman Gallery, New York and Paris, © Crystal Eye Ltd, Helsinki, © Photo: Antti Ruusuvauro

Mariko Mori, Genesis (Soap Bubbles), 1996

Duratrans print (3-dimensional) on light box, 183 x 122 x 14 cm, Ringier Collection, Switzerland, © 2012, ProLitteris, Zurich



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The weather forecast 38 years from now

Switzerland is just like everywhere else when it comes to climate change. The melting glaciers and rising temperatures, which have actually risen above the global average here, bear testimony to that. With its highly complex nature, climate change represents a kind of test case for the “Swiss system”. The key question is whether it will succeed in taking adequate measures quickly and decisively enough to curb climate change and alleviate its impact.

By Marc Lettau

Switzerland is just recovering from the sort of climate change that takes place every year. Autumn is over. The frost has killed off the last geraniums not relocated to the cellar in time. The early morning is no longer filled with the twitter of birdsong but the sound of scraping as commuters remove ice from their car windscreens with numb fingers in the pitch black. The summer wardrobe has long since been put away and winter woollies are in season.

A change of clothing of a different kind is underway in the Swiss mountains. While people are pulling on warm attire, some glaciers and snowfields are disrobing. It has become a familiar sight to see glaciers covered with a light fleece jacket in early summer. This sheet is intended to prevent the ice mass from becoming overexposed to the summer sun and melting. It is then removed in late autumn before the first snowfall. The fabric protector relies on the principle of hope. How beneficial it actually is remains unclear.

Very few Swiss enjoy a permanent view of the craggy ice of a glacier. But even those living in the lowlands see glaciers as an iconic feature of Switzerland. So, the thought of a glacial meltdown also sends a shiver down the spine of city dwellers. There was particularly bad news this year. Such dramatic shrinkage as in the 2010/2011 period had never been measured before. 93 of the 97 glaciers under observation retreated further. A record figure was recorded for the Rosegg Glacier in Grisons, which lost 1,300 metres in length. With the exception of a small number at very high altitude, all glaciers are set to disappear completely before the end of the century. It is not luscious alpine meadows that lie beneath, but grey scree landscapes.

The disappearance of the glaciers provides tangible evidence that Switzerland is not escaping the effects of climate change. However, this is just one piece in the jigsaw of the strategy presented by the Federal Council this year for dealing with cli-

mate change in Switzerland, as rising temperatures will eventually impact upon all walks of life. The Federal Council anticipates a higher incidence of extreme weather conditions, such as periods of heat or heavy rainfall with flooding, pressure on indigenous flora and fauna, negative effects on human health and major changes in Switzerland's water balance. The action that needs to be taken in the Federal Council's view to minimise the negative consequences has only been outlined vaguely so far. The government is nevertheless committed to producing a list of specific measures.

New arrivals are forcing out indigenous species

It is nonetheless already clear that the management of climate change presents a complex challenge for Switzerland because our country is extremely diverse topographically and climatically within a small area. There is a high degree of bio-



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Photo: djansted

The Morteratsch Glacier in the canton of Grisons has retreated by more than two kilometres in the last 100 years

diversity, for example, because we have animals and plants that have adapted to various altitudes. While the climate changes, the topography does not. Animals and plants that flourish at a particular altitude must move into higher regions provided they are able to do so. Urs Tester, head of the biotope and species department at the environmental organisation Pro Natura, sees bad times ahead for mountain hares and wood grouse: "Their potential habitat is growing smaller. We expect these species will die out in certain regions." The OcCC (Organ consultatif sur les changements climatiques), which plays an extremely important role in the climate debate in Switzerland as the expert committee advising the Federal Council, has highlighted the position of the alpine ibex, one of the most magnificent alpine residents. It too will seek to extend its habitat into higher and higher locations provided the mountains are actually tall enough. If they are not, "local populations may well break up", concludes the OcCC. The prospect of new species for which Switzerland was previously too cold resettling in the Swiss lowlands also poses a threat to indigenous species as it will put them under pressure. The scientists comment on the anticipated speed of change in the OcCC reports:

"The pace of the migration of foreign species to Switzerland will increase dramatically over the next 50 years on account of the rapid rise in temperatures."

Water, wind and weather conditions

The model calculations used by the climate experts focus on the assessable period up to 2050. They do not concentrate on a scenario well into the future, but rather on the climatic conditions that will shape the lives of the children being born today when they reach middle age. Switzerland's role as "Europe's water tower" will also change. Since the glaciers are disappearing and the snowfall line will rise by over 300 metres, water levels in the rivers will fluctuate much more than in the past. The balancing effect of the gradual melting of the snow is set to decline because rain instead of snow will fall more frequently during the wintertime. This will result in more frequent flooding during the winter months, greater water shortages and dry periods in the summer and a lower groundwater level. A new competitive situation will also emerge among water users. Drinking water plants, hydropower stations and farmers wanting to water their crops will rival one another, the OcCC concludes: "The water supply will no longer be able to meet the demand ev-

erywhere or at all times." Tension is also foreseeable if, of all things, eco-friendly hydropower stations produce less power because of water shortages. Power station operators already want to be able to dam rivers in protected natural environments even now, just as they will in the future. And advocates of nuclear power are taking advantage of this fact – in spite of Fukushima – to recommend the construction of new nuclear power plants. Nuclear power station operators are nevertheless aware that rising river temperatures will also make their lives more difficult. In the extremely hot summer of 2003, the water volumes available for reactor cooling were so low and warm that the output of the nuclear piles had to be reduced.

As it gets warmer, the growing season will become longer

A common argument put to those concerned is that as it gets warmer the growing season will become longer and a greater harvest will be produced in some fields. However, this outlook is flawed in the view of the Chairman of the Swiss Farmers' Union, Hansjörg Walter (SVP, TG), who is also the incumbent President of the National Council. Walter believes that, besides less certain water supply, the extreme weather conditions will have a predominantly negative effect on

agriculture particularly since risk insurance for the new dangers is currently unaffordable: "Climate change increases production risks for farmers." Walter also sees challenging times ahead because climate change will affect production prices worldwide: "We anticipate much greater fluctuations." He also foresees problems arising in the fields themselves. The growing season will indeed become longer, but agricultural researchers also expect pathogens, weeds and vermin to be able to reproduce more quickly and effectively. There may be two to three instead of just one or two generations of the European corn borer (*Ostrinia nubilalis*) and the codling moth (*Carpocapsa pomonella*) per season in future. The ravenous cockchafer grub – the larva of the cockchafer (*Melolontha*) – is already no longer appearing just every three years but instead at shorter, irregular intervals.

Sweating and coughing

And what about people? The OcCC says that people living in Switzerland will generally get off lightly: "Assuming that the temperature rises remain within the anticipated limits, the expected consequences of climate change for Switzerland by 2050 would appear to be manageable without serious problems for society as a whole." This is nevertheless immediately qualified by a "but". While the winters will become milder and air quality during the wintertime will improve as less heating will be required, the summer will present greater problems with increasing ozone pollution, a longer pollen season and heat waves in the cities where extreme heat pockets could form. Great heat also means increasing mortality. 1000 additional deaths directly related to the heat were recorded in Switzerland in the hot summer of 2003. It is therefore probable that Switzerland will require much more energy for

cooling and air-conditioning systems in future if it is to retain its current levels of productivity. The OcCC forecasts that in 20 years' time power consumption for cooling and air conditioning will be twice as high as in 2000.

When mountains melt

He may not be everyone's cup of tea, but you will surely have heard of the Swiss entertainer and singer Vico Torriani (1920-1998). Climate change will also invalidate some of his song material. Torriani's catchy track "Alles fährt Ski, alles fährt Ski, Ski fährt die ganze Nation" (Everyone skis, everyone skis, the whole nation skis) will no longer be sung with carefree abandon in 2050 because winter sports resorts will come under intense pressure from climate change. It will have a dramatic impact on those making a living from winter tourism.

The rising snowfall line means that the slopes are increasingly snow-free and it will be virtually impossible to operate lower alpine ski resorts viably over the long term. Lower-lying winter sports resorts will also be shaken to their very foundations as many railway stations and mountain rail masts are not anchored in solid rock but in permafrost. If the zero-degree line rises and the permafrost thaws, some seemingly unshakeable mountainsides will prove to be just scree deposits frozen together. The cable car station on the Gemsstock near Andermatt, which is "anchored" into permafrost, started to move back in 1992. The Riederalp-Moosfluh gondola lift station tilted sideways in 2011. If the permafrost melts, the number of rock falls will also rise. The major avalanches at Mont Blanc (1997), Ortler (2004) and Eiger (2006), where over a million cubic metres of rock and debris



In May 2005, the Stieregg mountain hut suddenly found itself teetering on the edge of a cliff. An enormous moraine had collapsed because the Lower Grindelwald Glacier had shrunk massively. The hut had to be torn down



The ice cave in Valais' Rhone Glacier has been covered in a blanket to try to stop it melting rapidly

thundered into the valley on each occasion, were primarily a result of retreating permafrost.

Return of the summer retreat

The mountains will nevertheless remain important. Researchers are expecting what the tourism industry is hoping for – greater demand for holidays in the mountains as a result of sharp temperature rises in the Mediterranean and searing heat in the cities of Switzerland's Central Plateau. The antiquated term "summer retreat" may enjoy a renaissance. The relative coolness of regions at higher altitude will become an asset. However, anyone hiking through the Alps in future will have to become accustomed to new surroundings. The Federal Office for the Environment expects that 500 to 600 new mountain lakes with a total area of 60 square kilometres will be created as a result of glacial melting.

The debate goes on

Elsewhere, rising sea levels are threatening inhabited areas. Switzerland does not have to prepare itself for this kind of acute threat. The Zurich-based geologist and National Councillor Kathy Riklin (CVP) puts it quite plainly: "We will survive this but at a high cost." Riklin, who also chairs the OcCC, is concerned at the growing number of people "who deny the truth of climate change". While many people are aware just how serious the situation is, if the "minority of sceptics" gain a foothold the mood may swing in the other direction and Switzerland's "well-planned climate roadmap" could be jeopardised. Apathy towards important issues is nonetheless not a new phenomenon. Riklin remarks: "Issues continually arise that are critical to survival and yet people appear indifferent."

Patrick Hofstetter, head of the climate and energy department at WWF Switzerland, has no time for "climate sceptics". He believes denial of climate change is unquestionably misguided as there is nothing to suggest that Switzerland will be spared: "Climate change measurements confirm the forecasts." Temperatures in Switzerland are actually rising at twice the rate of the global average. It is therefore vital "that Switzerland relentlessly pursues the global objective of restricting the increase in temperatures to less than 2°C by 2050". If a greater increase is permitted, "then it is highly likely

to get very, very hot". In the event of temperature rises of over 2°C, there is a risk that the system will topple due to self-perpetuating effects. Hofstetter believes this would result in even more rapid climate change that could no longer be contained by man, a conviction shared by Kathy Riklin.

Hofstetter provides an example of a self-perpetuating effect: "Permafrost soils contain lots of methane. If they thaw, this aggressive greenhouse gas will be released, causing temperatures to rise exponentially." Pro Natura expert Urs Tester points to similar chain reactions. If the fens should disappear as a result of climate change, the process would also be intensified: "Fens store more CO₂ than all the forests worldwide. If fens are destroyed, they lose their storage capacity and large quantities of environmentally harmful CO₂ are released. Protecting the fens therefore helps protect the environment."

A few killer arguments

If Hofstetter, Tester and Riklin were to sit around a table with Hans Killer, the debate would unquestionably get heated. Hans Killer, a National Councillor in Aargau and one of the spokespersons for the Swiss People's Party (SVP) on climate policy is firmly opposed to Switzerland pursuing any "special course of action with climate policy". He believes climate change can only be curbed in conjunction with the rest of the world: "It makes no sense for Switzerland to proceed with drastic measures." It will only end up being disadvantaged: "It would be ridiculous to react too frantically as Switzerland is far from one of the biggest emitters of CO₂." Killer's arguments, as he concedes, are fed by "a certain scepticism towards science". He nevertheless sees that the disappearance of the glaciers and the rising zero-degree line would impact on winter tourism: "Climate change presents a real challenge for winter sports resorts." Aside from that the issue should be tackled with much more composure and "without hysterically going it alone", he says. "Slightly higher temperatures in the Swiss Central Plateau will not pose major problems."

Scientist Riklin disputes science-sceptic Killer's argument that Switzerland will not help to save the world's climate by leading the way: "Switzerland has a special social responsibility. We are privileged to be able to set a good example. If

we lead the way, we will inspire other much larger industrial nations to follow suit." Pursuing a consistent strategy with climate policy remains "absolutely crucial" for Switzerland.

Criticism of the CO₂ law

Killer's SVP and many environmental protection campaigners do agree on one point – they deem the Swiss CO₂ law (see box) to be "unsatisfactory". Nonetheless, the reasons for this poor opinion differ. Hans Killer says that passing a CO₂ law and showing how important the reduction of CO₂ emission is while "in the same breath" giving the go-ahead for new gas-fired power plants is "completely inconsistent". The planned gas-fired power station in Chavalon will "wipe out all the CO₂ savings achieved on the roads thanks to tighter provisions and technical progress". The fact that the Chavalon operators want to invest in CO₂-reduction projects abroad is irrelevant in Killer's view: "That's nothing but a form of indulgence trade. I'm not interested in the redevelopment of some chicken farm in Southeast Asia." It should be noted that Killer sees nuclear power as one of the viable, eco-friendly energy sources of the future.

WWF representative Hofstetter adjudges federal government and, in particular, the Federal Council to be "unsatisfactory" because while it is pursuing the right objectives and relying on correct analyses it is "dragging its heels over its commitment". The Swiss CO₂ law, which is "targeting modest objectives", will "in effect be undermined" by poor implementation. Hofstetter believes there is no question that CO₂ emissions have to be cut: the high consumption of (fossil) fuels is one of the main reasons for climate change. The curve is particularly steep in Switzerland where energy consumption increased eight-fold in the 20th century.

Between "knowing" and "doing"

In Switzerland, general sensitivity about the future of the climate is not just determined by scientific model projections. Various uncomfortable issues are also significant:

– What consequences will the enormous financial expenditure on the management of climate change have on national co-existence?

– What conflicts will arise if this expenditure results in the sacrifice of services that citizens take for granted today?

– What additional challenges will occur if climate change drives more people from the southern regions of the world to Europe and, therefore, Switzerland?

– Is the notoriously slow-paced "Swiss system" sufficiently agile to implement preventive measures early and decisively enough to alleviate the effects of climate change and curb emissions that are harmful to the environment?

– Are there grounds to address pessimistic, instead of only optimistic, climate scenarios in Switzerland?

– And finally, in light of the complexity of the issue, is it not inevitable that ordinary citizens will concentrate on easily comprehensible everyday issues and leave climate change to the experts?

Patrick Hofstetter does not believe the Swiss people are apathetic: "I don't think they have a devil-may-care attitude." Environmental awareness is very high, he says, as is the "theoretical willingness" to change one's own behaviour: "But many people don't manage to put words into action." They fail to do so because they are often unaware of how much can be done for the climate with very little effort. Taking action is made more difficult because of a "sense of powerlessness" over climate change: "Everyone knows that we must all make our contribution." But too many people have shirked their responsibilities, which is why the framework conditions established by the state are "doubly important".

Should we resign ourselves on account

of the complexity of the issue? Kathy Riklin believes there is no choice to make: "We must endeavour to reduce greenhouse gases using all means available, otherwise the consequences will be tragic." Tragic because it currently seems possible to restrict the changes so they are manageable, whereas doing nothing will provoke extreme climatic transformations. Science-sceptic Hans Killer is unlikely to be swayed. He does not regard climate change as an "existential problem", not even for the farmers towards whom his party is always inclined. "Corn will still grow if it gets a bit warmer, perhaps even better", says Killer.

MARC LETTAU is an editor at "Swiss Review".



The codling moth: soon there will be three generations per season thanks to rising temperatures



The natural habitat of the ibex is being forced higher and higher

SWITZERLAND IS BECOMING HOTTER MORE QUICKLY

The average temperature in Switzerland has increased around twice as much as the global average in the 20th century. The global average temperature rose by 0.6°C compared with 1°C in Ticino, 1.3°C in German-speaking Switzerland and a staggering 1.6°C in French-speaking Switzerland, and the rate of increase is accelerating. Depending on the scenario, the global temperature may increase by between 0.8°C and 2.4°C by 2050 and by between 1.4°C and 5.8°C by the end of the century. Climate experts estimate that temperatures in Switzerland will be 1.8°C higher in winter and 2.7°C higher in summer. Zurich's climate in 2050 will be similar to the current conditions in Ticino's Magadino plain. Basel's weather will be comparable with that of Verona today. Climate scenarios for Switzerland: www.ch2011.ch

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ADVISORS CALL FOR DECISIVE ACTION

In 1996, federal government set up a committee of experts, who were given the task of providing advice on climate change policy and management. The "Organe consultatif sur les changements climatiques" (OcCC), which is managed by the Swiss Academies of

Arts and Sciences, has become one of the leading authorities on climate policy. The OcCC presented its latest report on 23 November 2012 in which the experts criticise the roadmap for the reduction of CO₂ emissions. The will for a global agreement on climate protection exists but the proposed timeframe is incongruous with the urgency of climate protection, they say. Firstly, the reduction of emissions needs to be pursued in a "much more targeted" way. Secondly, the additional focus on how to adapt to climate change is becoming more important than ever. The CO₂ law with which Switzerland aims to cut its CO₂ emissions by 20% by 2020 is, according to the OcCC, "a first step in the right direction". This measure is nevertheless not enough. It is "incompatible" with the objective of restricting global warming to a maximum of +2°C. By 2050, emissions must be cut by 80% to 95% compared to 1990. In the report on Switzerland's emission reduction targets, the scientists come to the conclusion that Switzerland possesses the technical and financial capacities to decrease CO₂ emissions dramatically but "societal behavioural changes to ensure a sustainable way of life" are also necessary.

THE REPORT IS AVAILABLE AT: WWW.OCCC.CH

In capitalism's toolbox

Outside, people are discussing disaster on the financial markets, but inside the Swiss National Museum in Zurich the talk is of cashless transactions in the Middle Ages and other famous discoveries. In the exhibition entitled "Capital", the museum explores the origins of our economy.

By Daniel Di Falco

It almost appears as though organ transplants were already being carried out back in 1506. The heart in the wooden box, lying on a bed of metal elements, is red and bulging. The only problem is that the donor is not quite dead yet. He lies on his death bed with a bandaged head and looking as pale as a ghost. His loved ones stand around him wailing and imploring.

The heart belongs to the dying man and it really has left his body. But the container is not a transplant box but a treasure chest and the shining metal inside is the money for which the wealthy man has sold his soul. The scene, painted by the artist Hans Fries in the late Middle Ages on the wing of an altar, depicts a cautionary sermon in the Franciscan spirit dedicated to poverty and charity. The line from the Gospel of Matthew is: "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Can wealth therefore be a sin? The question is asked mischievously here. That is because the entire exhibition, which starts with the warning about money, focuses on the triumph and blessing of capitalism, the economic system that has conquered the world in spite of Franciscan morality and fear of the loss of salvation. It is driven by the maximisation of profits not moderation.

Where it all began

"Capital" – a simple and striking title for an exhibition. And it has come at just the right moment as even capitalists are talking about capitalism. This economic system has ceased to be accepted without question; it has become open to debate again. Where did capitalism come from? Why did the markets emerge? How did the financial system develop? "We are all only too willing to voice our opinions on the economy but know much too little about its origins", says Walter Keller, publisher, cultural publicist and guest curator at the Swiss National Museum, in reference to his exhibition.

He has traced the origins of our economy to the late Middle Ages and the early modern period in Venice and Amsterdam. The nascent period of capitalism took place during the rise of these pre-modern economic powers; not in industry at this stage, but instead in the field of commerce. But globalisation existed even then, as did shares, gov-

ernment debt and financial markets. The exhibition organisers underline the fact that while this period of history was centuries ago it is remarkably topical. The long, winding route through the exhibition designed by Walter Keller and the scenographer Raphael Barbier covers several floors and passes through closets, rooms and corridors. It takes about two hours to see everything. Visitors will often find themselves standing and staring in amazement. One of the exhibits, for example, is a pocket calculator from the 17th century – an unadorned casket made of boxwood con-



Two men who played a key role in world trade in the 16th and 17th centuries: Dutch ambassador Cornelius von der Mijle and the Doge of Venice. They met in 1609.

tainning loose rods of ivory with grooved sequences of numbers, which enabled Venetian tradesmen to carry out simple calculations. A manual from 1525 contains illustrated instructions for a sign language that allowed three and four-digit amounts to be expressed on one hand. There is also a folding sundial for travelling, as well as ta-

bles with foreign alphabets and currencies, sea charts and nautical equipment. Venice's success was primarily based on the instruments of a capitalist economy that were applied very early here. As far back as the 12th century the state took on debt. It provided loans at 5% interest which could be traded on an emerging money and capital market. Venice also developed the "colleganza" system, a method for acquiring risk capital for long-distance trading ventures: an investor would provide three quarters of the finance required in advance

entire reason of state was the economy and which was itself nothing other than a company.

Silk, salt and slaves

abled the calculation of the burgeoning flows of capital, was of all things a Franciscan monk. It soon becomes clear what the organisers of the "Capital" exhibition set out to achieve – the history of capitalism is presented as the history of its technologies. It is told in an extremely appealing and vivid way, which is unexpected in light of the subject matter. There are endless things to marvel at here, such as the cashless transactions that have existed since the 12th cen-

It dominated the Mediterranean and maritime trade with the Middle East from the 14th to the 16th century. The Rialto became the most important market in Europe: metals, wood, salt, cotton, silk, gemstones and also slaves were imported and exported. Aside from ships and seaman-ship, Venice's power was based on politics that focused entirely on economic interests. It was the state that organised, guaranteed and pre-financed maritime trade. It built the ships in its own shipyard and leased them to traders by the journey. It also provided protection for trade expeditions with its navy. An early form of "public private partnership" can be detected here. But it was also a republic where the

and the travelling merchant came up with the rest – the profit was halved after the journey.

And then there is Luca Pacioli, the man who established double-entry bookkeeping, the method on which the economy still relies today. In 1494, he published a mathematical compendium in which he outlined his procedure, which is also known as the "Venetian method": each transaction is recorded in two accounts. A trader who sells silk for 20 ducats, say, notes minus 20 ducats in his silk stocks and plus 20 in his cashbox. It is a science in itself, as a comprehensive, finely detailed volume in the display cabinet illustrates. The irony is that Pacioli, who en-

It is just that innovations in economics and business alone do not reveal much about the "emergence of the economic system dominating the world today" – a quotation from exhibition organiser Walter Keller. Questions like how the world became accustomed to capitalism (despite the thing with the amputated heart) and how capitalism was able to triumph over other economic systems and philosophies remain unanswered.

It is the same with Amsterdam, the exhibition's other main focus area. With the discovery of the sea route to India, this city state on the Atlantic moved into the centre of the new geopolitical constellation and experienced its "golden age". Here too the emphasis is on the instruments of business – on display is the world's first share, an extremely thin piece of paper issued in 1606 by the Dutch East India Company, which financed the Netherlands' trade in the region that is now Indonesia. As with Venice, the story of the rise of a global power, illustrated with treasures from cultural history, also appears in the background here. However, anyone wondering which factors led to the formation of a kind of middle class and a consumer society outlook in Amsterdam during this period and how societies gained or lost wealth under capitalist conditions will go away with vague notions rather than clear answers.

"We are all part of the economy" reads the exhibition's first sentence. This holds out the prospect of insights into the present by discovering the past. But you will not make much headway in debates about the disaster of the financial markets, the power of the economy and the role of the state by learning about the monk who propagated double-entry bookkeeping or when the first share was issued. "Capital" is a rich exhibition but remains systematically non-committal whenever the economy is regarded as more than a technical issue. And the fact that it is more than this is beyond question, particularly these days.

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The exhibition runs until 17 February 2013. More information can be found at: www.kapital.landmuseum.ch. A book is also available: "Kapital. Kaufleute in Venedig und Amsterdam", edited by Walter Keller. Verlag Kein & Aber, Zurich 2012. 271 pages, approx. CHF 23.90.

Switzerland and the nuclear smugglers

For years the CIA, the US intelligence agency, and the Federal Council attempted to prevent nuclear smugglers Friedrich, Urs and Marco Tinner from being brought to trial. This affair has however reached a legally acceptable conclusion thanks to a deal with the judicial authorities.

By René Lenzin

An espionage thriller, an affair of state and almost a judicial scandal – such was the astonishing story of Friedrich Tinner, a mechanic from eastern Switzerland, and his two sons, Urs and Marco. The Tinnings were part of the network of Abdul Qadeer Khan, who is known as the “father of the Pakistani nuclear bomb”. This engineer, who is now 76 years old, stole documents on uranium enrichment centrifuges from a Dutch research laboratory in the early 1970s and made a significant contribution to Pakistan’s ability to carry out successful nuclear weapons tests in 1998. Khan also later offered his services to other states. The Tinnings supplied his network with components for such centrifuges, some of which were designed for the Libyan nuclear weapons programme that the US thwarted on 4 October 2003 with the seizure of a German ship in Taranto, southern Italy.

The Federal Criminal Court sentenced the Tinnings to 50 months’ imprisonment each plus a financial penalty in September 2012 for offences against the War Materials Act. However, this verdict was not reached in a normal court hearing but rather in summary proceedings, where prosecution and defence agree on a sentence. Such a deal can only be concluded if a confession has been made, at least to some extent, and the punishment does not exceed five years of imprisonment. The judgement was preceded by tough negotiation and court intervention. Before accepting the deal, the judges had demanded an increase in the sentences originally negotiated. The Office of the Attorney General of Switzerland met this demand with unconditional financial penalties for Friedrich and Marco Tinner. It was nevertheless still able to ensure the two sons would not be sent to prison since the period spent in detention awaiting trial was equal to their custodial sentences.

The judges still had difficulty in accepting the deal despite the stiffer sentences because they regarded the Tinnings as extremely culpable. They only finally consented because a conviction would probably not have been achieved outside summary proceedings.



Main protagonists in the affair, from top to bottom: Urs Tinner, Bush and Kahn.

After all, the feasibility of instituting constitutionally legitimate proceedings against the Tinnings had hung in the balance for some time. This was due to the fact that the Federal Council had ordered the destruction of practically all documents and data carriers seized from the Tinnings in February and June 2008.

Blocher called for shredding

National government justified its decision to destroy the files on the grounds that they contained blueprints for nuclear warheads. However, it had actually taken this course of action under enormous pressure from the US and its intelligence agency, the CIA. Friedrich, Urs and Marco Tinner had cooperated with the CIA from June 2003 and had thus helped to stop the Libyan nuclear weapons programme. As a result, the US at-

tempted to sabotage the Swiss investigations against the Tinnings using all means available. This was partly to protect their informants and partly to prevent the documents detailing the collaboration from being made public. The US exerted tremendous pressure, particularly on Christoph Blocher, Minister of Justice at the time. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and the heads of the FBI and CIA approached Blocher and other Federal Councillors directly. As Switzerland refused to hand over the files to the US, it insisted upon them being destroyed as comprehensively as possible.

Switzerland also had a strong interest in the destruction of the files. This is because the authorities wanted to conceal the fact that they had long been aware of the Tinnings’ illegal activities but had still issued them with export permits for internationally prohibited war material. In 2007, Minister of Defence Samuel Schmid had declared that “the Swiss authorities had known about the activities of persons and companies in Switzerland working for the Khan network for almost 30 years. The inadequacies of the competent authorities in Switzerland in dealing with the greatest and most dangerous proliferation case in history were extremely serious”. This can be read in the report produced by Parliament’s Control Delegation after the destruction of the files came to light.

Little prospect of success for conventional proceedings

Although the Office of the Attorney General of Switzerland was able to obtain some of the files destroyed through international judicial assistance, conventional legal proceedings would have had little prospect of success. The destruction of the files would have restricted the Tinnings’ rights of defence to such an extent that they would probably have been acquitted by the European Court of Human Rights. The proceedings would still have taken several years to reach that point. This provided Friedrich Tinner, now 76 and suffering ill health, with leeway to strike a deal with the judicial authorities. This deal drew a line under an affair that saw Switzerland appear in the international headlines and pushed the nation to the brink of a crisis of state.

RENÉ LENZIN is an editor at “Swiss Review”

Proponents of tax cuts face a struggle

The Swiss people are becoming increasingly sceptical of lower corporate taxation. Yet, corporate taxes may fall further as a result of a tax dispute with the EU. Tax competition between the cantons is unlikely to abate either.

By René Lenzin

Europe looks enviously towards Switzerland. While the southern countries of the European Union, in particular, have been unable to find their way out of spiralling debt despite austerity measures and tax increases, Switzerland announces figures in the black year after year and is attracting more and more EU citizens seeking to take advantage of extensive employment opportunities and attractive salaries. This is despite the fact that the low euro rate is making business difficult for the Swiss export industry and especially Swiss tourism.

Most cantons have also regularly presented positive accounts in recent years even though they have cut taxes with almost equal regularity. The tax burden for private individuals fell significantly in all cantons between 2001 and 2011. Last year, companies also had to contribute less to the tax authorities than a decade ago, almost without exception. This is revealed by the comparison between the cantonal capitals that is carried out by the Swiss Federal Tax Administration every year. These figures illustrate not only the significant differences between the cantons but also the nationwide trend towards lower taxes (see charts on pages 18 and 19).

Financial equalisation as a softener

This trend is the result of tax competition, which is one of the peculiarities of Swiss federalism. Formally speaking, taxation is harmonised. Federal government stipulates the regularity at which specific taxes are to be levied. But the cantons are free to set the tax rates. An attempt to restrict tax competition



Hans-Rudolf Merz, former Federal Councillor and head of the Department of Finance. In 2008, he deliberately misled voters about the impact of tax cuts for companies

was well defeated at the ballot box. 58.5 % of the electorate rejected the Social Democrats’ so-called tax fairness initiative in November 2010. The only restrictive principle that applies is therefore the “ability to pay” enshrined in the constitution (Article 127) for which the Federal Supreme Court has established certain guidelines. It prohibits degressive taxation, in other words falling tax rates for high income. The Federal Supreme Court argued that in order to ensure tax fairness it was not sufficient for taxes to increase in absolute terms with rising income. People on higher incomes should pay proportionately the same amount as or more than people with low and average earnings.

Financial equalisation between federal government and the cantons on the one hand and among the cantons on the other serves

to cushion tax competition in the interests of federal solidarity. The Federal Council and Parliament have just updated this “softener to federalism” with a fundamental reform. The new system of financial equalisation provides for a clearer distribution of responsibilities and allows the cantons greater freedom in the deployment of funds. Equalisation is no longer primarily based on the cantons’ effective revenues but their resources potential. The thinking behind this is that cantons should no longer be able to reduce taxes in order to obtain greater funds from financial equalisation.

However, the new system has given tax competition additional impetus as the National Bank sold off 1,300 tonnes of excess gold reserves almost at the same time as its introduction. The cantons, as co-owners of the

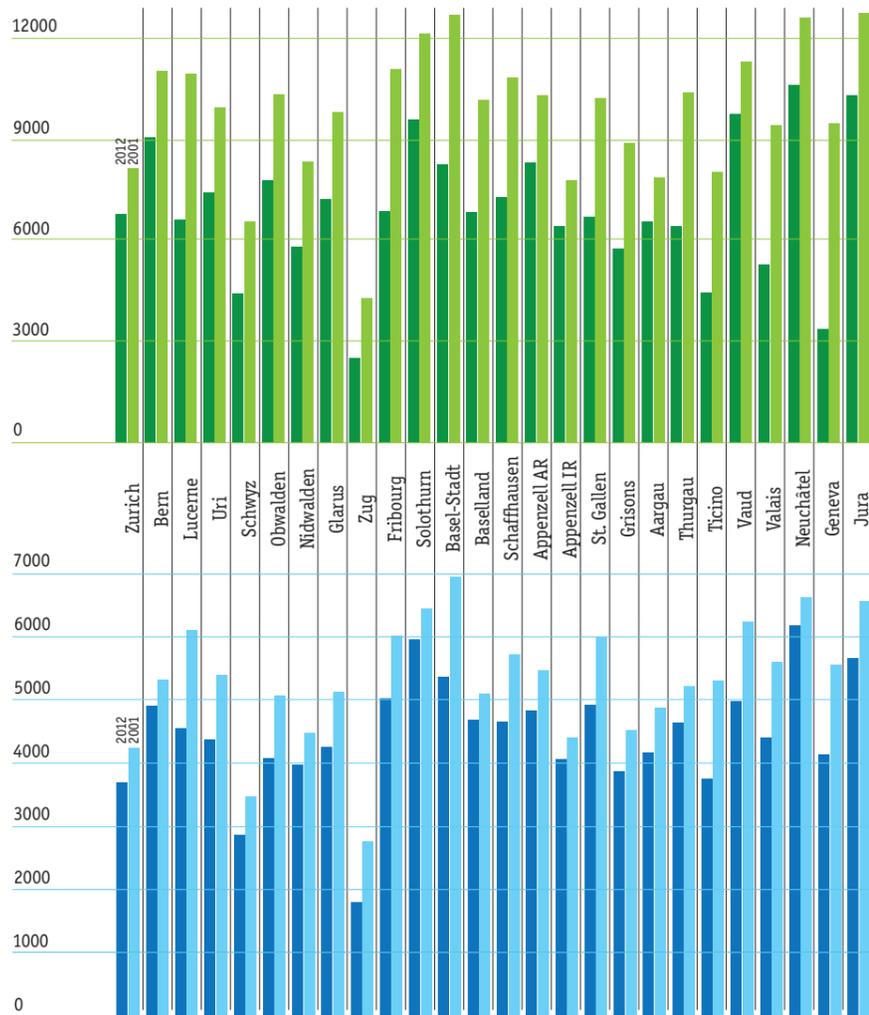
National Bank, received two thirds of the proceeds of 21 billion Swiss francs. Depending on their size and financial capacity, they obtained between 32 million (Appenzell Innerrhoden) and 2.35 billion Swiss francs (Berne). Small cantons with lower levels of debt were able to reduce taxes massively in some cases – for private individuals and much more so for businesses.

Two thirds will be in the red

But now the golden age of constantly lower taxation appears to be over, not least because the National Bank has cut ordinary dividend payouts owing to its interventions on the foreign exchange market to support the Swiss franc. Two thirds of cantons are projecting figures in the red for 2013. Most are putting together

Tax levels in the cantons – calculated for each cantonal capital

Married, 2 children,
gross income CHF 100,000



Single, no children,
gross income CHF 50,000

austerity packages, while some are also even planning tax increases. The electorate has also established limitations, rejecting further corporate tax reductions in Basel-Stadt and Zurich.

Federal government's corporate tax reform, which voters approved by the finest of margins in February 2008, may have contributed to the shift in opinion. It was presented to the electorate as a bill for small and medium-sized enterprises entailing manageable tax losses of less than a billion Swiss francs. It has nevertheless now emerged that the losses will be many times higher because the reform enables companies to enjoy tax-free repayment of capital. The Federal Supreme Court severely reprimanded the Federal Council for providing the people with incorrect information. The conduct of Federal Councillor

Rudolf Merz, who evidently lied as head of the Department of Finance, was particularly outrageous. However, the Federal Supreme Court found that the referendum should not be held again for reasons of legal certainty. Together with the international financial crisis and the debate about excessive management salaries and bonuses, this reform has increased scepticism among the people about lower taxes for the business world.

The middle classes will bear the brunt

Yet, the next wave of tax reductions is imminent. This has been triggered by pressure from the EU to abolish the privileges that holding companies, investment companies and joint enterprises enjoy in Switzerland. In many cantons, such companies pay less tax on revenues generated abroad

than on revenues from Switzerland. The EU regards this as a tax loophole that infringes the equal treatment principle. Switzerland has already declared its willingness to resolve this issue in dialogue with the EU.

In order to eliminate the unequal tax treatment of domestic and foreign revenues, federal government and the cantons may agree on a general reduction in corporate income tax, at least in those cantons which are home to many such companies and today have above-average corporate income tax rates. This would allow Switzerland to avoid the threat of an exodus of holding companies because their taxes would not have to be increased or would only have to rise slightly.

However, this will result in massive tax losses – at least in the short term. The four

Public limited company,
capital and reserves CHF 100,000
net profit CHF 30,000

Public limited company,
capital and reserves CHF 2,000,000
net profit CHF 400,000

large cantons of Basel, Geneva, Vaud and Zurich alone, where a particularly high number of holding companies are domiciled, are anticipating a fall in tax receipts of over two billion Swiss francs. Federal government and the cantons have therefore set up a working group to coordinate the next steps and to discuss sharing the burden. Proponents of tax competition see it as a necessary reform to make the country even more attractive as a business location. By contrast, critics are calling it a "race to the bottom" – a competition for the lowest corporate taxes, the cost of which will ultimately be borne by the middle classes.

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FLAT-RATE TAXATION: ABOLISHING TAX PRIVILEGES FOR WEALTHY FOREIGNERS

Tax competition does not just occur within Switzerland, but internationally as well. Flat-rate taxation, also known as lump-sum taxation, is a key factor in attracting wealthy foreigners. Foreigners who do not have any gainful employment in Switzerland can be taxed based on their living costs. The French rock star Johnny Halliday, Formula 1 boss Bernie Ecclestone and seven-time Formula 1 world champion Michael Schumacher are famous examples. The 5,000 or so people paying flat-rate tax in Switzerland contributed around 700 million Swiss francs to the tax authorities in 2010.

The number of flat-rate taxpayers has increased constantly in recent years, but so too has criticism of this special regime. Flat-rate taxation has been abolished by Parliament or the people in five cantons (AR, BL, BS, SH, ZH). Abolition initiatives have been defeated in four cantons (BE, GL, SG, TG) but, at the same time, taxes were increased for flat-rate taxpayers. The Federal Council and Parliament have also responded to the growing criticism. The taxable income of flat-rate taxpayers is now to be at least seven times their accommodation costs, whereas previously it was five times. A minimum taxable income of 400,000 Swiss francs will apply to direct federal tax. The cantons must also set a lower limit.

Opponents of flat-rate taxation say these measures do not go far enough. They want to abolish what they consider unfair privileges throughout Switzerland, and presented a popular initiative in October.

Initiatives against fat-cat pay and urban sprawl and in favour of the family

Two fiercely debated issues will be decided at referendum in March – excessive management salaries and the protection of undeveloped countryside. The Swiss people and cantons will also vote on enshrining an article on families in the federal constitution.

By René Lenzin

The people will now have the final say – how are excessive management salaries and enormous bonuses to be curbed? With the “fat cat” initiative launched by Thomas Minder, the Schaffhausen businessman and Council of States member, or with the indirect counterproposal put forward by the Federal Council and Parliament? If the people and cantons approve the initiative on 3 March, Parliament will then have to draw up applicable legislation. If it is rejected, the already adopted counterproposal will enter into force. Both proposals aim to strengthen shareholder rights and to subject the management of large listed companies to more stringent controls. The counterproposal gives companies more room for manoeuvre in relation to severance pay and the third-party mandates of members of the Board of Directors and management (see also “Swiss Review” 4/2012). Thomas Minder has stood by his initiative because he says the counterproposal only takes account of 40% of his demands. In contrast, opponents of the initiative claim 80% are incorporated. The National Council recommended the rejection of the initiative, as did the Council of States. Left-wing and green Members of Parliament support the initiative, while most conservatives are opposed to it. Industry associations are also against it.

Protection of the countryside

Spatial planning and urban sprawl have become increasingly important issues in recent

years. The growing sensitivity shown by the Swiss people towards protection of the countryside was reflected in the approval of the proposal restricting second homes in the referendum held on 11 March 2012. The countryside initiative submitted in August 2008, which calls for a 20-year ban on new development zones, is along similar lines. Having taken heed of the success of the second homes initiative, the Federal Council and Parliament have decided to oppose the countryside initiative with a robust counterproposal. Its aim is to curb urban sprawl and protect precious farmland better.

In specific terms, the proposed amendment to the spatial planning law provides that communes shall only have access to as much development land as they require for the coming 15 years. Excessive development zones are to be reduced. The proposal's key element is the so-called added value tax. The owners of newly categorised development land must in future pay 20% of the added value to the state when the land is sold or developed. These revenues are to be used by the state to compensate landowners whose land is excluded from development zones and which loses value as a result.

The National Council finally approved the proposal by 108 votes to 77 and the Council of States by 30 votes to 10. The Social Democrats, Greens, Green Liberals and the majority of Christian Democrats voted in favour of it. It was opposed by the Free

Democrat-Liberals and the Swiss People's Party. The Swiss people must now decide after the Swiss Chamber of Commerce successfully called a referendum. If they approve the new law, the countryside initiative will be withdrawn.

Article on family policy

A broad consensus exists among politicians that families should be strengthened and promoted. How this objective should be achieved, nevertheless, remains contentious. A centre-left parliamentary majority has now pushed through a proposal for an article on family policy to be enshrined in the federal constitution. This would require federal government “to take account of the needs of families when performing its duties”. Together with the cantons, it would also have to “promote balance between family and work or education”. The cantons would have to ensure a “needs-led provision of day-care facilities for families to complement schools”, as set out in the new article 115a. The proposal has come from the ranks of the Christian Democrats. The National Council approved the article by 129 votes to 57 and the Council of States by 28 votes to 12. As this involves a constitutional amendment, the majority support of the Swiss people and cantons at referendum is mandatory

RENÉ LENZIN is an editor at “Swiss Review”

LAW ON EPIZOOTIC DISEASES APPROVED

68.3% of the electorate and 24 out of 26 cantons approved the revised law on epizootic diseases on 25 November. This gives federal government greater powers to prevent such diseases. The cantons remain responsible for fighting epizootic diseases, but federal government can take and fund preventive measures. Only the cantons of Appenzell Innerrhoden and Uri rejected the law. The proposal was accepted by a narrow margin in the other cantons of central and eastern Switzerland. The larger cantons and French-speaking Switzerland overwhelmingly supported the law. The turnout of 27%, the second lowest since the introduction of the right to vote for women in 1971, highlights the low level of interest in the proposal. (RL)

TAX AGREEMENTS – IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Swiss citizens abroad in Germany, Austria and the UK must decide how their banks are to act vis-à-vis the tax authorities in future in view of the tax agreements between these countries and Switzerland. The banks are currently sending clients abroad the respective forms with mandates. It is important that these forms are completed and returned to the banks. Otherwise, the banks will calculate the withholding tax on the relevant capital and debit it from the account directly. The final deadline for notification according to the agreements is 31 May 2013 and not 14 December 2012 as communicated by some banks. Further information is available at www.sif.admin.ch

Between two worlds: books and literary figures among the Swiss abroad

By Charles Linsmayer

He made the landscapes of Europe truly shine until a Swiss one became a portent of his death – Hugo Marti

Perhaps the most wonderful and impressive of Hugo Marti's achievements, when he returned to reside in Switzerland more or less permanently, was portraying each of the landscapes that he had become familiar with as a young Swiss abroad not as a backdrop in his books but rather as an indispensable and central element that captivated people. He intimated as much himself in 1934 when he wrote: “My characters are always so embedded in their landscape, they sometimes seem part of it to me.”

East Prussia, Rumania, Norway

Aside from the Basel region, which the journalist and author, who was born in Basel on 23 December 1893, orphaned at a young age and grew up in Berne, transformed into his earliest place of longing in the aftermath of a tragic experience of death in “Kirchlein zu den sieben Wundern” (1922), it was East Prussia that first captivated him. It fascinated him as a student in Königsberg in 1913/14 and he evoked it afresh in a melancholic and poetic way in 1922 in the novel “Das Haus am Haff”, which is infused with a tragic love affair. Rumania, still seemingly in the Middle Ages, where he was the private tutor of a prince in 1915/16, was portrayed with vibrancy and realism in “Rumänisches Intermezzo” in 1926 and in a romantic, dreamlike way in 1928 in the novellas “Rumänische Mädchen”.

He maintained lifelong memories of Norway, to where he fled in 1916 with the Rumanian prince's children entrusted to his care and from where, engaged to Elsa Lexow-Breck, the daughter of a pastor from Oslo, he finally returned to Berne in 1919 once the war was over. “The days are like a dream to me”, he wrote in the “Haff und Heide” series produced in 1917. The poems connected East Prussia with Norway and were dedicated to his wife-to-be, who, enigmatically concealed, also featured in Marti's finest novel, “Ein

Jahresring” in 1925. The central character is a 19-year-old woman who meets Rolf, an author, by chance in the rectory. Without realising it, she wields so much power over the young man so hopelessly in love with her that in order to forget her he hurriedly gets engaged to someone else and in a state of desperation at the end bemoans his fate in a snow-covered mountain hut. When a friend visits him there and asks the girl's name, he replies: “I cannot say. I have never said her name aloud.”



Quotation

“This luscious plant, which God has allowed to grow on the small European cape of vain hope, will not survive unless the new cell formation succeeds in ensuring organic recovery on the smallest scale and healing of the soul. But we are not talking about a mass phenomenon or impenetrable dervish-like politics, but blessed sobriety. If two or three decent people come together and talk or remain silent in testimony of the truth, more is achieved towards Europe's salvation than with the proclamation of thousand-year empires and eternal orders.”

From “Davoser Stundenbuch”, 1935

BIBLIOGRAPHY: “Die Tage sind mir wie ein Traum”, his narrative work, is the only title by Hugo Marti that is available. With a biographical epilogue by Charles Linsmayer, in Reprinted by Huber, Verlag Huber Frauenfeld 2004

The literary legacy

Marti's landscapes are associated not just with love but also with death. This is also the case in his last novel, which, for the first time, takes place in a Swiss landscape in which he was currently living. Marti suffered from pulmonary tuberculosis from 1929 onwards, and his “Davoser Stundenbuch” was written in 1934 during a stay at a health spa in Davos. Taking it upon himself to give testimony on behalf of the countless victims of the white plague, he attempted the impossible by trying to comprehensibly convey the terror and suffering that patients experienced with humour, compassion and irony. But to those fighting the disease the Davos picture-postcard scenery now just seems like “an extraordinarily realistic backdrop”, against which we perform like amateurish actors more preoccupied with ourselves than with the play we have to act out.”

Even though he went on to produce a biography of the poet Rudolf von Tavel, who wrote in the Bernese dialect, in 1935, the “Davoser Stundenbuch” became Marti's legacy. The universally popular editor of the “Bund” and selfless promoter of young talent finally died of pulmonary tuberculosis in Davos on 20 April 1937 at the age of 44.

CHARLES LINSMAYER is a literary scholar and journalist in Zurich.

A mass phenomenon in God's name

"Pilgrimages are booming" according to an exhibition at the "Museum der Kulturen" in Basel. Christians have actually been going on pilgrimages in their hundreds of thousands for years although most of them want to have increasingly less to do with the Church and religion. The most popular pilgrimage route has long been the Way of Saint James to Santiago de Compostela. It is starting to get very congested.

By Barbara Engel

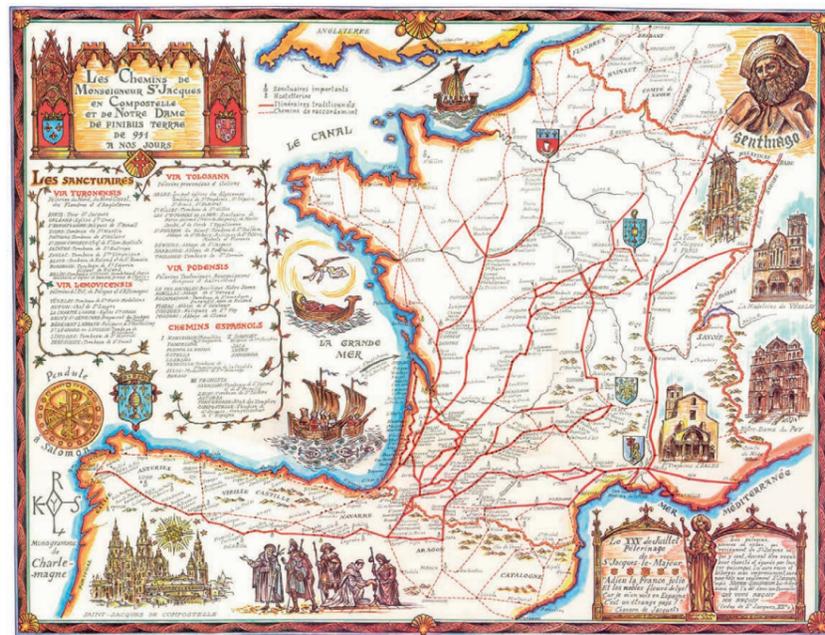
You encounter them, for example, on Mount Nebo in Jordan, where God is said to have shown Moses the Promised Land. They usually appear there in groups and praise the Lord with lots of hallelujahs and hands raised to the skies. You come across them in the historic city of Jerusalem, where they follow in Jesus' footsteps along the Way of Sorrows, sometimes with a tortured downcast look and sometimes staring into the distance struck with awe. A pilgrimage to the Holy Land is of special significance to devout Christians, far more important than, say, a visit to Rome.

Rome has also recently been pushed into the background by the Spanish town of Santiago de Compostela. Tens of thousands of pilgrims can be seen there every day. But something differentiates them from the pilgrims on Mount Nebo or in the Garden of Gethsemane. Those in Santiago de Compostela travel on foot and not in coaches.

Midlife crises, burnout, career breaks

The "Camino de Santiago", or Way of Saint James, has become the most popular and well-known hiking trail in the world within just ten years. Mass is celebrated in the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela several times a day so that every pilgrim can receive a blessing. The giant thurible, which half a dozen fathers swing through the nave above the heads of the visitors, is the greatest attraction.

In contrast to the pilgrims in the Holy Land, faith and Christian tradition play a secondary role for those in Santiago de Compostela. Pilgrimages have become a mass phenomenon. People go on them for adventure, as a holiday or for a sporting challenge. Pilgrimages are undertaken in the search for one's self far more than in the search for God. Major life events, such as illness, divorce, midlife crises, burnout or career breaks, inspire many more people to go on pilgrimages than faith. Anyone who doubts this should visit some of the many pilgrim blogs on the Internet.



17th-century map of the Camino de Santiago

One might ask what makes the Camino de Santiago so unique? Perhaps it is the legend. According to historical lore, the body of the apostle James was transported from Jerusalem to Santiago in 44 A.D. Disciples are said to have placed the body of the martyr, who had been beheaded shortly beforehand, on an unmanned stone boat, which an angel then guided to Santiago. The Catholic Church has no doubt this is what happened and that the bones of Saint James lie beneath the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. The Armenian Church refutes this story. It claims that James' body – together with his head – are in its possession. However, it has not provided any evidence to support this.

From apostle to slayer of the Moors

Saint James only became famous centuries after his journey from Jerusalem to Spain thanks to Alfonso II, King of Asturias. He proclaimed him the national saint in the 9th century, had a church built on top of his grave and declared Santiago de Compostela to be the third most important pil-

grimage destination after Jerusalem and Rome. Alfonso II's motive was less the glory of Saint James than his own. However, for the people and the Church, this saint became an example of piety in the crusades against all non-believers and a symbolic figure in the struggle to recapture the Iberian peninsula, which had been conquered by Moors from Africa between 711 and 719. The once peace-loving apostle was presented as a soldier of God and was given the epithet "Matamoros", the slayer of the Moors.

That is all in the past, even for the Church. Today, it makes every effort to promote pilgrimages as this is a lucrative business. The number of pilgrims walking the Way of Saint James has increased rapidly over the past 30 years. There were 200 in 1980, 5,000 in 1990, and 55,000 pilgrims were recorded in 2000. The figure reached 240,000 in 2010, which was an "Año Xacobeo" – a year in which 25 July, Saint James' Day, falls on a Sunday. A pilgrimage then is particularly rewarding for Catholics: the Church grants complete absolution. In 2010, twelve million visitors

were counted at the Gate of Forgiveness on the east side of the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.

A papal visit of significance

The Way of Saint James experienced its first golden age in the 12th century. 400,000

souvenir shops and guesthouses as well as luxury accommodation. The production and sale of devotional objects has become a major source of income.

Besides the Pope and other Church officials, eminent secular figures have also contributed to the pilgrimage boom and

"The Camino: A Journey of Spirit". For MacLaine, the journey ended with a spiritual experience that is extremely embarrassing for readers.

On foot, on horseback or on a donkey

Those who arrive in Santiago de Compostela after what may have been arduous and exhausting days or weeks only need to obtain the official stamp in their pilgrim pass to achieve salvation. This is today available in most countries from pilgrimage companies or Church organisations. It costs 15 francs in Switzerland, five euros in Germany and 10 euros in the UK. The much-coveted stamp is nevertheless only given to those who have covered the last 100 kilometres on foot, on horseback or on a donkey. Cyclists are required to travel twice the distance and have to start their pilgrimage 200 kilometres from Santiago de Compostela.

The onslaught of pilgrims is increasingly bringing problems as well as joy. An invasion of bugs last year ensured nights of misery for pilgrims staying in the hostels. Those who want to be sure of securing a place in a hostel for the evening ought really to hit the road at between three and four o'clock in the morning to be able to check in before midday. Organised groups of pilgrims more interested in self-indulgence than self-denial are proving increasingly tiresome for those pilgrims seeking peace and spirituality. On the German pilgrim forum, one outraged pilgrim summed up his experience: "Just back from the party bar".

BARBARA ENGEL is the editor-in-chief of "Swiss Review"



The cathedral of Santiago de Compostela

pilgrims are said to have walked along the Camino each year during this period. It then remained quiet for a few centuries. The revival was triggered by Elías Valiña, a priest in the small Galician village of O Cebreiro in 1982. After Pope John Paul II had reminded Catholics of the ancient tradition of the Way of Saint James on a visit to Santiago de Compostela, the priest began marking the Camino Francés between the Pyrenees and Santiago de Compostela with yellow arrows and opened a hostel for pilgrims next to his church in O Cebreiro. The publicity was incredibly effective and the time was clearly ripe for new swathes of pilgrims to arrive. UNESCO declared the Camino Francés a world heritage site in 1993.

The economically underdeveloped region of Galicia subsequently received significant funding, not only from the Church but also from the state and the private sector. Monasteries and churches were renovated and restaurants opened along the route. There are now first-aid posts, shops selling pilgrimage and hiking equipment, massage salons,

economic success, not least Paulo Coelho, the Brazilian esoteric writer, with his book published in 1986 entitled "The Pilgrimage". Shirley MacLaine followed his lead in 2000, as did German comedian Hape Kerkeling shortly afterwards. He provided his fans with an account of his experience called "Ich bin dann mal weg" (I am on the road). The title of MacLaine's pilgrimage journal is

EXHIBITION IN BASEL

"Pilgrimages are booming" is the title of an exhibition at the "Museum der Kulturen" in Basel which will run until 3 March 2013. This focuses on Christian pilgrimages in Europe. It becomes evident that there is no clear distinction between purely religious pilgrimages and those where salvation or miracles are sought. Some of the 500 exhibits are very unusual, such as the "Three Kings Certificate", which is supposed to protect pilgrims against enemies and attack, and the feet, hands, chests and stomachs made of wax known as wax votive offerings. The exhibition focuses on both historical documentation and a sociological analysis of pilgrimages. The pilgrimage pass of German comedian Hape Kerkeling, who recounted his experiences on the Way of Saint James in 2007 in his book "Ich bin dann mal weg" is also on display. He made the fun factor a new element in the life of pilgrims.

"Pilgrimages are booming" exhibition until 3 March 2013, Museum der Kulturen, Münsterplatz 20, Basel. www.mkb.ch

Dogs just like in the Far North

A country with a tradition of winter sports, Switzerland is also passionate about sled dog racing and breeding pedigree Nordic dogs, including the most popular breed, the Husky. Breeder Maurice Jobin from the canton of Jura, and musher Pierre-Antoine Héritier, from the canton of Valais, give us an insight.

By Alain Wey



A sled team in full swing in a race in Kandersteg

The atmosphere of the Far North, the packs of sled dogs howling, sensing the imminent start of a race. Although North America and Scandinavia are the champions in this sport, Switzerland has more than 200 mushers and some 3,000 pedigree Nordic dogs. And where there is passion, races abound in the middle of winter. Alongside competition and breeding, the winter season attracts tourists for dog sledding tours, with demand far outstripping supply. Developing a passion for epic Alaskan adventures is becoming a way of life. The most experienced Swiss mushers even take part in the long-distance races which made this sport famous. This is true for Pierre-Antoine Héritier from the canton of Valais, who completed the 1,600-km Yukon Quest (Alaska-Canada) in 12 days in 2010. There is a whole world behind these impressive feats: the life of enthusiasts and of the Nordic dogs, whose breeding is strictly controlled in Switzerland to preserve the pedigree of purebred dogs. Let's take a ride on the trails of the Nordic dogs, breeders and mushers in Switzerland.

The packs gather

The Swiss Club for Nordic Dogs (SKNH) has been working to maintain the pedigree

of the four pure breeds since 1959, and now numbers 1,078 Siberian Huskies, 450 Alaskan Malamutes, 393 Samoyeds and 80 Greenland Huskies. Although crossbreeding to improve the dogs' speed and performance is widespread in the world of mushers, Swiss competitors largely prefer to conserve breeds. Yukon Quest Finisher Pierre-Antoine Héritier only sleds with Siberian Huskies. The first real sled dog race in Switzerland was held in 1973 at Saignelégier (Jura), where the Franches-Montagnes district takes on the look and feel of the Far North in winter. Over the course of the 1970s, it became a European benchmark in the genre, and today hosts 120 teams and more than 20,000 spectators. The late 1980s saw the birth of three national sporting federations, which are behind most of the winter races in Switzerland: the Swiss Mushers' Society (SMV), the Swiss Sporting Club for Pulka and Sled Dogs (SKS) and the Swiss Sled Dog Sports Club (SSK). Since then, up to three sled dog competitions have been held on one-day races every weekend between January and March at locations including Kandersteg (Berne, Swiss championships), Lenk (Berne), Lenzerheide (Grisons), Les Mosses (Vaud), and numer-

ous others where sled dogs have made a name for themselves.

The Husky, polar endurance with a transcendent stare

Maurice Jobin (79) has been breeding Siberian Huskies on the high slopes of Saignelégier (Jura) since 1979. This fastest and most widespread of the pedigree Nordic dogs is the most iconic symbol of the Far North dog breeds. Its bright blue eyes and wolf-like appearance have captivated many among the non-initiated. At Le Lichen Bleu – the former musher's kennels – 421 puppies have been born to date. The breeding regulations here are similar to those for racehorses. "Studs should be the offspring of studs selected over five generations", explains Jobin. "You also have to check for predispositions to hip abnormalities and eye diseases. Finally, they must be subjected to behavioural tests as the dog shouldn't be aggressive." Jobin cannot help but praise the qualities of Huskies: their resistance to cold, independence and intelligence. "There are a dozen official breeders in Switzerland, added to



Pierre-Antoine Héritier and his dogs on the Yukon Quest in Canada

whom are those who compete or take tourists on sled rides. They breed litters from time to time to bring new blood into their team."

Dreams of the Far North

When sled dog competitions are mentioned, dreamers inevitably think of the challenges of the Far North. The Iditarod Race, the longest in the world, commemorates the achievement of a musher who in 1925 successfully reached the town of Nome (Alaska), which had been hit by a diphtheria epidemic, with ice and a blizzard preventing serum being sent by air or boat. Switzerland's passion for mushing is also embodied in countryman Martin Buser. Originally from Winterthur, Buser has lived in Alaska since 1979 and became the first non-American to win the race in 1992, going on to win it a total of five times. In view of these achievements and the escapist images that the sport conveys, we could legitimately ask why it has never been included in the Olympic Games, despite the fact that almost all countries practising winter sports are sled dog enthusiasts. Just imagine the excitement that these races could generate if aired live on television! The Swiss would certainly have the means to compete against the North American champions. Until then, the teams will continue to cross thousands of kilometres in complete freedom, in a harmony between man, dog and nature.

www.lichenbleu.ch (website of Maurice Jobin)

"The Yukon Quest, the ultimate challenge"

Musher Pierre-Antoine Héritier (47) began competing in 1990. Sprint and middle distance (8-50 km) races led on to major endurance races over stages and without assistance covering hundreds of kilometres. The high point of these challenges was the Yukon Quest in 2010, which is considered to be the most difficult race in the world. With his team of 14 Huskies, he raced from Fairbanks (US) to Whitehorse (CA) in 12 days (1,648 km). A book on his epic adventure will be published in December. The heroic deeds of this wine grower from Savièse (Valais) now also include six Polardistans (300 km, Sweden), four Grande Odyssee (1,000 km, Savoie Mont-Blanc), five Femundløpet (400 and 600 km, Norway) and one Finnmarksløpet (1,000 km, Norway).

How many dogs do you currently have?

«P.-A. HÉRITIER»: Twenty. After the Yukon Quest, my team of dogs had become a little old. I'm currently breeding and training for a team that will be ready in the 2014 season for long-

distance races over ten days.

As I have young dogs that need training, I'm starting off with three-day races. I generally race with teams of between 8 and 14 Huskies.

What is the Yukon Quest?

It's the ultimate challenge. It's like climbing Everest or competing in the Olympic Games. The 14 dogs that start the race are like the footballers in my team, but they cannot be substituted, only taken off. The rule is that you need to finish the race with a minimum of six dogs – I did it with 11. My aim was to finish the race, and not to place well.

What do your Huskies mean to you?

They're my football team! I consider myself to be a trainer, owner, dietician, masseur, vet and psychologist. During a race, you depend on the dogs. If you don't treat them well, get to know them and look after them, this isn't possible. In endurance races, the dogs need to be confident and well supported. They're like athletes: if they lack the morale, they won't succeed. These races are extremely difficult to manage on a physical and mental level, both for the Huskies and for the musher.



Which races will you compete in this season?

The Haute Maurienne Trophy over three stages of the Grande Odyssee in January, and sprint races in Switzerland over 15-20 km between December and February. Then, in mid-February, I'm competing in two 300 km races in Swe-

den: the Polardistans and the Amundsen Race. But this year, it's just about getting the young dogs used to competition. In the coming seasons, I'm thinking of lining up some 400 and 500 km races. I'll be working based on the abilities of my dogs.

Are there any major challenges you would still like to tackle?

There's still Iditarod in Alaska, which with a course of 1,800 km is the longest race in the world. That said, it's still less difficult and more manageable than the Yukon Quest because there are no mountains and the course is punctuated with around 20 checkpoints compared to eight on the quest. So, maybe one day!

How do you see your future as a musher?

I've still got some time before I think about someone else taking over. Some of my competitors are currently aged over 60... We're a little like equestrians: mushers improve with age!

www.teamheritier.com

ALAIN WEY is an editor at "Swiss Review"



OSA advice

Having lived abroad for several years, I'm planning to return to Switzerland. How does that work in terms of health insurance?

Health insurance is mandatory for all persons living in Switzerland. This means that insurers are obliged to provide basic cover to anyone who is resident in Switzerland, regardless of their age or state of health. The catalogue of services is stipulated in the legislation relating to health insurance and everyone is entitled to the same basic medical treatment. If Swiss citizens living abroad decide to return to Switzerland, they therefore cannot be denied health insurance cover or refused reimbursement for treatment (e.g. if they suffer from pre-existing conditions). When they arrive back in the country, Swiss citizens have three months from the date when they take up residence in Switzerland to arrange health insurance. The insurance then comes into force retroactively from the date the individual moved back to Switzerland. There are exemptions to the obligation to obtain health insurance in Switzerland. These include retired individuals receiving a pension from an EU member state and no pension in Switzerland and individuals coming to Switzerland to study who already have insurance cover equivalent to the basic Swiss health insurance.

Adults and children have to be insured individually. Every insured person has to pay an insurance premium. The premiums can vary from one insurer to another, although the medical treatment is the same for everyone. It is therefore worth comparing the premiums offered by different insurers. Some insurance models also enable you to save money on your insurance premiums. The Federal Office of Public Health allows you to compare premiums online at: www.prim-info.ch.

If you would like cover that goes beyond what is offered by the basic insurance (e.g. alternative therapies, a private or semi-private hospital room), you can take out supplementary insurance. This insurance is private, however, which means that insurers can refuse to provide cover to certain individuals, or refuse to reimburse certain treatments.

For further information, please see the website of the Federal Office of Public Health: www.bag.admin.ch -> Topics -> Health insurance

SARAH MASTANTUONI, Head of the Legal Department

The Organisation of the Swiss Abroad's Legal Department provides general legal information on Swiss law and specifically in areas that concern the Swiss abroad. It does not provide information on foreign law and does not intervene in disputes between private parties.

The economic crisis is affecting young Swiss abroad

The number of enquiries from Europe received by the Association promoting Education for Young Swiss Abroad (AJAS) is increasing sharply.

AJAS, which has been providing young Swiss abroad with advice on educational and funding opportunities for the last 50 years, has received a growing number of enquiries from young people in European countries in 2012. There has been a particularly significant rise in enquiries from Greece and Portugal. Fiona Scheidegger, Director of AJAS, believes this is clearly a result of the challenging economic situations in these countries.

Over the first nine months of this year, enquiries from Greece increased by 60% to 29 compared to the same period last year and

11 enquiries were received from Portugal, which is over twice as many as last year. Enquiries from Italy and Spain doubled in 2011 compared to 2010 but have remained at around the same level this year.

Young Swiss people abroad or their parents can contact the AJAS advisory team by telephone or e-mail.

AJAS, Alpenstrasse 26, 3006 Berne, SWITZERLAND
Tel +41 (0)31 356 61 04
E-mail: ajas@aso.ch / www.ajas.ch



New head teacher in Italy

Christian Zwingli will be the new head teacher of the "Caslina al Piano" Swiss school in Cadorago, which is affiliated to the Swiss school in Milan, from the 2013/2014 academic year onwards. Zwingli, who was born in Switzerland in 1956, has been head of the Swiss school in Cuernavaca, Mexico, since 1998. He previously worked in Switzerland and Mexico City as a primary school teacher as well as at a vocational training college. Zwingli oversaw the highly successful expansion of the Swiss school in Cuernavaca. He introduced pre-university education there, and the number of pupils increased from 135 to 335. Christian Zwingli is married to painter Chris Zwingli.



Above: Young Swiss abroad with Federal Councillor Didier Burkhalter and his wife Friedrun at the Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Lausanne
Below: The Adventure Crew from last year's camp



"Let's keep moving!"

This summer, around 350 young Swiss abroad took advantage of the offers of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad's Youth Service: two sports camps in Lenk in the Bernese Oberland, language classes in Zurich, Fribourg, Berne and Lausanne, a politics seminar at the 90th Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Lausanne and various individual programmes provided unforgettable experiences and the opportunity to make new friendships with people from all over

the world. The highlight for the young participants at the Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Lausanne was meeting Minister of Foreign Affairs, Federal Councillor Didier Burkhalter, who answered fascinating, offbeat questions at a get-together with young people.

Others were more interested in adventure. Those who took part in the 10-day adventure camp learned to work as a team and carry out tasks independently. The organisational, planning, cooking, navigational and bivouacking skills learned were immediately

put into practice. The group slept either at the base camp in Interlaken or in self-constructed shelters after an arduous trek.

Winter is coming

The 2012/13 winter season will open with the popular New Year snow sports camp in Sedrun. The first language course will then take place in Berne in January, with others following in summer 2013. In addition to learning a national language, participants experience "everyday Swiss life" while staying with host families. This always proves to be an enriching experience with long-term benefits for both guests and hosts. More information on the host family programme can be found at: youth@aso.ch.

There are still places available for our winter sports camp for adults in Davos from 29 March to 7 April 2013. OSA looks forward to receiving your enquiries and registrations. More details can be found on our website at: www.aso.ch ("Offers" section).

Summer camps for 8 to 14-year-olds

Registration process for summer camps will begin in February 2013

The exact details, such as location, date and age groups, etc., for the various summer camps run by the Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad (FYSA) for 2013 will be published in "Swiss Review" from February 2013 and at www.sjas.ch in the "Our forthcoming activities" section from the beginning of February 2013. You will also find the registration forms there. Anyone requiring an overview of the offers in paper form can order the brochure from the office from February 2013.

Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad (FYSA), Alpenstrasse 26, 3006 Berne, Switzerland
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Ten years of Swiss UN membership

Switzerland became the 190th member of the UN when it joined 10 years ago. It was the first and only nation to decide its accession by referendum.

Switzerland and the UN share the same values and objectives – promoting peace, improving human rights, encouraging sustainable development and providing humanitarian aid for the victims of wars and natural disasters. This direct-democratic basis and the shared values give Switzerland's commitment to the UN a high degree of legitimacy. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visited Berne last September to mark the anniversary and to thank Switzerland for its commitment in a speech to the United Federal Assembly.

SWITZERLAND'S UN MEMBERSHIP IN FIGURES

Providing 1.13 % of the UN's budget (mandatory contributions), Switzerland is the 16th biggest contributor to the UN. Switzerland's regular mandatory contributions to the UN's main bodies stood at 147.4 million Swiss francs in 2010 (2011: 130.4 million), which, for example, include contributions to the peace missions and war crimes tribunals. There are further mandatory contributions to multilateral funds and special organisations, such as the WHO, FAO and ILO, as well as voluntary contributions (e.g. for food aid). Even prior to its UN accession, Switzerland had made contributions of around 500 million Swiss francs to the UN system.

Switzerland provides 25 military personnel and police officers for UN peace-keeping missions (Lebanon, DRC, Burundi, South Sudan), putting it in 99th place among donor countries. Over 230 additional Swiss military personnel are deployed in further peace-keeping missions (Kosovo, Bosnia, Korea). More than 1,500 Swiss citizens work for the United Nations, around 70 of whom hold directorial positions.

Geneva is the most important seat of the United Nations after New York and is home to 242 missions, representations and permanent delegations, 33 international organisations, including 7 UN special organisations, and no fewer than 250 international non-governmental organisations. In terms of the number of international conferences and meetings, Geneva is ahead of New York, hosting 2,700 meetings a year on average.

"ABC SWITZERLAND UN" BROCHURE

The FDFA has published an "ABC Switzerland UN" brochure to mark the UN anniversary. This new publication explains how Switzerland is implementing its commitment to the global organisation, the objectives it is pursuing and the specific spheres in which it is active.

Further information and documents can be found in the online dossier "Ten Years of Swiss Membership in the UN" at www.eda.admin.ch

To order the "ABC Switzerland UN" brochure, please contact: FDFA Information, Tel. +41 (0)31 322 31 53
E-mail: publikationen@eda.admin.ch



With 193 member states, the UN is the most important international organisation in the world. The wheels of the United Nations often turn slowly as the search for consensus among the various states presents major challenges, but the international community cannot survive in an increasingly interconnected world without exchange, coordination and decision-making mechanisms. In other words, if the UN did not exist, it would have to be created. Or, as former UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld put it, "the United Nations was created not to lead mankind to heaven, but to save humanity from hell".

Switzerland, which is recognised as a proactive, assertive and conscientious team player in the international community, has made its mark over the past ten years with innovative ideas and clear convictions. It often builds bridges between the major regional blocs in negotiations. Particularly

worthy note are the establishment of the Human Rights Council in Geneva and an ombudsman's office for sanctions policy, which were largely the result of Swiss endeavour. The masterful presidency of the UN General Assembly in 2011 by former Federal Councillor Joseph Deiss is still fresh in the memory. Switzerland has received recognition for its efforts in making the structure of the Security Council more democratic and restricting the right of veto for the most serious infringements of human rights. Switzerland is seeking a seat on the UN's most powerful body – the Security Council – for 2023/24.

New: Itineris

When travelling abroad, Swiss citizens can now register on an online platform, whether they live in Switzerland or abroad. This makes it easier for them to be contacted in emergency or crisis situations.

The FDFA activated the new electronic online platform "itineris" in June 2012 as part of the ongoing expansion of consular services. Travellers of Swiss nationality as well as their family members can enter personal details and information about forthcoming journeys – holidays, business trips or short breaks abroad, etc. – online at www.eda.admin.ch/itineris. In the event of crisis situations arising, this tool provides the FDFA with an overview of Swiss citizens staying in a region affected and enables it to contact them directly.

Registration with "itineris" is voluntary and the data entered, which the FDFA only accesses in the event of a crisis, is treated confidentially. By entering their data under password protection, travellers agree to allow the FDFA to access it within the scope of its crisis management duties. All data on the journey is automatically deleted 30 days after returning to Switzerland or to the country of residence. Basic personal information – surname, first name and e-mail address – is stored in "itineris" for two years in order to facilitate entries for other journeys within this period.

Even if travel details are entered online with "itineris", you still need to make proper preparations for your trip, which include consulting the FDFA's travel advice (www.eda.admin.ch/reisehinweise).

itineris

Online-Registrierung für Schweizerinnen und Schweizer auf Auslandsreisen
Inscription en ligne pour les Suisses voyageant à l'étranger
Registrazioni online per Svizzeri in viaggio all'estero
Online registration for Swiss citizens travelling abroad

[eda.admin.ch/reisehinweise](http://www.eda.admin.ch/reisehinweise)). This provides valuable information on the situation at your destination and corresponding recommendations for your journey and stay abroad. It is also worth checking your insurance status – an insurance policy should ideally contain details of insurance coverage in the event of travel cancellation, route changes, theft and accident, etc.

If you intend to remain abroad for a relatively long period or for over a year or you plan to settle abroad, please contact the Swiss representation responsible for your destination country in order to register there as a Swiss abroad.

Important information

The FDFA's Consular Directorate wishes to make all Swiss citizens abroad aware that Swiss passports issued in 2003 will expire next year (2013). Renew your Swiss passport as early as possible at the Swiss representation (embassy or consulate general) responsible for you. The biometric data required can be recorded at any appropriately equipped representation or at any passport office in Switzerland within six months of your passport application.

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SWISS REVIEW December 2012 / No. 6



Important notice

Please do not forget to notify the embassy or consulate general responsible for you of your valid e-mail address and your mobile phone number.

Register at www.swissabroad.ch to ensure you do not miss any communications ("Swiss Review", newsletters from your representation, etc.) The latest "Swiss Review" and recent issues can be read and/or printed out at any time via the Review link on the websites of the Swiss representations abroad or directly at www.revue.ch. "Swiss Review" is sent to all Swiss citizens abroad registered with an embassy or consulate general free of charge either in printed format or electronically (via e-mail and as an iPad app).



Helpline number from Switzerland:
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Helpline number from abroad:
+41 800 24-7-365
E-mail: helpline@eda.admin.ch
Skype: [helpline-eda](https://www.skype.com/name/helpline-eda)

ELECTIONS AND REFERENDA

The Federal Council has decided to put the following proposals to the vote on 3 March 2013:

- Federal resolution of 15 June 2012 on family policy;
 - Popular initiative of 26 February 2008 "against fat-cat bonuses";
 - Amendment of 15 June 2012 to the federal law on spatial planning.
- Forthcoming referendum dates: 9 June 2013, 22 September 2013 and 24 November 2013

POPULAR INITIATIVES

At the time of going to press, the following federal popular initiatives had been launched since the publication of the last edition of "Swiss Review" (deadlines for the collection of signatures in brackets):

- "Für eine vernünftige Finanzierung der Gesundheitskosten" (For reasonable financing of healthcare costs) (28.02.2014)
- "Für eine sichere und wirtschaftliche Stromversorgung" (Stromeffizienz-Initiative) (For safe and cost-effective energy supply – (energy efficiency initiative)) (28.02.2014)
- "Keine Spekulation mit Nahrungsmitteln" (No food speculation) (25.03.2014)

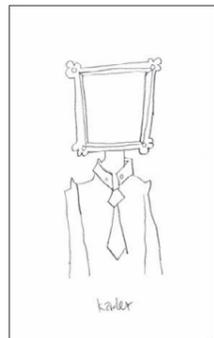
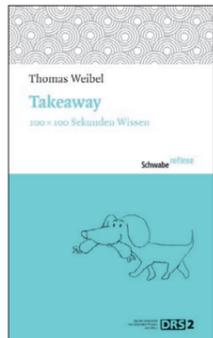
The complete list can be found on the Federal Chancellery's website at www.bk.admin.ch under Aktuell > Wahlen und Abstimmungen > Hängige Volksinitiativen.

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WWW.EDA.ADMIN.CH / E-MAIL: HELPLINE@EDA.ADMIN.CH

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Little gems



"100 seconds of knowledge"

A technical term, an abbreviation, a musical genre or a buzzword – it is familiar but you know little about it. We are often amazed by explanations of such things; they provide moments of insight. "100 Sekunden Wissen" (100 seconds of knowledge) from Swiss radio station DRS2 helps listeners to discover such revelations. It has been going for years, every morning from Monday to Friday at 7 a.m. And now "100 Sekunden Wissen" is also available in book form. The small book entitled "Takeaway" contains 100 selected "100-second" programmes. It begins with the term "Akronym" (acronym) and ends with "Zirkus" (circus). Terms like author, copy & paste, free-of-charge, http://, obolus and seventh heaven are also explained on just under a page each. There are so many surprises you cannot help but find yourself suddenly smiling when reading or listening. Here is some original material on the term "executive": *"All animals are equal" declare the pigs in George Orwell's satirical novel Animal Farm. So too are people in the eyes of the law and of the flu. But all equality ends when it comes to income and influence. Then they emerge on the scene: the executives, the class of leaders (...)*

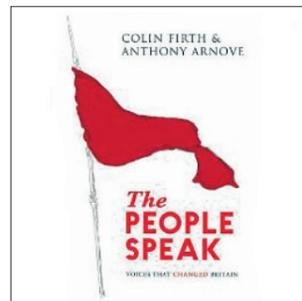
Thomas Weibel: "Takeaway" 100 x 100 Sekunden Wissen; Verlag Schwabe, Basel 2012; 120 pages; price approx. CHF 19.50 / EUR 17. Articles online: <http://drs2blog.ch/100sekunden/>

Words on freedom

Colin Firth is in a class of his own on the big screen with his performances in films like "The English Patient" and "The King's Speech". But Firth is not just an actor, he is also an activist who carefully observes developments in the world. In this role, together with the English author Anthony Arnone, he has now published the book "The People Speak". The subtitle "Voices that changed Britain" is very revealing – the collected articles all focus on just one subject, freedom. The book contains historical texts, such as the lamentation by Benedictine monk Orderic Vitalis about suppression by the Normans and Bertrand Russell's letter of 12 August 1914 setting out the arguments against Britain's involvement in the First World War. Also included are the rousing speech by Emmeline Pankhurst in support of the suffragettes in 1913 and Oscar Wilde's wonderful explanation in 1895 of the line of poetry "the love that dare not speak its name". There are also remarkable speeches by people who have received little attention for centuries because history is usually told as the story of winners. The book's collection of voices belonging to rebels, non-conformists, visionaries and ordinary critics takes on particular significance in light of the current street protests and mood of revolution against the authority of the political class and business leaders. To complement the book, readings are taking place in the UK with stars like Sir Ben Kingsley, Sir Ian McKellen, Kelly Macdonald, Joss Stone, Arundhati Roy and Mark Steel. (BE)

Colin Firth & Anthony Arnone: "The People Speak, Voices that changed Britain"; published by Canongate Books Ltd, Edinburgh; EUR 14.95.

<http://www.history.co.uk/the-people-speak.html> <https://www.facebook.com/ThePeopleSpeakOut>



A melting pot where jazz meets rock

Instrumental power trio Ouizzz fuse jazz and rock in a blend reminiscent of big Scandinavian names such as the Esbjörn Svensson Trio. The Lausanne musicians' third album "Hello, Goodbye" sees them enchant the audience with both the powerful rhythms of an edgy bass and piano parts that are lively at times and melancholic at others.

Founded a decade ago, Ouizzz comprises Michael Gabriele (composer and pianist), Pierre Kuthan (bassist with metal ten



dencies) and Marc-Olivier Savoy (drummer and fan of extreme styles). The album includes some stand-out numbers. The opener, "Hello", kicks off on an enquiring and existential note, driven by a new wave bass riff. "Metal Bolero" is clearly the high-point of the album, with a diffuse theme that clings to the spirit guided by a bassline that

veers straight towards the obscure. The groovy feel of "Pecorino Addiction" seems to have been composed with moving ahead and overcoming obstacles in mind, even if it does refer to a white wine or an Italian cheese. Ouizzz? Wintry jazz that seduces us into happy dreams. (AW)

www.ouizzz.com

Bulletins

Designers awarded prize

Franco Clivio, Gilles Gavillet, David Rust and Karl Gerstner have been awarded the 2012 "Grand Prix Design", which was given by the Swiss Federal Office of Culture. The Swiss Confederation has been running an annual competition to promote Swiss design since 1918. This year, the winners received 40,000 francs each.

Further education popular

In the past year, four out of five people living in Switzerland have completed a further education course. There is virtually no difference in the further education trends between men and women. There are, however, significant differences as regards the level of education. Just 32% of people who have only graduated from compulsory schooling attended a further education course, compared with 80% of college graduates.

Fewer tourists

Switzerland has evidently become too expensive as a holiday destination for guests from abroad, particularly from the rest of Europe. In August, the FSO reported a 9.5% decline (in comparison with the previous year) in the number of overnight stays enjoyed by European guests in the country. Germany was the country to record the largest drop at 12%. The number of tourists from Asia, however, increased (+30%), but the largest rise in the number of foreign guests was recorded by visitors from the Gulf States at 258%. Statistics also revealed that tourists increasingly visited cities at the expense of some of the more traditional tourist regions.

The working poor

In 2010, 120,000 people lived in poverty in Switzerland despite having a job. This equates to 3.5% of gainfully employed people. Single parents are some of the most affected – the latest poverty statistics from the FSO show that 20% of single parents are living in poverty. The study also ascertained the number of people at risk of poverty in comparison with other countries. By comparison with all other European countries, Switzerland was slightly below the average in this respect. Compared with its immediate neighbours, however, Switzerland performed poorly. The risk of poverty was only higher in Italy; in Germany, France and Austria, the risk is significantly lower.

No generational conflict

There is no conflict between the generations in Switzerland, as concluded in the 2012 Social Report published by the Swiss Centre of Expertise in the Social Sciences (FORS). The relationships between the different generations play a particularly important role within families. In contrast, there are few cross-generational acquaintances outside the family. It is quite remarkable that it is not the elderly in Switzerland who often feel as though they are treated unfairly and disrespectfully, but the young instead. This is particularly the case in the work environment, according to around half of those who took part in the survey. The study also reveals that the cliché of the apolitical youth has absolutely no bearing on the truth. The youth of today are turning out for the national elections in greater numbers than young people did 20 or 40 years ago.

Quotes

"I want everything to be out in the open." Federal Councillor Johann Schneider-Ammann quotes this sentence every now and then, e.g., in connection with the free movement of people, as well as in reference to commodity-trading companies

"The world is in disarray, as politics and the economy act without ethical principles." Heiner Geissler, former German Federal Minister for Youth, Family and Health, and General Secretary of the Christian Democratic Union

"It is certain that nothing is certain, and not even that is." Joachim Ringelnatz, German author and cabaret artist (1883–1934)

"It is of course ridiculous to write such nonsense." Peter Ramsauer, German Minister of Transport, commenting on a report by the Swiss Federal Council regarding the treaty on aircraft noise

"If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail." Mark Twain, American author (1835–1910)

"We have to act if we do not want to be marginalised." Federal Councillor Doris Leuthard on the situation in Switzerland

"Everything comes in time to him who knows how to wait." Leo Tolstoy, Russian author (1828–1910)

"He does not preach what he practises till he has practised what he preaches." Confucius, Chinese philosopher (551–479 B.C.)

"The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing." Socrates, Greek philosopher (470–399 B.C.)



Over the past few years, snowshoeing has developed into a popular sport. There are scarcely any winter sports resorts that do not offer special snowshoeing tours. Everything is offered – from full-moon trips, senior citizen and children's walking tours to tours up high mountains. Thousands of people in Switzerland take advantage every weekend of the opportunity to enjoy the tranquillity and solitude offered by the mountain regions, without being dependent on mountain railways and flattened pistes. Swisstopo, the Federal Geo-Information Centre (previously known as the Federal Office of Topography) has worked together with the Swiss Alpine Club to publish a special map of snowshoeing tours in Prättigau, featuring numerous tips and extensive information on environmentally friendly winter sports, cabins, avalanches and important telephone numbers. www.swisstopo.ch



Bernina Express at Lake Bianco, Graubünden

The train that puts on a great show.

Welcome aboard the Bernina Express – the train that treats you to a big show as it makes its way along a UNESCO World Heritage Site-listed route.

From the North of the Alps to the gentle South

From Chur in Graubünden to Tirano in Italy, the red train crosses the Alps from North to South on a spectacular route that is recognized for its beautiful landscapes and the ingenuity of its designers. Over its four-hour journey, it travels through 55 tunnels, crosses 196 bridges and numerous stunning viaducts, climbs the Bernina Pass (2,253 m) and scales slopes with a gradient of up to 70 pro mille without cogwheel drive. It's no surprise that it ranks among the few rail journeys listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Beyond the human ingenuity displayed in the construction of the route, it is the rich and diverse wonders of nature that are truly fascinating, as the high Alpine summits, glaciers and bleak landscapes in the Albula and Engadine valleys transform into the gentleness of the South as the journey reaches its end. Once it has crossed the famous spiral viaduct in Brusio, the red train pulls into Tirano.

Horse racing on ice

Since 1907, the frozen Lake of St. Moritz has been transformed into a racecourse for three Sundays in February. Whether ski-joring or free riding, the White Turf races offer a heart-stopping show set amongst the spectacular mountainous backdrop of the Engadine valley.



Tip 1

MySwitzerland.com
Webcode: **AD90182**

Albula Railway Museum

The brand-new Albula Railway Museum in Bergün, situated on the route of the Bernina Express, offers an interactive journey through more than a hundred years of history of the Rhaetian Railway and delves into some of the most spectacular Alpine lines in the world.



Tip 2

MySwitzerland.com
Webcode: **B145097**

Escape to the summit

Reaching a staggering 3,000 m, the amphitheater in Diavolezza (female devil) will cast a spell on you in the winter. Skiing under the moonlight or across a glacier and a peaceful night at the summit await you after your ascent in the new cable car, which leaves from the Bernina Pass.



Tip 3

MySwitzerland.com
Webcode: **C42580**

Network Switzerland:

Hotel Palazzo Mýsanus, Samedan

Register until 31.12.2012 at www.MySwitzerland.com/aso and win a two-night stay for two people at Swiss Historic Hotel Palazzo Mýsanus in Samedan, including a free entrance to the mineral baths and spa.



MySwitzerland.com
Webcode: **A54436**

A collaboration between Switzerland Tourism and the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA)



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