

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE SWISS ABROAD

S W I S S

REVIEW

JUNE 2007 / NO. 3



Switzerland is getting warmer and warmer

SWISS heads for the skies

640,000 Swiss citizens live abroad

Finanzanlagen – made in Switzerland

Versicherungen und Banken haben in der Schweiz eine lange und starke Tradition. Seit 150 Jahren gehört Swiss Life zu den grössten und bedeutendsten Gesellschaften in einer Reihe von bekannten Anbietern der Schweiz. Viele Jahre wuchs das Unternehmen unter dem Namen Rentenanstalt und wurde rasch zum grössten Lebensversicherer. Seit 2004 ist die ehemalige Rentenanstalt unter ihrem neuen Namen Swiss Life aktiv. Geblieben ist, dass sie für alle Finanz- und Vorsorgefragen der richtige Partner ist.

Zentrale Anliegen der Kundinnen und Kunden sind Themen wie die vorzeitige Pensionierung, die Absicherung und Amortisation von Wohneigentum, die lebenslange finanzielle Sicherheit, sichere Anlagen mit attraktiver Rendite. Swiss Life hat die Bedürfnisse der Kunden frühzeitig

erkannt und bietet umfassende Finanzberatungen für alle Lebenssituationen an.

Sie finden bei Swiss Life die richtigen Ansprechpartner, wenn Sie sich mit folgenden oder ähnlichen Fragen und Themen beschäftigen:

- Wie lassen sich gute Renditeaussichten mit Kapitalschutz kombinieren?
- Welche Anlagefonds sind für meine Bedürfnisse geeignet?
- Wie präsentiert sich der Stand meiner aktuellen Altersvorsorge?
- Welche Renditen lassen sich im heutigen wirtschaftlichen Umfeld erzielen?

Seit 150 Jahren engagiert sich Swiss Life für sichere und renditestarke Vorsorge- und Anlagekonzepte. Damit Menschen in eine sichere Zukunft blicken können. Ein Leben lang.



Stefan Böni
Generalagent Swiss Life, Meilen

«Geniessen Sie Ihr Leben in finanzieller Sicherheit. Wir unterstützen sie bei der Planung und Umsetzung Ihrer persönlichen Wünsche und Vorstellungen.»

Swiss Life
Dorfstrasse 140
8706 Meilen
Telefon +41 44 925 39 39
Telefax +41 44 925 39 30
auslandschweizer@swisslife.ch



SwissLife
Bereit für die Zukunft.

Your direct contact to Switzerland ▶

www.swissinfo.org ▶

Swiss news
International news
Specials
Forums
Swiss links
Contact ▶

swissinfo
70 years of quality reporting
idée suisse

Climate change becomes an election issue

LATE LAST YEAR, former US vice-president Al Gore had everyone talking about his alarming environmental documentary. In January and February, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change published its first two reports. These are considered to be the most comprehensive assessments of climate change to date, bringing together the work of hundreds of scientists from around the globe. The reports show that scientists now have empirical proof that human activities around the world cause global warming.

The first IPCC report addresses the physical causes of climate change, i.e. the increase in greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide. The second describes the possible effects of global warming on humans, plants and animals in various regions of the world. The forecasts make for worrying reading. For instance, a rise in temperature of just 4 percent could wipe out 40 percent of the our planet's species of flora and fauna and permanently inundate huge areas of land around river deltas in Africa and Asia. In addition, global warming could cause water shortages for up to 250 million people in Africa. The two reports can be consulted at www.ipcc.ch.

An earlier report by former World Bank chief economist Nicholas Stern (www.hm-treasury.gov.uk) caused a similar stir last October. The Stern Review is the most extensive economic survey yet of climate change, and its core message was a bombshell for the economy: unless 1 percent of global GDP is spent tackling climate change between now and 2050, vast parts of Asia will become uninhabitable and hundreds of millions of people will be forced to flee their homes. The resultant cost would be higher than that of the two world wars combined.



Heinz Eckert

As in the 1987 general elections, environmental issues and particularly climate change will undoubtedly feature highly in campaigning this autumn, and political analysts believe that the Greens will be the main beneficiaries. But the social and political omens are very different to those of 20 years ago. Whereas in the late 1980s the "green" debate was dominated by apocalyptic warnings, today's environmental issues are discussed in a more sober, less ideological manner. Now that even the economy has opened itself up to ecological ideas, centre-right politicians have become far less defensive in their stance. Indeed, ever since Al Gore began preaching environmental protection around the world, the issue has become nothing short of sexy. Defensiveness has given way to the realisation that global warming has to be tackled – even in the United States.

It remains to be seen to what extent the Greens will profit from this sea change. All the pollsters assume that their strong showing at various cantonal elections will be echoed nationally, and that the Greens will gain votes at the federal level.

Swiss citizens abroad who would like to vote in a general election for the first time should contact their local Swiss embassy or consulate now to get on to the electoral register. We sincerely hope that many more Swiss abroad will take an active interest in the Swiss elections and swell the current figure of 110,000 voters registered abroad.

The next edition of the Swiss Review will be devoted entirely to the elections, in line with the motto "Everything you ever wanted to know about voting (but were afraid to ask)".

HEINZ ECKERT, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

5
Mailbag

5
Sounds: Swiss music on the Internet

7
Images: A photographic history of Swiss industry



Industrial history:
Brown Boveri lorries transporting generator parts to Wägitalersee lake (1924)

8
Climate change: Will palm trees soon bloom in Switzerland?

Regional news

11
Politics: Environmental issues in parliament

12
SWISS flies out of the red

14
Notes from Parliament

16
OSA news

18
Locarno Film Festival turns 60

19
News in brief

Cover photo:
Global warming threatens even the Aletsch glacier
Photo: Swissimage

IMPRINT: "Swiss Review", the magazine for the Swiss abroad, is in its 34rd year of publication and is published in German, French, Italian, English and Spanish in 21 regional editions. It has a total circulation of over 390 000. Regional news appears four times a year.

■ EDITORS: Heinz Eckert (EC), Editor-in-Chief; Rolf Ribi (RR), Alain Wey (AW), Gabriela Brodbeck (BDK), responsible for DFA information pages, Service for the Swiss Abroad, DFA, CH-3003 Berne. René Lenzin (RL), reporting from Parliament. Translation: CLS Communication AG ■ POSTAL ADDRESS: Publisher, editorial office, advertising: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad, Alpenstrasse 26, CH-3006 Berne, Tel.: +41 31 356 61 10, Fax: +41 31 356 61 01, Postal account (Swiss National Giro): 30-6768-9. Internet: www.revue.ch ■ E-MAIL: revue@aso.ch ■ PRINT: Zollikofer AG, CH-9001 St.Gallen. ■ CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Please advise your local embassy or consulate. Do not write to Berne. Single copy: CHF 5 ■



**Protect your interests,
vote in Switzerland!**

www.aso.ch

Rente ~~oder~~ und Kapital

Der Anlageplan **RentenTIP®** erhält Ihr Kapital und sichert Ihnen ein regelmässiges Einkommen in Form einer Rente in der Höhe von 6,5% pro Jahr Ihres investierten Kapitals*. Verlangen Sie unsere Unterlagen oder ein persönliches Gespräch.

Wir freuen uns auf Ihren Anruf.

*Beispiel: Eine Einlage von €250'000.- ergibt Auszahlungen von €16'250 pro Jahr.

ProTIP Financial Products AG Telefon +41 052 369 05 65
Hauptstrasse 36A Telefax +41 052 369 05 68
CH-8546 Islikon info@protip.ch www.protip.ch




www.revue.ch

We look forward to your online visit.




Leave a lasting legacy behind Do something for our compatriots abroad

A legacy or bequest allows you to leave instructions on the disposal of your money, real estate or property*. A bequest to the OSA is an enduring reminder of your solidarity with our compatriots abroad. The Organisation for the Swiss Abroad uses all such funds to assist Swiss Abroad in accordance with the testator's instructions.

*To do this you need to draw up a will. The OSA offers an informative, easy-to-understand brochure on how to draw up a will: Contact the OSA Legal Service, "Rechtsdienst der ASO", Alpenstrasse 26, CH-3006 Berne or e-mail info@aso.ch

Help us to help you!

International Health Insurance

Comprehensive, worldwide cover and free choice of doctor and hospital

SIP SWISS INSURANCE PARTNERS® Tel +41 44 266 22 66
info@siphealth.com

Competence. Experience. Independent Advice. www.siphealth.com

All-round insurance cover for Swiss citizens living abroad.

The CSS Insurance International Health Plan covers **medical expenses**: on the job, off the job; **sickness, accident and pregnancy**. For details and a quotation:

www.css.ch/ihp

Phone: ++41 58 277 16 87/91
E-Mail: ihp.info@css.ch

SR 3/07



International Health Insurance

- Private medical treatment due to accident and sickness
- Free choice of doctor and clinic worldwide
- Lifelong guaranteed cover on a worldwide basis
- Multilingual 24-hour hotline service
- Benefits for alternative medicine

Are you looking for a health insurance? We'll gladly help you find the best possible insurance protection: contact us.

ASN AG, Bederstrasse 51, CH-8002 Zurich
Tel +41 43 399 89 89, Fax +41 43 399 89 88
e-Mail info@asn.ch, Internet www.asn.ch

Insurance



Aromat in Finland

I'm afraid I must disappoint you. Your attempt to reserve Aromat exclusively for Swiss use appears to have fallen foul of globalisation. At any rate, Aromat is on sale throughout Finland. On the packaging, incidentally, the Finnish word used for seasoning is "Maustesuola".

VERENA VOUTILAINEN, VANTAA, FINLAND

Editor's note: In a caption to our article on Knorr's centenary, we incorrectly stated that Aromat was only available in Switzerland. Of course this is not true, as various readers have pointed out. Aromat has been on sale abroad for many years. We apologise for this error.

A good mixture

For the past three-and-a-half months, I have been at the Ban Sabai Sunset Beach Resort & Spa on Koh Samui as part of my training at the hotel management school in Lucerne. The hotel industry in particular is a gateway to life outside Switzerland as well as an opportunity to work in many different places. I came into contact with your magazine through my employer, Matthias E. Froelich, who has been working in Thailand for 18 years. I find it a very good mixture of news, politics, culture and entertainment. It's always a pleasure reading your magazine and studying the interesting reports.

ANDY MICHEL, KOH SAMUI, THAILAND

Muslims in prayer

I wish to comment on the caption of page 7 in the "Swiss Review" 1/07 (best press photos of 2006), which reads, "Muslims on Berne's Bun-

desplatz protesting against the publication of caricatures of the Prophet Mohammed". This caption is incomplete and creates a bias in the reader. The correct and complete caption should be: "Muslims in prayer on Berne's Bundesplatz during a protest against the publication of caricatures of the Prophet Mohammed". I enjoy receiving the "Swiss Review" and thank you for this excellent publication.

JAMILA YOUSSEF, GORDON, AUSTRALIA

Blocher should represent the people

As editor-in-chief, Heinz Eckert should be more neutral towards all Swiss abroad. The way he expresses himself conveys the impression that he is a supporter of Federal Councilor Blocher. Quite a few things might be better if Blocher were voted out and the SVP went into opposition. Sadly, the well-oiled consociationalism praised by Mr Eckert has ceased to exist since Blocher's arrival. Mr Blocher should represent his own ministry rather than constantly meddling in the work of other ministers. It's high time he stood down as party leader and represented the people rather than his party.

ALOIS BRANDENBERG, DELTA, CANADA

The real Swiss

I am an avid reader of everything that is written in the "Swiss Review", and I normally agree with you. However, this time I must agree with P. Schaad from London and B. Wachter from Kandy in Sri Lanka (2/07) regarding fellow countryman and patriot Christoph Blocher and the UDC, who are truly Swiss.

FERNANDO BLATTMANN, LISBON, PORTUGAL

www.mx3.ch: Swiss music on the Internet

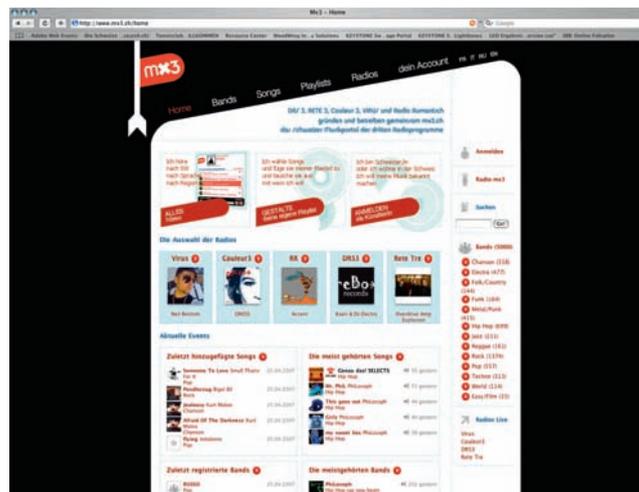
A music platform for Swiss bands? The Web site www.mx3.ch may only have been online since last September, but it already contains some 14,000 songs from more than 4800 bands to listen to. The portal was set up by channel-three radio stations like DSR 3 and Couleur 3, and is an open invitation to discover the gems of the domestic music industry. With just a few clicks, you can listen to much of what the Swiss music scene has to offer – free of charge! The speed at which people have been uploading music to the database clearly shows that the site is not just an alternative to www.myspace.com, the worldwide Eldorado for music fans. Rather, it satisfies a genuine need.

Every day, www.mx3.com is visited by no fewer than 5200 music fans. The site is aimed not only at followers of modern music in all its forms but also at those who like indulging in classic songs from the Sixties and Seventies. Looking for a band that breathes new life into classic AC/DC songs? Graf von Spiegelberg will rock your socks off. Or are you a heavy metal head-banger? Three new songs by Freiburg band Unterschule Element are already online. What about some Victorian rock 'n' roll? Just listen in to Dorian Gray, a Genevan artist who has named himself after the Oscar Wilde hero. Alternatively, you might want to find out more about Lausanne's prolific rock scene, including bands like Fazez, Honey For Petzi and Magicrays. Whatever you're into, there's something for every taste.

The Swiss bands that get the most airtime on domestic radio are easy to find. Simply click on the playlists of stations Rete Tre, Radio Rumantsch, DRS 3, Couleur 3 or Virus. Incidentally, the songs available on www.mx3.ch sometimes also end up on the airwaves – provided they catch DJs' ears. Yes, in this electronic age, musicians can even be discovered on the Internet. The English band Arctic Monkeys, for example, built up its fan base exclusively over the Internet (www.myspace.com) and even broke the record for the highest number of album sales in a single week, an accolade previously held by The Beatles.

This new medium is fun and provides interesting information about the lively Swiss music industry. There are almost 5000 bands, in other words, one for every 1500 people in Switzerland, and it's more than likely that 10,000 musicians will be represented on the platform by the end of the year. So whether you prefer jazz, rock, hip-hop, pop, folk, electronic or reggae, with so much to choose from, the site is music to your ears.

ALAIN WEY



Invitation to the 2007 General Meeting on Lake Geneva

Soliswiss members are cordially invited to attend the **Ordinary General Meeting in Geneva on Friday, August 17, 2007, at noon**. It will take place on the newly renovated **"Savoie"** steamship and features a short excursion across Lake Geneva.

Our ship will be ready for boarding from 11:45 AM at the "Geneva English Garden" station. It will cast off *punctually* at 12:20 pm and return to the same pier by 2:00 pm. We look forward to offering you a culinary treat on board: during the General Meeting, you are invited to enjoy a *lunch menu by renowned chef-de-cuisine Philippe Chevrier*.

Due to limited space, *registration (by letter or e-mail)* is required.

Agenda for the 2007 General Meeting

1. Annotations to the 2006 Annual Report
2. Annotations to the 2006 balance sheet and 2006 income statement
3. Auditors' report
4. Votes:
 - a) Approval of the 2006 Annual Report
 - b) Approval of the 2006 financial statements
 - c) Appropriation of retained profit for 2006
 - d) Ratification of the Council's decisions
5. Elections to the Council
6. Reappointment of the auditors
7. Miscellaneous

As usual, you can find explanations to the General Meeting on our web site www.soliswiss.ch. Members can also request the documents from Soliswiss, Gutenbergstrasse 6, P.O. Box, CH-3001 Berne, or from info@soliswiss.ch.

soliswiss

Living abroad –
with Swiss security

Lump sum compensation Membership

Genossenschaft Solidaritätsfonds der Auslandschweizer
Société coopérative Fonds de solidarité des Suisses de l'étranger
Società cooperativa Fondo di solidarietà degli Svizzeri dell'estero
Sociedad cooperativa Fondo de solidaridad de los Suizos en el extranjero
Cooperative Society Solidarity Fund for Swiss Nationals Abroad

Wealth Management Insurance brokerage

Soliswiss AG
Soliswiss SA
Soliswiss LTD

General Meeting 2007

I will participate in the General Meeting on the Lake of Geneva.

- I eat meat or fish
 I am a vegetarian

Membership Nr. _____

Name, First Name _____

Date of birth _____

Address _____

ZIP, Town _____

Country _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

Soliswiss
Gutenbergstrasse 6
P.O. Box
CH-3001 Berne
T +41 31 380 70 30
F +41 31 381 60 28
info@soliswiss.ch
www.soliswiss.ch

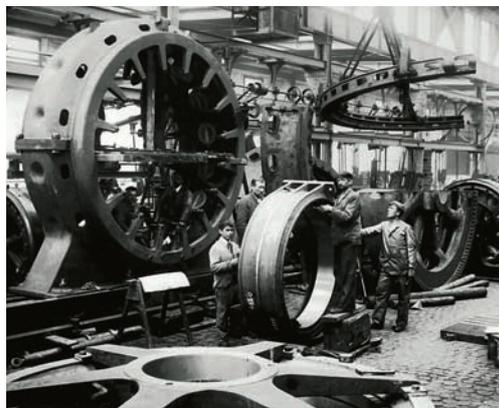
Industry. When electricity began making an impact at the end of the 19th Century, Charles Brown and Walter Boveri founded BBC – which later became ABB – in Baden in 1891. The photographic treasures from ABB’s photographic archives are a testament to a part of Switzerland’s industrial history and document the culture and workings of an industrial enterprise. *Industriewelt, Historische Werkfotos der BBC 1890 bis 1980, Verlag der “Neuen Zürcher Zeitung”*



The first BBC factories in Baden (1892). The tree-lined Basel-Zurich road can be seen in the foreground.



The factory bell, which sounded to mark the start and end of the working day, hangs above the porter’s lodge (1895).



In the generator hall (1897). Processed cast-iron parts are prepared for coil-mounting.



A vertical generator manufactured for the Aswan dam on the River Nile (1952).



In the winding shop (around 1910). Right: A rotor part being made.



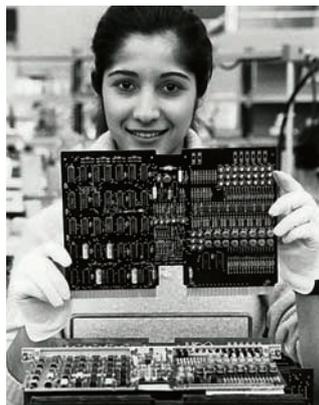
The BBC factory in Münchenstein (1915). Manufacture of magnetic coils for use in locomotive engines.



The ends of the coils are trued up in a large turbo generator.



The longest steam turbine blades were almost man-size. Each of these blades was exposed to centrifugal forces of more than 100 tonnes when the turbine was in operation.



Women were typically employed to equip electronic circuit boards (1967).



By 1950, the site of the BBC plant in Baden covered nearly the entire area between the slopes of the mountain and the SBB rail line.

Will palm trees soon flourish in Switzerland?

Global climate change also affects the climate in Switzerland. An extensive study of global warming in our country forecasts "serious consequences" and "major damage". Melting glaciers are a particular concern. Even so, the Federal Council and Parliament are adapting their climate policies at snail's pace.
By Rolf Ribi

The beautiful image in the advert could hardly have been more controversial. It depicted a powerful off-road vehicle against the backdrop of a snow-white glacier. Who ever thought of combining a 600-horsepower, polluting "king of the road" with a frozen world threatened by increasing carbon dioxide levels? "I witness the effects of climate change first hand," says geologist Jürg Meyer. "As an alpinist and mountain guide, I can see dramatic changes in the mountains."

Climate and environmental policies are currently right at the top of the political agenda in Switzerland. The Swiss have realised that temperatures and rainfall have changed in recent times, and that heat waves and water shortages are increasingly common occurrences in the summer, as are a lack of snow and flooding in winter. And the politicians appear to be accepting that the key factor driving climate change in Switzerland and elsewhere in the world is the rise in carbon dioxide (CO₂), which acts as a greenhouse gas in the atmosphere, thereby warming the planet.

Facts about global warming

There are a number of facts about the change in climate that has occurred in Switzerland:

- In the 20th Century, the average temperature rose by 1.6 degrees Celsius in western Switzerland, by 1.3 degrees in German-speaking areas and by 1 degree in the southern Alps. That is far more than the world-wide increase of 0.6 degrees over the same period.
- The record-breaking summer of 2003 was the starkest evidence so far of climate change in Switzerland. In the summer months from June to August, the mean temperature was more than five degrees higher than the average for the last 140 years. Meteorologists in Mesocco in southern Grisons

registered a Swiss all-time high of 41.5 degrees.

- In the three autumn months of 2006, Switzerland was more than one degree warmer than in the previous record autumn of 1987 and more than three degrees hotter than the average temperature in the years 1961 to 1990.

- The winter of 2006-7 was the warmest in central Switzerland since records began in 1864, with temperatures about 3.1 degrees over the average from 1961 to 1990.

The climatic changes being witnessed in Switzerland mirror global changes. Over the course of the 20th Century, mean global temperatures rose by 0.6 degrees. Researchers predict that temperatures around the world will climb by a further 0.8 to 2.5 degrees by 2050, and be somewhere between 1.4 and 5.8 degrees higher than 1990 levels by the end of the 21st Century. The amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is currently almost 30 percent higher than at any other time in the past 650,000 years, while global emissions are currently increasing by 3.2 percent every year.

The climate in the year 2050

What will conditions be like in Switzerland in 2050? This question was addressed by the OCCC, the body advising the Federal Government on climate change, which has now presented its findings. More than a hundred scientists and other experts have done their meteorological calculations to see what climate Switzerland can expect to have by the middle of the century, and they have made what they term a "realistic" prediction. Their report states that by 2050, average temperatures in Switzerland will be about two degrees higher than today in the autumn, winter and spring, and almost three degrees higher in the summer. "By 2050, the temperatures in Zurich will be similar to those currently experienced in Sion in Val-

ais given slight global warming, they will be similar to those in Magadino in Ticino in the case of moderate global warming, and similar to those experienced in Turin in Italy if there is strong global warming," the report says.

The report goes on to say that rainfall will increase by about 10 percent in the winter and decrease by 20 percent in the summer. "We must expect a rise in extreme rainfall, flooding and mudslides, especially in winter, but also in the summer," it says. "The incidence of summer heatwaves and possibly also droughts will generally increase."

Global warming will also have an effect on the Swiss countryside and its flora and fauna. Trees and other vegetation will grow at higher altitudes, and more and more indigenous species of plants will die out, while plants and animals from warmer regions will spread into Switzerland. An increase of just 1.5 degrees could threaten the edelweiss with complete extinction. Global warming has already brought change to Switzerland. Wild palms now bloom in Ticino, and in Valais the Scots pines are being replaced by oak trees. Martin Grosjean of Berne University considers it "perfectly conceivable" that palm trees will one day grow and flourish in central Switzerland.

The following are the key points that the OCCC report makes about the effects on tourism, agriculture, water supplies and energy:

Major effect on tourism

Global warming has far-reaching implications for tourism. Between now and 2050, the snow line will rise by 350 metres. Low-lying ski resorts will rarely have sufficient snow. Ski-based tourism is under threat in the Vaud and Fribourg Alps, in Ticino and in central and eastern Switzerland. Skiing areas in Valais and Grisons will be less affected. In areas where winter sports die out, many hotels and transportation companies will be forced to close down. Heavy rain and other extreme weather patterns could damage or close roads and other transport routes. Shrinking glaciers will spoil the beauty of the alpine landscape. Areas at altitudes over 2000 metres will get more snow than they do now, which will benefit the local resorts, although it will also increase the risk of avalanches.

Warmer summers would encourage people to take their holidays in the cooler Al-

pine air. The summer peak season could also be extended. Alpine health and beauty holidays will be more attractive. Tourism is not only affected by climate change; it is also one of the key perpetrators of it, especially through personal transportation.

More risks for farmers

A moderate rise in temperature of two to three degrees could prove favourable for agriculture. The growing season would be longer, the number of frost days would diminish, grain, fodder, vegetable and grape harvests would increase. But more summer sun would also mean more drought damage and crop losses for farmers, not to mention too little water for irrigation.

Farmers must therefore protect themselves against the greater risks, for instance by using new varieties or changing crops, and improving pest control and water management. "If average temperatures go up by five degrees, the Emmental valley could be used for rice-growing," says Environment Minister Bruno Oberle.

The effects on water supplies

Rain and melting snow and glaciers currently provide Switzerland with plentiful supplies of water. Climate change would de-

crease the available water in the summer and autumn. An increasing number of summer heatwaves could reduce the flow of water in medium-sized or even larger rivers in central Switzerland to wintertime levels. Groundwater reserves in valleys will diminish considerably in late summer and the autumn.

The potential for flood damage will grow. Experts are predicting more frequent and more severe flooding primarily in winter in central areas, the Jura, the foothills of the Alps and Ticino. However, "Climate change will mean that the available water supplies will not be able to satisfy the demand at all times and in all areas." Water consumption will have to be managed, and better flood protection put into place.

Changes in the energy sector

As a result of the climate change, less energy will be required for heating in winter, while more will be needed for refrigeration in summer. That will shift the emphasis in energy consumption from fuels to electricity. In terms of electricity production, global warming has a negative impact on hydroelectric and nuclear power. Less water means that less hydroelectric power can be generated, while warmer river water re-

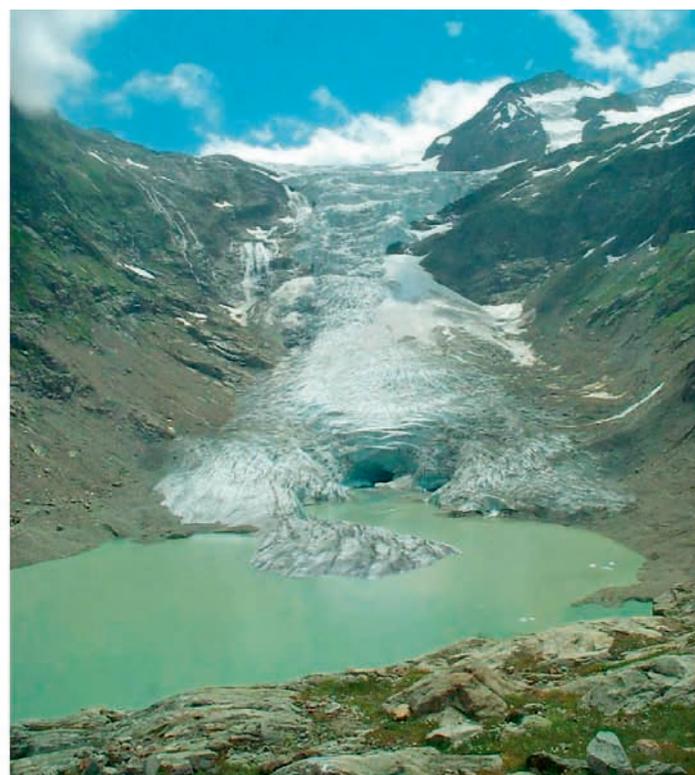
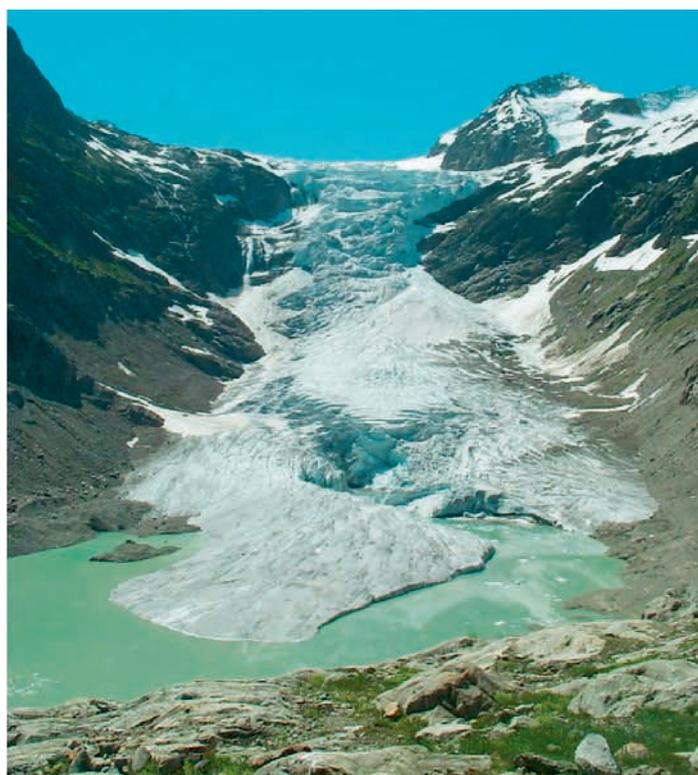
stricts production at nuclear power plants because it is less effective for cooling.

Increased demand for CO₂-neutral energy sources favours the use of renewable energy. Although this only accounts for 3 percent of electricity supplies at present, it could be increased to 10 percent by 2035 and even more by mid-century. This creates a potential for small hydroelectric power plants, wind farms, biomass fuel, geothermal energy and solar power.

The experts' conclusions

The Swiss scientists behind the OCCC report reached a number of clear conclusions:

- "The greatest contribution towards solving the climate problem would be to drastically cut emissions of greenhouse gases. There is simply no alternative."
- "Our actions today will determine the climate of the future and the massive associated socio-economic costs beyond 2050." In the second half of the 21st Century, climate change will "have serious consequences and create major damage" in Switzerland.
- Nevertheless, "Switzerland has a long tradition of adapting to natural dangers". Flooding, landslides and rock falls have al-



The Trift glacier in the Bernese Alps taken from the same place on 30 June 2004 (left) and 30 June 2005 (right). Switzerland's glaciers continue to melt. Measurements taken between 2004 and 2005 showed that 84 of the 91 observed glaciers

had receded. The most dramatic melting was seen along the tongue of the Trift glacier, which had receded by 216 metres. The second largest shrinkage was recorded on the Aletsch glacier (cover photo), which receded by 66 metres.

ways shaped our landscape and influenced our attitudes towards it. "Our country will continue to have the financial means and the technological know-how to adapt to climate change."

When glaciers melt

Climate change in Switzerland has two key natural elements: the gradual shrinking of its glaciers, which has been observed for years, and the melting of the permafrost in the high Alps.

A famous folk song from the Bernese Oberland begins "In Grindelwald den Gletschren by". Glaciers are an integral part of the Swiss sense of home, as well as an attraction for tourists. Glaciers cover 3 percent of the country's land mass and store the equivalent of the average annual rainfall in the form of ice and snow. They are crucial to the water cycle. In cold and rainy years, they store water as snow and ice, and in hot, dry years they supply water to lowland regions. "If this compensatory function can't be guaranteed any longer, it will lead to severe water shortages," says glacier expert Wilfried Haeberli.

Switzerland's glaciers halved in size between 1850 and 1970, and they had shrunk further still by the year 2000. "Only about a quarter of today's glaciers will be left by 2050," predicts Professor Haeberli. He says that only one thing is to blame for this: the rise in temperature. According to the OCCC researchers, many small and medium-sized glaciers will have disappeared by the second half of the century, and in the absence of effective climate protection measures even most of the large glaciers will melt towards the end of the century. If that happens, little water will flow down even the major Alpine rivers anymore.

A third of the upland areas of Switzerland at 2500 metres and above are permanently covered in ice and snow. "Warm winters have a destabilising effect on permafrost areas with steep rocky slopes," says Daniel

Vonder Mühl, a geophysicist. One possible consequence of this is an increase in the number of rock falls.

The slow pace of political change

The greenhouse gas carbon dioxide is the main cause of global warming. The CO₂ law enacted by Parliament in 2000 is the centrepiece of Swiss climate policy. The law demands an "incentive" tax on fossil-based fuels, specifically a CO₂ tax on petrol and diesel if voluntary measures fail to bring the economy round.

The Federal Council decided on this approach as far back as 1990, and yet centre-right politicians, business lobbyists, homeowners and automobile associations have blocked the CO₂ tax time and again. By 2005, it became clear that voluntary measures would not suffice, and the Federal Council demanded a CO₂ tax on fuels. By the end of the following year, both the National Council and the Upper Chamber had finally given their approval too. As a result, a CO₂ tax of CHF 0.06 per litre will be levied on heating oil from 2009, increasing to CHF 0.09 the year thereafter.

When the Upper Chamber passed the bill on the CO₂ tax on heating oil, coal and natural gas fully two decades after the Federal Council's initial efforts, the move was heralded as an "historic" step. And yet the Swiss approach to climate policy is good in many ways. The tax makes fuels more expensive and encourages consumers to use less fossil-based energy. It rewards investment in insulation for buildings and heating systems incorporating heat pumps and wood-burning, solar and geothermal energy. The revenues generated by the incentive tax on fuels are redistributed equally between the Swiss people (in the form of a CHF 50.00 credit on their health insurance premiums) and the economy. "The tax sets an example for future policymaking on environmental and energy issues," wrote the *NZZ* newspaper.

And the incentive tax on petrol? Transport lobbyists and the economy have managed to block it to the present day. Instead of imposing a CO₂ tax of this kind, the Government introduced the so-called "climate cent" (a surcharge of CHF 0.015 on every litre of petrol and diesel purchased) in 2005. The annual revenues of about CHF 100 million from the climate cent flow through a private foundation into domestic and for-

eign projects aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It has not had any perceivable effect on petrol consumption. In the transport sector at least, Swiss climate policy has failed thus far.

Precious time has been lost

"Switzerland has done nothing to improve climate protection since the end of 2002," complains Patrick Hofstetter, a climate expert at WWF Switzerland. So it's hardly surprising that Switzerland has failed to meet its legal and contractual climate targets. Following the world climate summit in Tokyo, Switzerland pledged to reduce its carbon dioxide emissions by 8 percent over 1990 levels by 2012. The CO₂ law demands a 10-percent reduction in carbon dioxide by 2010.

Today the Federal Council is forced to concede that although its transport and energy policy and the voluntary measures taken by industry have kept greenhouse gas emissions at 1990 levels, it has not been able to push them below this mark. "Switzerland will not meet its statutory Kyoto targets," says ETH professor Eberhard Jochem. "Precious time for action and investment has been lost." Decisive action on climate protection is desperately needed. Switzerland is one of the world's worst CO₂ polluters, ranked sixth overall (behind the United States, Canada, Australia, Germany and Denmark) in terms of per-capita CO₂ emissions.

"We only have this one planet"

"In the best-case scenario, greenhouse gas emissions would be cut drastically and worldwide and global temperature rises would be limited to two degrees," says environmental and climate physicist Fortunat Joos from the University of Berne. ETH professor Willy Tinner is not concerned about the ecosystems, which have always adapted over time. "I'm only worried about the people who depend on those ecosystems," he says.

Probably the most poignant comment was made by Swiss astronaut Claude Nicollier, who had four opportunities to look down on Earth from space on board the space shuttle. "I love our planet," he said. "I love life and I wish that our descendents will be able to enjoy a healthy and harmonious existence for millions of years to come. Earth is the only home we humans have."

DOCUMENTATION

Klimaänderung und die Schweiz 2050 (Climate Change and Switzerland in 2050). Advisory Body on Climate Change (OCCC), Berne 2007. Report available for downloading (in German) as a PDF document from www.occc.ch. Individual copies can be ordered from OCCC/ProClim, Schweizerische Akademie der Naturwissenschaften, Schwarztörstrasse 9, CH-3007 Berne. Reports by the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: www.ipcc.ch
Public information: www.doku-zug.ch

The nuclear power debate.

Switzerland could start having problems meeting its energy needs by about 2020. The Federal Council's solution is a combination of power-saving and new nuclear power stations. But the country is as split over atomic energy as it has ever been. By René Lenzin

Two of Switzerland's five nuclear power stations will be ready for decommissioning in 10 to 15 years. At about the same time, long-term energy supply agreements with France will run out. That's why the term "shortfalls" is on everyone's lips in Switzerland at present. What does it mean? That Switzerland won't be able to secure its energy supplies from about 2020. The electricity industry was the first to warn about the looming threat, and it promptly suggested a remedy: Switzerland needed new nuclear power plants, while gas-fired power stations could fill the gap in the short-term.

Even the Federal Council recently considered different energy-related scenarios. It is betting on a four-pronged approach based on energy efficiency, renewable energy, large-scale power stations and foreign energy policy. Energy Minister Moritz Leuenberger thinks the first point is particularly important. However, the Government has yet to spell out how it plans to save energy. Existing energy-reduction programmes have so far failed to have a decisive effect on con-

SWITZERLAND'S GROWING ENERGY NEEDS

■ Between 2000 and 2006, domestic energy consumption rose by more than 10 percent, despite the Government's energy-saving programme.

Consumption even increased in years in which the Swiss economy shrank (2003) or mild winters reduced the amount of heating required (2006). RL

Year	Power consumption	Increase
2000	52.3 bn kWh	2.3%
2001	53.7 bn kWh	2.6%
2002	54.0 bn kWh	0.5%
2003	55.1 bn kWh	2.0%
2004	56.2 bn kWh	1.9%
2005	57.3 bn kWh	2.1%
2006	57.8 bn kWh	0.8%

SOURCE: FEDERAL OFFICE OF ENERGY

sumption (see box). The Federal Council has decided in principle that Switzerland needs new nuclear power plants to secure its energy supplies.

This decision drew a storm of protest from Social Democrats, the Greens and environmental groups, who pledged to oppose the construction of more nuclear power stations with all their might. They are convinced that future needs can be secured through a mixture of energy-saving measures and renewable energy sources. They want an emphasis on wind energy in particular in the short term, and on geothermal energy, biomass and solar power in the long term. Centre-right politicians applauded the Federal Council's decision. The Liberals and the Swiss People's Party want a new nuclear power station built as soon as possible. The Christian Democrats are more reticent, but they too want to keep the nuclear option open.

And the Swiss themselves? They have been anything but consistent. In 2003, they rejected moves both to scrap nuclear power and to declare a moratorium. However, opinion polls regularly find that a majority of the Swiss have reservations about new nuclear power plants. There probably won't be any clarity on the issue until a specific construction project is on the table. If the politicians approve the plans, the decision will be put to the electorate because co-determination is firmly anchored in the Nuclear Power Act.

The energy debate overlaps with that over global warming to some extent, especially with regard to gas-fired power stations, which could be built quickly and would therefore be practical to plug short-term shortfalls, whatever the situation. However, they are hazardous to the environment because of the large volumes of CO₂ they release. That's why most politicians rule them out unless the emission of similar amounts of CO₂ can be prevented.

Focus: Atomic energy

Nuclear power has become a core issue in this general election year. In what seemed like the blink of an eye, the Federal Council raised the importance of expanding the country's nuclear output from "an option" to "a necessity" in March. Five nuclear power stations at four locations currently generate 42 percent of our domestic electricity.

Following the row in 1988 over the planned Kaiseraugst nuclear power plant and the approval of a ten-year construction moratorium in a 1990 referendum, the issue calmed down somewhat. In 2003, voters clearly rejected the "Electricity without Atoms" initiative (calling for an end to nuclear power) and the "Moratorium Plus" initiative aimed at extending the temporary halt on construction.

Major power plants are an important pillar of the Federal Council's new energy plans. Gas-fired plants have no chance of being accepted in the current political climate. By contrast, the environmental aspects of atomic energy are being stressed. But this form of energy also has serious disadvantages: a new nuclear power station costs CHF 5 billion to CHF 6 billion to build. Finding the necessary funding for such projects is the sector's biggest problem, not to mention the fact that it can take 16-18 years from planning to operation. Added to this, Switzerland's system of democracy gives the Swiss people the final say on new nuclear power plants.

Although Switzerland's nuclear power plants have a good safety record, the incident at Sweden's most modern nuclear power station in Forsmark last summer once again highlighted the dangers of atomic energy. A former director of Forsmark described it as the most serious nuclear incident since Chernobyl.

The question of what to do with highly radioactive waste is and remains nuclear power's Achilles heel. The Federal Council may not approve any new nuclear power stations without proof that the associated waste can be disposed of securely. And here too the people have the final say. Perhaps it is technically feasible to dump highly radioactive nuclear waste in Switzerland, as the Federal Council claims, but one fundamental ethical question remains: who will accept responsibility for ensuring that it is stored safely for the next 10,000 or even 100,000 years? ROLF RIBI

SWISS heads for the skies

SWISS has put the turbulence behind it and is now flying packed planes extremely profitably. What, if anything, is still Swiss about the Lufthansa subsidiary today? We spoke to Marcel H. Biedermann, SWISS Managing Director and Head Intercontinental Markets. Interview by Heinz Eckert

SWISS REVIEW: Mr Biedermann, why is SWISS suddenly doing so well again? It wasn't all that long ago that we heard nothing but bad news about the airline. What exactly happened?

MARCEL H. BIEDERMANN: SWISS began operating in 2002 at a time when the market had completely collapsed. What's more, the former structure was too expensive and our fleet uneconomical and far too large. We then scaled everything back: the fleet, the workforce and the network. The turnaround came about 18 months ago. Demand grew, and we were able to take unprofitable 50-seater aircraft out of service. Today, we only use two types of planes on our domestic European routes. We were able to find a good balance between long-haul and inner-European flights and generate lots of extra traffic through direct sales. Finally, we now have an ideal mixture of cheap and standard tickets. That is very important. We are now leading in terms of capacity management.

What do you mean by "capacity management"?

Capacity management refers to the way in which flights are filled. It's not simply about operating aircraft with as many cheap flights as possible. Capacity management can make you a great deal of money, but it can also lose you a great deal. The same applies to the way you use your aircraft; so-called "fleet management". After all, if an aeroplane is not in the air, it's costing you money. SWISS is among Europe's leaders in capacity management and fleet management. You must bear in mind that nowadays every single seat in an aeroplane can be booked at any time, anywhere in the world. For this reason, you have to know exactly how many tickets to sell whom, when and at what price. If you can master this problem more-or-less, you've already achieved a great deal.

What precisely has joining forces with Lufthansa brought SWISS?

Lufthansa brought us stability as well as the advantages of membership of the Star Alliance and savings through the resulting synergy effects with Lufthansa. The takeover made us credible again. Even the banks suddenly started believing that we could survive. After all, many people thought we had been doing everything wrong before. We were able to start working with cheap loans, and profit from the joint purchases with Lufthansa. Suddenly we were trustworthy again. Even customers who left us have come back.

What does the Star Alliance bring SWISS?

We have become a member of a global network without taking any commercial risks. The frequent flyer programmes are networked, we benefit from code-sharing and from common booking systems. What's more, the Star Alliance offers us the greatest advantages of any alliance.

SWISS is still referred to as "Swissair" abroad. Does that bother you?

The further away people are from Switzerland, the less they know what happened to Swissair. For them, aircraft with a Swiss cross on the tail fin are Swissair planes. In fact, little has changed for most foreign passengers. And in the end, major airlines nearly always represent a country. So it's hardly surprising that the name "Swissair" is still widely used in some parts of the world.

What is still Swiss about SWISS, since it is now actually a German airline?

Ninety percent of the people working for us are Swiss. The aircraft are registered in Switzerland, our home base is in Switzerland, we are perceived to be a Swiss firm, and our customers expect the same high quality that they would only expect

from a Swiss product: punctuality, service and reliability.

Will low-cost airlines soon also be competing with you on long-haul flights?

We'll certainly have to expect competition from low-cost airlines on some routes sooner or later. However, the business model on which low-cost airlines are based is less suited to long-distance travel. Long-haul flights place very different demands on logistics and staff. Connecting flights have to be organised, check-in is more complicated, it's not that easy. But in the end, it's the market that will decide.

What plans does SWISS now have to expand?

First of all, we want to serve our destinations on a daily basis, where possible. That is very important for the business sector. Business travellers don't understand why, for instance, they can't take a particular SWISS flight on a Wednesday. This will primarily affect Sao Paolo, Los Angeles and Hong Kong, and in the next phase Johannesburg. We are also assessing new destinations in the major growth markets. For example, we are looking into destinations in India and China, and have a few more ideas for Africa. But we can't provide any more specific details at the present time.

Is Africa good for business?

Yes, actually it is. It's a pity that our African network was cut back so strongly following the grounding of Swissair. Now it's difficult to regain the market share that we lost to other airlines.

What are the conditions for operating a new long-haul route?

Operating a long-haul route on a daily basis means carrying 500 to 600 passengers a day, not all of them from the Swiss market. We must therefore attract customers in other markets, and that's not easy, and particularly costly, given the competition.

Why are SWISS tickets sometimes more expensive in Switzerland than those on sale abroad?

If we want to attract foreign customers, we have to adapt our prices to those of our competitors, otherwise people won't fly SWISS. The reason why we are sometimes more expensive than other airlines is that

we offer a quality product. And that includes Zurich Airport.

Economy passengers sometimes feel like a necessary evil. Are you only interested in business and first-class passengers?

Not at all. After all, economy-class passengers make up nearly 80 percent of our traffic. In any case, I don't think that economy-class passengers get a raw deal.

You don't even get salted almonds with your drink anymore ...

We're re-introducing those. You have to bear in mind that if you have 10.5 million passengers, cutting out salted almonds alone saves you about CHF 6 million a year. That was a lot of money for us at the beginning, but SWISS is in much better shape now and we can invest in our product again.

I understand that many customers would like a class between economy and business,

with more comfortable seats, though without the extra expense.

We are constantly reviewing our cabin layout. However, not all our aircraft can easily be reconfigured inside. Because business class is becoming more like first class all the time, I could well imagine that there will one day be a class between business and economy.

What criteria make business or first-class passengers choose one airline over another for long-haul flights?

There is statistical data on this. Previous experience plays a major part. Check-in is also important, as is the airline's image.

Will SWISS be ordering any of the new Airbus A380s?

No. This huge aeroplane for 850 passengers is simply too large for our needs. We want to be strong because of the variety of our services, not the size of our planes. For

instance, you can already fly from Switzerland to New York several times a day and at different times. That is interesting for our customers, who want a wide range of flights to choose from.

Swissair had an enormous emotional value for the Swiss. Does SWISS have this too?

Every national carrier has an emotional value for the relevant population, be it British, French or German. I think that the grounding of the "flying bank", as Swissair was dubbed, was a somewhat sobering experience for the Swiss. Nevertheless, I am convinced that SWISS is regaining the emotional value that it deserves from the Swiss people. At any rate, we have become a much sought-after employer again. That was very different two years ago. The passengers are coming back too, and realising that we are a good airline with attractive offers at favourable prices.

A TASTE OF SWITZERLAND

■ The gourmet concept Taste of Switzerland gives first- and business-class passengers flying on SWISS an in-flight introduction to the haute cuisine that awaits them on their arrival in Switzerland. All year round since 2002, SWISS has been offering its passengers specialities from various regions prepared by Switzerland's best chefs and accompanied by exquisite Swiss wines.

Manfred Roth from the Hotel

Victoria Jungfrau in Interlaken presented his culinary skills in spring this year, and Felix Eppisser from the Hotel & Restaurant Rigiblick in Zurich will be treating passengers to his delicacies all summer. The concept has been developed specifically for in-flight meals in close collaboration with Gate Gourmet. And not only the passengers have been impressed by the service. Taste of Switzerland has been presented with the Mercury Award.

SWISS PROFITS SOAR

■ Swiss International Air Lines generated earnings before interest and tax (EBIT) of CHF 231 million in 2006 following losses of CHF 14 million the previous year. The consolidated net profit for 2006 was CHF 263 million, compared to the net loss of CHF 178 million a year earlier.

In the entire 2006 business year, SWISS's total income from operating activities rose by 11.3 percent to CHF 4153 million (2005:



CHF 373m). "SWISS achieved its turnaround and began to climb in 2006," CEO Christoph Franz reported with evident satisfaction at a special news conference. He said costs had been reduced further, but more still needed to be done. Cost- and revenue-related synergy effects from the integration of SWISS into Germany's Lufthansa made up half of the operating result, and SWISS was being given additional lift

by the currently positive economic environment, he added.

The SWISS fleet of 73 aircraft serves a total of 70 destinations worldwide from Zurich, Basle and Geneva. It currently achieves average capacity utilisation rates of 79.8 percent across its entire network.

SWISS AND ZURICH AIRPORT HONOURED

■ SWISS was named "Best Airline for Europe" at this year's coveted Business Traveller Awards. The overall top spot was the result of the airline's excellent rankings in a number of areas. The readers of Business Traveller magazine placed the national carrier first in the "Cabin Crew", "Ground Services", "Cabin Comfort" and "In-flight Food & Drink" categories.

SWISS also finished third overall in the "Best Airline to the Middle East and Africa" category.

Zurich Airport, where SWISS is based, was named "Best Major European Airport and Hub".



Swiss abroad statistics for 2006 published

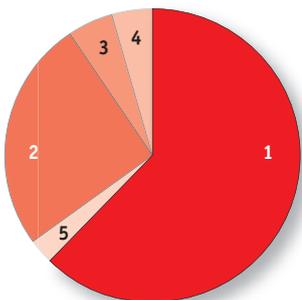
The number of foreign-resident Swiss citizens is rising constantly. This year it has topped 640,000.

A total of 645,010 Swiss men and women were registered with Swiss embassies and consulates at the end of December 2006. This means that the number of our compatriots living abroad rose by 10,794 over the previous December. In all, the foreign-resident Swiss community has risen by about 11 percent since 2000. 460,065 Swiss have dual citizenship (71.3%).

European Union countries are the preferred foreign domiciles of 390,182 of the Swiss (60.5%, see table). France has by far the biggest group of Swiss nationals (171,732), while large Swiss communities can also be found in Germany (72,384), Italy (47,012), the United Kingdom (27,326), Spain (22,680) and Austria (13,380).

Outside Europe, most Swiss citizens live in the United States (71,984). The statistics also show that women make up half of the Swiss adults living abroad.

The Swiss abroad worldwide



1 Europe 402,560
2 America 164,055
3 Asia 32,372
4 Australia & Pacific Region 27,643
5 Africa 18,380

146,615 (22.9%) are under the age of 18.

Of the 494,802 citizens eligible to vote, 111,249 (22.5%) have actually registered with Swiss missions in order to exercise their voting rights.

The statistics can be consulted at the following address: www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/doc/publi/ptrali.html

The Swiss abroad in EU Member States

France:	171,732
Germany:	72,384
Italy:	47,012
United Kingdom:	27,326
Spain:	22,680
Austria:	13,380
Belgium:	6934
Netherlands:	6912
Sweden:	4506
Greece:	3191
Denmark:	2901
Portugal:	2782
Hungary:	1691
Finland:	1444
Republic of Ireland:	1387
Czech Republic:	1166
Luxemburg:	980
Poland:	583
Cyprus:	434
Slovenia:	296
Slovakia:	231
Malta:	149
Estonia:	36
Lithuania:	26
Latvia:	9
Total:	390,182

“The Swiss Confederation: A Brief Guide 2007”

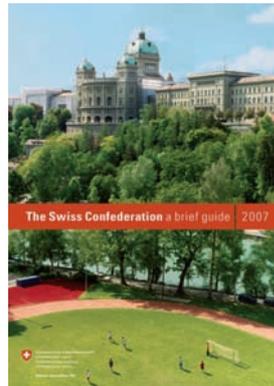
In March, the Federal Chancellery published the brochure “The Swiss Confederation: A Brief Guide 2007” in the four national languages and English. The brochure is free of charge.

The Federal Chancellery’s publication is extremely popular. Due to overwhelming demand in recent years, the print run has been increased slightly and now totals 230,000 copies.

The 84-page “Brief Guide 2007” opens with an interview with Federal President Micheline Calmy-Rey conducted by

parliamentary reporter Christiane Imsand.

The brochure explains the political system of Switzerland, the civic rights of its citizens, and the structure of the National Council and Council of States. As always, there are photographs of the councillors as well as information about their election dates and which commissions they sit on. The legislative procedure is also described in simple terms. In addition, the brochure details the work of the various authorities: the Federal Council, departments and federal offices, parliamentary services, Federal Chancellery, Federal Court and Federal Insurance Court as well as the two new first-instance federal courts.



The photos in this year’s edition were taken by photographer Julie de Tribolet from western Switzerland.

The brochure can be ordered free of charge from :

Bundesamt fuer Bauten und Logistik (BBL), Vertrieb Publikationen, CH-3003 Berne, Fax: +41 (0)31 325 5058, Internet: www.bundespublikationen.admin.ch

Updated “Advice for Swiss citizens living abroad” now available in electronic form

The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs first published its “Advice for Swiss citizens living abroad”, a guide for the Swiss abroad and those considering moving abroad, in April 1993. A new edition of this brochure was published in German and French in 2002, and a new Italian edition appeared a year later. This year the publication was updated in electronic form.

The reprints of 2002 and 2003 have repeatedly been updated in recent years. However, for reasons of cost, the DFA has not reprinted the brochure, opting instead to provide the most important changes over the Internet.

Together with several federal agencies and the organisations representing the Swiss abroad, the DFA has now completely revised the guide, although the 2007 version is only available in electronic form. The brochure is due to be reprinted again next year.

The up-to-date version of the guide can be found at the following address: www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/doc/publi/ptrali.html

The printed version can be ordered free of charge either from: Bundesamt fuer Bauten und Logistik (BBL), Vertrieb

Advertisement



swissworld.org
Your Gateway to Switzerland



Publikationen, CH-3003
Berne, Fax: +41 (0)31 325 5058,
Internet: www.bundespublikationen.admin.ch or via the
following Web page: www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/doc/publi/ptrali.html

Please note: The printed
version dates back to 2002!

For orders by post, please
enclose a self-addressed label.

Halting the construction of second homes in Switzerland

**In June 2006, the Helvetia
Nostra committee launched
the popular initiative "No
more unbridled construction
of second homes" (see issue
5/2006 of Swiss Review).
The initiative wants to restrict
the building of second homes
in Switzerland.**

The initiators fear that a repeal of the Lex Koller law on the acquisition of real estate by foreign residents would create a spatial planning fiasco in Switzerland and radically accelerate the country's desolation and destruction. In an attempt to counteract this trend, they have proposed adding a new article (75a) to the Federal Constitution that would limit second homes to 20 percent of the total number of residential units and restrict the gross floor area used in each community for residential purposes. Furthermore, they want to oblige local authorities to publish figures for the proportion of first homes and details of the extent to which they are implementing the new legislation.

In certain tourist areas, this would effectively halt the construction of second homes. Helvetia Nostra sees this as an

POPULAR INITIATIVES

The following initiatives have been launched since the last issue:

- "For people-friendly cars" (until 27 August 2008)
- "For tax relief on building society savings for purchasing owner-occupied property and funding energy-saving or environmentally friendly construction" (the Building Society Saving Initiative; until 27 September 2008)

Signature forms for current initiatives can be downloaded in German, French or Italian from the Federal Chancellery site: www.admin.ch/ch/d/pore/vi/vis_1_3_1_1.html.

VOTING

Federal referendum of 17 June 2007

- Amendment of 6 October 2006 to the Federal Invalidity Insurance Act
- Date of the National Council elections: 21 October 2007
No federal referendum will be held on 25 November 2007.

opportunity to preserve what character and charm remain in our landscapes and residential areas.

The Constitutional amendments would also involve changes to the Transitory Regulations of the Federal

Constitution. A new clause (Art. 197 item 8) would oblige the Federal Council to issue a decree containing the necessary regulations on the construction, sale and registration of second homes in the Land Registry if the necessary act does not come into force within two years (paragraph 1).

In addition, if the constitutional changes were approved, building permits issued in the intervening period would be declared null and void. This intervening period would be defined as the period between 1st January of the year following the constitutional amendment and the date at which the regulations entered into force (Art. 197 item 8 new paragraph 2 of the Transitory Regulations to the Federal Constitution).

The initiative can be signed until 20 December 2007.

RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OFFICIAL DFA
INFORMATION PAGES: GABRIELA
BRODBECK, SERVICE FOR THE SWISS
ABROAD/DFA, CH-3003 BERNE

Diplomatic service entrance examinations 2007/2008

Are you dynamic, motivated and keen to promote the interests of Switzerland abroad? Are you flexible and open-minded towards other cultures and open to change? Are you interested in politics, business, culture and the history of Switzerland? Then you are the right person to meet the challenges of the future within the Federal Department for Foreign Affairs (DFA).

The DFA has a wide range of exciting jobs in a variety of specialist areas. New staff are recruited through entrance examinations.

Conditions for entry: Applicants must be Swiss citizens and aged under 35 in the year in which they apply. They must be university graduates with a Bologna master's degree or equivalent foreign qualification. In addition, they must have a good working knowledge of two official Swiss languages and a foreign

language, and have no previous convictions. Applications from law, economics or business graduates are particularly welcome.

Applications should be sent to Direktion fuer Ressourcen und Aussennetz, Personalgewinnung und Marketing, Freiburgstrasse 130, Buero A.3017, CH-3003 Berne to arrive no later than 6 July 2007. Complete information (in German, Italian and French) on the entrance examinations, procedure and timetable can be found on our Web site:

www.eda.admin.ch/diplojobs

In order to increase the proportion of female members of the diplomatic service, the DFA is particularly keen to recruit more women. Applications from representatives of Swiss linguistic minorities are also especially welcome.

For further information, please contact us by e-mail: concours@eda.admin.ch

EDA, Direktion fuer Ressourcen und Aussennetz, Personalgewinnung und Marketing, CH-3003 Berne, www.eda.admin.ch



Young Swiss abroad have been discovering Switzerland for 90 years

Some 300 Swiss children from around the world will be travelling to their mother country this summer to find out about the Switzerland of today.

The Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad has a long tradition of running holiday camps. In 1917, the year it was established, the foundation brought Swiss children from war-stricken areas abroad to visit Switzerland. Back then, the host families offered their young charges a break and a few trouble-free weeks in a relaxed environment.

The first holiday camps were organised in the 1960s, when the foundation was still known as Schweizer Hilfe (it didn't get its current name until 1979). In 1990, it ended its partnership with Pro Juventute. Today the FYSA operates out of the offices of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad in Berne.

Every year, some 400 children aged between 8 and 14 take part in FYSA activities. The aim of the programme is to familiarise young people from more than 50 countries with Switzerland, and show them how much it has to offer. Often the children make friendships at camp that last for years, promoting contact and exchanges across the five continents.

The Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad would like to give all expatriate Swiss children at

least one opportunity to take part in its activities. It has therefore set up a fund for subsidising the attendance fees of children whose parents cannot afford to send them to Switzerland on holiday.

The FYSA consists of 22 cantonal committees, which organise annual collections that cover most of the organisation's expenses. The members of the cantonal committees together form the board of trustees, which meets once a year. The foundation's staff are responsible for organising and running the holiday camps.

The FYSA is always on the lookout for committed volunteers who would like to play an active role in one of the cantonal committees.

Young Swiss men and women abroad: active and committed

The youth programme of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) provides lots of interesting, up-to-date information about Switzerland, whether as part of a holiday spent together with other children of the same age from around the world or a study trip to discover more about their roots.

The 2007 Congress of the Swiss Abroad will have as its theme "United and committed: the Swiss on humanitarian missions". Young people are, of course, more than welcome to attend the Congress. For all those interested in deepening



Every year, 400 children from Swiss families resident abroad take advantage of Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad offers and spend their holidays in Switzerland discovering its beauty and unique characteristics. Established in 1917 to help children from war-stricken areas, the foundation has been operating under its present name since 1979.

their understanding of development aid and humanitarian work, we have an exciting seminar explaining the work of various NGOs and international organisations. After their introduction to human rights, participants are bound to want to get involved in a specific aid project. A street campaign in support of young people in Lima is therefore planned to take place in Geneva. It is extremely important to hear what young people think at the Congress. Federal President Micheline Calmy-Rey will take the time to answer questions from young people, and leading specialists in humanitarian issues will also be on hand.

In October, the Swiss people will be electing a new parliament, and campaigning is already underway. The OSA encourages all citizens – especially young men and women – to go out and vote on polling day. In the week before the general election, we'll be running a seminar offering behind-the-scenes insight into the elections, including an introduction by the OSA to the political system and an

opportunity to meet candidates standing in the parliamentary elections. We'll be taking a closer look at the media and experience first-hand how news is reported on television and the radio. Finally, we'll be monitoring the various parties' progress on election day, and then analysing the results together with experts.

There are still a few places left on the language course being held in Lausanne on 13-24 August 2007. These comprise French classes in the mornings together with other Swiss abroad, an attractive programme of leisure activities as well as plenty of opportunities to practice your newly-acquired language skills with your host family. Participants in the language course in Lausanne are also invited to take part in the discussions, activities and festivities at the Congress of the Swiss Abroad.

New host families sought

The OSA is recruiting host families willing to accommodate young people from around the world. We offer an exciting cultural exchange and experi-

OVERVIEW

■ The Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad is a charitable organisation recognised by ZEW0. Its aim is to give Swiss children living abroad an opportunity to have a holiday in Switzerland, regardless of their financial circumstances, and thereby strengthen the bond with their mother country.



THE OSA YOUTH SERVICE

■ The Youth Service of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad offers young Swiss living abroad the opportunity to discover more about their mother country. Its holiday camps and study trips are designed to foster closer links between the Swiss abroad and promote ties with Switzerland.

ence of other lifestyles that will bring a breath of fresh air and variety to your everyday life.

Host families offer our young people accommodation and meals. All other expenses are paid for by the young people themselves. Most young guests are enrolled in education programmes. However, two-week breaks without organised events are also possible.

As always, you can request further information about the above offers from the Youth Service by writing to youth@aso.ch.

Do you have any questions about Switzerland? SwissInfoDesk can help

SwissInfoDesk facilitates the search for Switzerland-specific information on the Internet. This service, provided by the Swiss National Library, is available in German, French and English.

SwissInfoDesk is a collection of the most important links on Swiss topics (2500 in the year 2006). The Web site is particularly specialised in history, geography, cultural studies, culture and languages, though it also covers everything from sport to business, politics to education. The range of topics is constantly being expanded.

The directory is compiled and maintained by IT specialists at the Swiss National Library. The links have been chosen for the relevance of the Web pages in question, and each link is explained in brief. Searching for electronic information has just become easier. SwissInfoDesk generally provides the required information more quickly and generates more pertinent results than searches conducted using a search engine.

Questions about Switzerland that cannot be answered through SwissInfoDesk can be addressed to the Swiss National Library's research

service. Search requests can be posted using an online form and are processed within 48 hours. Searches lasting up to half an hour are free. A fee of CHF 20 is charged for each additional quarter of an hour (or part thereof).

SwissInfoDesk: www.nb.admin.ch/slb/dienstleistungen/swissinfodesk/index.html?lang=en

Switzerland: New telephone prefix for the Zurich area

On 1 April 2007, the 01 area code was replaced by 044 for calls to the Zurich region of Switzerland. All numbers beginning +41 1 therefore now start +41 44.

Example of a call to the Zurich region from abroad:

+41 44 765 43 21 instead of +41 1 765 43 21.

Example of a domestic call: 044 765 43 21 instead of 01 765 43 21.

Private or business callers with partners in Switzerland must change the numbers stored in their telephones and fax machines, electronic diaries, databases, directories, etc., and bring them in line with the new area code. The last seven digits of the number following the international and new area code remain unchanged. Numbers which already have an (0)44 or (0)43 prefix and all other telephone numbers in Switzerland remain unchanged. The Swiss Federal Office of Communications (OFCOM) has prepared a comprehensive dossier, which is available on the Internet at www.bakom.admin.ch/044

ORGANISATION OF THE SWISS ABROAD

Our services:

- Legal Department
- Youth Service
- Association for the Promotion of Education for Young Swiss Abroad (AJAS)
- Committee for Swiss Schools Abroad (CSSA)
- Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad (FYSA)

OSA, Organisation of the Swiss Abroad, Alpenstrasse 26, CH-3006 Berne, Phone +41 31 356 6100, Fax +41 31 356 6101, www.aso.ch

The Golden Leopards, take 60.

The Locarno International Film Festival, one of Switzerland's premiere cultural events, celebrates its 60th anniversary this year. It may also soon be moving into a new cultural and conference centre. By René Lenzin

Locarno is nothing like Berlin, Cannes or Venice. The annual film festival held on the shores of Lake Maggiore has neither the fame of Europe's showcase events nor their glamour. Locarno may award Leopard statuettes for the year's best cinematographic performances, but few Hollywood stars and starlets grace it with their presence. Despite this, or perhaps precisely because of it, the festival enjoys international acclaim and is considered one of the most important cultural events in Switzerland. The relative lack of Tinseltown hubbub along the Piazza Grande does little to detract from the fascination of the event, as the *NZZ* newspaper reported after the close of last year's festival. "Since it is drawn to Locarno for the magic of the location rather than Julia Roberts' smile, one can assume that the festival audience has once again survived this shortcoming unscathed," *NZZ* wrote.

This year, the festival celebrates a very special anniversary: it is being held for the 60th time. Frédéric Maire from western Switzerland is putting together the programme for the second year in succession, having taken over as artistic director from Italy's Irene Bignardi in October 2005. The audiences seem to like the cinematographic fare he serves them. Last year's festival attracted 4000 more visitors than the year before. A possibly record-breaking 78,000 people were counted on the Piazza Grande in the heart of Locarno alone, thanks in part to the fine

weather throughout the festival. Unfortunately, Maire's cinematic selection for 2007 had not been released when we went to press (see box).

For the past six years, the festival has been presided over by Ticino-born Marco Solari, an experienced organiser of tourist and cultural events. Amongst other positions he has held, Solari was the Federal Council's official delegate at the celebrations marking the 700th anniversary of the Swiss Confederation in 1991. He has overhauled the festival's finances, solved its chronic lack of funds and put it on a solid footing. The festival's budget of almost CHF 10 million is funded partly from federal coffers, by Ticino canton and local authorities, and partly by private sponsors. But at the recent annual general meeting, Solari said that the festival needed still more funding in order to keep pace with its international rivals. He's now hoping to get an extra CHF 700,000 for

2008. Maire is also hoping to raise the budget by between CHF 500,000 and CHF 1 million. "That would give us a big boost," he said after last year's premiere as director.

A city without a cinema

The festival has an even greater problem finding suitable venues. Ever since Locarno's prestigious Grand Hotel closed its doors, regular festival-goers have been left feeling somewhat homeless. Maire is therefore planning something special for the big anniversary to ensure that the festival can once more offer what he calls "a nightlife centre". He's also worried about screening rooms. In April, Locarno's only cinema, the former Rex on Piazza Grande, was closed down. Although there were plans for a five-screen cinema complex, the conversion project was deemed unlikely to succeed, and subsequently shelved. Nevertheless, Maire still hopes to be able to use the old 500-seater cinema this year. He also has a converted cinema with three screens available to him in neighbouring Muralto.

The medium-term prospects are also good. At the start of the year, Locarno and Ascona agreed to build a joint cultural and conference centre, thereby putting an end to years of rivalry and scrapping plans for separate

projects that the two could ill afford or use to anything like capacity. The new centre is to be built on the site of Ascona's former airport, which lies conveniently close to the point at which the two municipalities now meet. What's more, it would be able to host both the Locarno film festival and Ascona's equally famous music festival. However, plans for the complex have yet to be finalised, let alone realised. Even so, the film festival has never been closer to getting its very own "movie palace". What better 60th birthday present could it hope for?



LOCARNO FILM FESTIVAL

■ The 60th Locarno International Film Festival takes place on 1–11 August. This year's honorary award will be presented to Taiwanese director Hou Hsiao-hsien. According to festival director Frédéric Maire, Hou is "one of the most important representatives of the Taiwanese *nouvelle vague* of the 1980s". The programme had not been announced as this issue of *Swiss Review* went to press. Further information on the festival can be found on the official Web site: www.pardo.ch.

RL

Swiss tourist industry booming

In 2006, Switzerland welcomed more tourists than at any time in the last two decades, recording 34.7 million overnight stays. The country's cities were particularly popular, primarily Basel, which drew 19.8% more visitors than the year before.

Ammann flies to glory

Ski jumper Simon Ammann from St. Gallen picked up the gold medal on the large hill and the silver on the normal hill at the World Ski Championships in Sapporo, Japan. Ammann finished the season in third place in the World Cup ranking.

Warmest winter ever

According to MeteoSchweiz, the Swiss meteorological office, last winter was the mildest since records began in 1864. Temperatures were an average 3–4 degrees Celsius higher than the long-term average.

Economy up, unemployment down

Figures released by the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs show that the Swiss economy grew by 2.7% last year. That's the highest growth in six years. In March, unemployment was at its lowest level since October 2002, at 2.8%.

Excellent airport

It's official: Zurich is Europe's best airport. At a ceremony in Dubai, Zurich was presented with the Airport Service Quality Award (see also pages 12–13).

Samuel Schmid's Friday the 13th

The plane carrying Federal Councillor Schmid on his return from an official trip to the United States was forced to make an emergency landing in

Washington. Having jettisoned fuel and aborted his first attempt at landing, the captain finally touched the aircraft down safely after circling Washington for one-and-a-half hours.

Death of César Keiser

Satirist César Keiser from Basel died in February at the age of 82. Keiser attracted huge audiences to the Cabaret Fédéral in the 1950s, and his limericks were also extremely popular.

Tunnel under Gibraltar

Eighty-year-old engineer Giovanni Lombardi from Ticino has been commissioned to build a 40-kilometre railway tunnel under the Straits of Gibraltar. Lombardi is no stranger to tunnels. To date, the projects he has headed or participated in, including the Gotthard tunnel, run a combined length of more than a hundred kilometres!

Ideal cities

According to the annual survey by American consultants Mercer HRC, Zurich and Geneva offer the best quality of life of all cities in the world. A total of 39 criteria were used to assess 215 cities around the globe.

Switzerland online

A study by the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs has found that 91% of people working in companies with 10 or more employees have Internet access at their workplace. Nearly two-thirds of respondents said they used the Internet every day.

Air pollution

Although a number of cantons have declared war on cigarettes and banned smoking in enclosed public spaces, another airborne pollutant is now causing concern: fine dust particles. Last

year, the levels of particulate matter in Switzerland exceeded the statutory maximum on no fewer than 66 days.

President takes to the road

In April, Federal President Micheline Calmy-Rey visited Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. She discussed fiscal policies and the distribution of the "cohesion billion" with her hosts. Mrs Calmy-Rey also stressed that cantonal corporate taxation policies in no way breached the 1972 Free Trade Agreement with the European Union.

EU embassy opened

In April, Federal President Micheline Calmy-Rey and Benita Ferrero-Waldner, the European Commissioner for External Relations, officially opened

the EU's embassy in Berne. Ambassador Michael Reiterer has been in office since the start of the year and has already begun forging contacts within the confederation.

Ammo to stay in arsenals

The Security Commission of the Swiss Council of States wants to stop soldiers being issued ammunition to take home. The proposed change would apply to all soldiers with the exception of about a thousand military policemen. Members of the armed forces would, however, continue to keep their service weapons at home. Commission Chairman Hermann Bürgi (SVP/TG) denies that recent shootings had any bearing on the recommendation.

ALAIN WEY

Advertisement



Vote SVP,
Vote for Switzerland!

Dear fellow citizens living abroad,

On 21 October, 2007, elections will be held. We, the Swiss citizens living abroad can also exert our influence on Switzerland's future; personally, I will support the Swiss People's Party's electoral list of citizens abroad, since:

- **The SVP is committed to Switzerland's freedom and independence.**
- **The SVP defends traditional Swiss values.**
- **The SVP wants Switzerland to remain an attractive destination to live, work and do business.**
- **The SVP represents the interests of Swiss citizens living abroad.**

Therefore, choose the SVP's electoral list of citizens abroad and speak out for the interests of Switzerland and its citizens living abroad!

With warmest regards

Rolf Schudel, Johannesburg (SA)
President SVP International

www.svp-international.ch



soliswiss:

Living abroad – with Swiss security

RAIFFEISEN



Is your goal financial independence abroad?

We can assist you: In cooperation with Raiffeisenbank Aarau, we now have the opportunity to offer our members a Soliswiss savings and retirement account with a preferential interest rate of 1.75% per annum – with no termination limit up to CHF 20,000.

Create a secure and reliable financial foundation with us, across the border. Find out more. Contact us today.

.....
I would like to personally meet with a consultant:

Please contact me on

Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri

Between

and

o'clock

Last name

First name

Home phone

Office phone