

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE SWISS ABROAD

S W I S S

REVIEW

APRIL 2008 / NO. 2



Heady days for Swiss
football

Napoleon III spoke
Thurgau dialect

The Swiss Cervelat in
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More and more Swiss living abroad

THE NUMBER OF SWISS PEOPLE LIVING ABROAD increased by 3.6% last year from 645,010 to 668,107. These figures come from the latest statistics on the Swiss abroad issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs. The highest growth rate is in Asia (10.4%), followed by Africa (4.8%) and Oceania (3.1%). Of the countries with the largest Swiss populations (more than 10,000), Israel comes out on top with a growth rate of 9.5%, followed by Austria (4.5%), Germany (3.6%), Canada (3.6%) and Great Britain (3.5%). Of the middle-ranking countries in terms of numbers of Swiss residents (500 to 10,000), the United Arab Emirates (24%, 276 people), Singapore (20.7%, 352 people) and Serbia (20%, 176 people) recorded particularly high growth rates, followed by Lebanon (13.2%), Turkey (12.3%), Morocco (11.3%), Croatia (10.4%), Thailand (9.7%), India (9.1%), the Dominican Republic (8.3%) and China (7.9%).

Most of the Swiss abroad, however, live in countries within the European Union: France (176,723), Germany (75,008), Italy (47,953), Great Britain (28,288), Spain (23,324) and Austria (13,984).

Outside of Europe, most Swiss abroad reside in the USA (73,978), Canada (37,684), Australia (22,004), Argentina (15,372), Brazil (14,374), Israel (13,151) and South Africa (9,078).

A few more facts and figures: 57.9% of Swiss adults abroad are women (296,621) and 151,714 (22.8%) are under 18 years of age.

119,429 Swiss citizens abroad are entered in an electoral register and regularly take part in Swiss elections. That is 7.4% more than in 2006.

The reasons why Swiss people move abroad are not recorded in the statistics. However, the increasing mobility is doubtless mainly to do with the globalised economy and the free movement of people within the European Union. Many Swiss move abroad for personal reasons, such as marriage to a foreigner.



Heinz Eckert

Another surprising announcement from Parliament is that the new Swiss army knife will be manufactured in Switzerland after all. As reported in "Swiss Review" 5/2007, WTO regulations state that the order should be put out to tender internationally, and the new knife could conceivably have been produced in China. This prospect came in for strong public criticism – from the Swiss abroad as well – and even led to a petition. The federal procurement department has now opted against an international invitation process and will only invite bids from Swiss companies. The Swiss army aims to order 75,000 of the new knives at a total cost of CHF 1.4 million. In addition to a high-grade, lockable steel blade with a serrated edge, the new knife will be equipped with tools such as a Phillips screwdriver and a wood saw. It will also be easy to maintain. It will be carried in a belt-bag in future. The new design has not yet been finalised. We look forward to it with great anticipation.

HEINZ ECKERT, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



The leap, 1955, photograph by Theo Frey.

5
Mailbag

5
Books: The Swiss in Rome

7
Images: Theo Frey's world of photography

8
Euro 2008 – Heady days for Swiss football

Regional news

11
Politics

12
Notes from Parliament

14
The Emperor from Switzerland

16
OSA news

18
The Swiss Cervelat in danger of disappearing

19
News in brief

Cover photo: Euro 2008 – Diego Benaglio in goal for the Swiss national football team

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Publireportage

Sicherheit made in Switzerland – mit einer lebenslangen Rente

Einmal mehr werden die Aktienmärkte von Unsicherheit überschattet. Keine gute Ausgangslage für Menschen, die von ihrem Vermögen und dessen Erträgen leben müssen.

Häufig werde ich angefragt, welche Anlagen wohl die besten sind. Meine Antwort ist immer die gleiche: Es gibt keine universale Topanlage. Ob eine Anlage geeignet ist, hängt ab vom Zweck, den sie erfüllen soll. Für viele im Ausland lebende Schweizer ist das eigene Vermögen neben der AHV die einzige Altersvorsorge. Es versteht sich von selbst, dass dies kein Spielgeld ist: Das Geld muss in vielen Fällen nach dem Arbeitsende für mehr als 20 Jahre reichen. Eine goldene Regel besagt, dass fixe Ausgaben auch durch fixe Ein-

nahmen gedeckt werden sollten. Wenn Sie diese Weisheit beachten, sichern Sie sich einen finanziell sorglosen Lebensabend. In der heutigen Zeit erleben wir wieder einmal, dass Aktienkurse auch nach unten schwanken und somit kaum eine verlässliche Einnahmenquelle sind. Auf der Suche nach sicheren, fixen und regelmässig fließenden Erträgen gibt es gute Lösungen, wie zum Beispiel eine Lebensrente. Ihr Markenzeichen ist die lebenslängliche Garantie. Die strenge schweizerische Aufsicht sorgt dafür, dass Versicherungsgesellschaften ihre Garantien auch in schwierigeren Zeiten stets gewähren können. Swiss Life bietet als Vorsorgeleader in der Schweiz eine breite Palette von hochwertigen Lebensrenten an. Ist das ein interessantes Thema für Sie? Zögern Sie nicht, und kontaktieren Sie mich.



Stefan Böni
Leiter Agentur Auslandschweizer

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Thank you!

I received the December edition of "Swiss Review" today (it always arrives so late). I flicked through the pages and saw that the points I raised in my e-mail yesterday had already got through. Thank you for the differentiated approach to reporting. Now I too know that most cantons do not give a breakdown of votes cast by Swiss people living abroad and those resident in Switzerland in their election result listings.

EVELYNE URECH, TÂRGU MURES,
RUMANIA

Switzerland – a model of peace

I would like to congratulate you on the editorial in the December edition of "Swiss Review". The position taken concerning the recent unfair and unjustified criticism of Switzerland and the Swiss people abroad and in the foreign media was spot on. Spain was unfortunately no exception. Rash, unconsidered and untrue judgements on society in our peaceful nation started to appear everywhere, not just in Spain. These other countries should get their own house in order and concentrate on raising their own ethical standards before reproaching Switzerland for intolerance. Thank you for the clear, correct position you took on this. We Swiss (in particular the Swiss living abroad) have nothing to be ashamed of. Our country is a model of peace and will remain so.

ANDREW SANDILANDS, BARCELONA,
SPAIN

Black sheep

I really liked your editorial. During my holiday to Switzerland, I was saddened to see how much attention the media gives to comments made abroad.



I also saw the "for greater security" posters, where a flock of sheep snub a black sheep. I understood the notion of the "black sheep" in the customary sense.

To my great astonishment, I was told that

the poster had been interpreted as racist and xenophobic, drawing parallels between the colour of the sheep and foreigners. I felt Switzerland's need to be liked, recognised, held in high esteem and to conform. In psychology, putting such emphasis on the opinion of others is an indication of not liking oneself enough and of a lack of confidence. I believe the intelligentsia, including journalists and the government, have more of a problem with this than the Swiss people.

I hope to see a new generation of politicians with the courage to be different and able to accept that we are who we are, instead of making excuses and doing everything possible to conform for fear of being alienated. As regards investors, do you know of any who are concerned about morality? They will go wherever's profitable, even if that means "the dark heart of Europe."

SYLVIA CHACHAY, NEW CALEDONIA

Ridiculous experience

As I have done in previous years, I mailed some smoked salmon to a friend in Geneva in early December. To my astonishment, when she received the package the salmon had been removed, with a note stating that as of July 2007, foodstuffs (comestibles) were not allowed into Switzerland from outside Europe. I find this ridiculous and want to warn others of this idiotic practice.

VINCENT M. JOLIVET, WASHINGTON,
USA

The Swiss in Rome

Did you know that the Ticino architect Domenico Fontana reinvented the city of Rome in five years? Of course this question posed by the Roman professor of architecture Paolo Portoghesi is somewhat overstated or pithy, as we journalists might say. But Portoghesi chose his words carefully to highlight Fontana's great influence on the pontificate of Sixtus V (1585–1590) which, although brief, was highly significant to the urban development of Rome. According to Portoghesi, Fontana, principally known as an architect until now, is also an important figure in urban development. Together with Francesco Borromini and other Ticino architects, he made a significant contribution to making Rome one of the outstanding centres of architecture from the 16th century to the 18th century.

A special edition of the Italian-language magazine "Arte & Storia" on the Swiss presence in Rome from the 16th century to modern times features the Ticino architects. Anyone familiar with the subject will find little that is new at first glance. A closer look, however, will reveal lots of new insights into well-documented figures and events. The organisational and technical impact of the Ticino group on the great constructions of the day, such as the dome of St Peter's, is examined. The authors have listed useful bibliographical information at the end of each chapter for anyone interested in finding out more about particular aspects.

The first part of this chronological, beautifully illustrated book with just short of 400 pages is dedicated to who else but the Swiss Guard, who have now served the papacy for over 500 years. In 29 chapters, the authors then concentrate on the most prominent of the Swiss in Rome and their most important achievements. As well as architects, the book also includes artists like Giovanni Serodine, Pier Francesco Mola, Angelica Kauffman and Arnold Böcklin, as well as the historian Jacob Burckhardt. Two chapters feature Swiss hoteliers who have strongly influenced the Roman hotel industry since the 19th century. One such hotelier is Alberto Hassler, from the Grisons, who founded the still world-famous hotel which carries his name on Piazza di Spagna in 1892. The Wirth family, who have run several renowned hotels for more than 100 years and who provided the impetus to found the Swiss School in Rome in 1947, are also featured. Along with the Istituto Svizzero di Roma, which is part of the Pro Helvetia cultural foundation, this school is still one of the cornerstones of the Swiss presence in the eternal city. A chapter of the book is dedicated to each.

The concise introduction to the history of Rome between 1420 and 1945 is helpful. Unfortunately, there is no indication of the numbers of Swiss in Rome. As the federal government has produced

statistics on Swiss abroad according to country and embassy for the last 50 years, this information would have been available, at least for recent times. However, this shortcoming should not prevent anyone from enjoying this highly recommended book.

RENÉ LENZIN



"Svizzeri a Roma" is a special edition of the magazine "Arte & Storia" and is published by Ticino Management SA in Lugano (www.ticinomanagement.ch). The book costs CHF 40 or EUR 24. Only available in Italian.

2007 Annual Report

Soliswiss is establishing itself on the market as a corporate group. The Cooperative Society focuses on lump-sum compensation. Soliswiss Ltd is successfully continuing its activities as an asset manager and insurance broker.

Since 2007 the Cooperative Society exclusively focuses on its core task of providing lump-sum compensation. In the year under review it was able to compensate individuals and families for losses suffered in Lebanon, Colombia and Iraq. An application from Bolivia had to be rejected since it did not meet the statutory requirements. At the end of the reporting period an application from Eastern Europe was still under consideration.

Solid finances

The compensation fund remains capable of providing a hedge against a once-in-a-millennium event. This is ten times more than the supervisory authorities require and attests to extremely prudent business practices. The Swiss government's default guarantee offers Soliswiss an additional hedge against risks, although thanks to favourable reserves it remains highly unlikely that this guarantee will be used.

In the year under review capital investments once more yielded an above average return of 8.7%. Our portfolio yielded the following returns: Winter -0.8%, Spring 12.0%, Summer 20.5%, Autumn -0.8%. In addition, members currently enjoy a rate of 2.125% with the Soliswiss account with Raiffeisen.

Regrettably, there was a decline in revenue from premiums for lump-sum compensations. The collection of premi-

ums, which were formerly paid through direct debiting of savings deposits, is cause for concern. Plans for new credit-card-based payment methods are ready for implementation early next year.

The ordinary account closed with a profit of CHF 0.2 million.

Modern products and services

With the globalisation of the world economy, insurance market niches have been re-discovered and further developed. This includes political risk insurance. Soliswiss remains committed to providing unique lump-sum compensation in the event of loss of livelihood due to coercive political actions. As part of the company's development the Executive Committee has launched a project to identify ways in which Soliswiss could offer its members more specific coverage in conjunction with first-class insurance providers. Concrete findings are expected in the course of 2008.

NOTICE

Under the supervision of the Federal Banking Commission, the repayment of former savings deposits has been carried out since the autumn of 2006. While the majority of credits have been transferred, some members have still not sent in the required payment orders. Please notify Soliswiss if you miss the relevant documents. Do inform family members and acquaintances if you are aware of their entitlement. Unclaimed credits will be transferred to a collective account (subject to charges) with the Raiffeisenbank on 30 June 2008 following approval by the Federal Banking Commission, but can still be claimed from Soliswiss. Many thanks for your cooperation.

New staff

With a staff that makes up fewer than three full-time equivalents, the Cooperative Society benefits from the exceptional voluntary support provided by the Council. Since the spring of 2007 this has included Dr Doron Zimmermann, historian and security policy expert, who joined the Secretariat from the Council and now holds a full-time position responsible for product development. The Committee has been strengthened with the addition of Eric Herren, a security expert who sits on many national and international committees, and Walter Suter, who as former General Consul is well-versed in foreign Swiss colonies and as a former ambassador is an expert in regions with an unstable political environment.

Different markets

Soliswiss is active throughout the world. The market can be divided into three segments:

1. Safe countries: Members pay annual contributions as well as premiums and claim virtually no compensation. We call this a donor market.
2. Countries at acute risk: Revenue from premiums are well below the level required to finance claims. We call this a beneficiary market.
3. Unstable countries: Premium payments and claims pay-



ments balance out over the long term. This is a classic indemnity insurance market.

Segments 1 and 2 demonstrate that the Cooperative Society can only perform its task if Swiss abroad show solidarity with one another and help those who find themselves in need through no fault of their own. Segment 3 shows that Swiss abroad stand by each other and can protect themselves.

New members

The Cooperative Society was pleased to welcome more than 360 new members in the period under review. Soliswiss remains a popular option. Some new members joined to take advantage of the attractive services offered by Soliswiss Ltd as an asset manager and broker for health and life insurance policies. Others joined Soliswiss out of a sense of solidarity with the policy of lump-sum compensation.

Here are many reasons for joining. Take precautions for yourself and your family, or assist fellow compatriotes in need.

Soliswiss: Living abroad – with Swiss security

Dr. Felix Bossert
Director

Theo Frey (1908–1997) is often mentioned in the same breath as some of the greats of Swiss photo-journalism – Hans Staub, Gotthard Schuh and Paul Senn – although his work remains less well-known. He was always interested in and sympathetic towards the lives of ordinary people, and his photography shows a great social commitment. The Swiss Foundation of Photography in Winterthur is showing a selection of his vast collection of works until 24 August.



Choir practice, Zuoz, 1939



Tobacco worker, Brissago, 1947



Third Sunday of Advent, Zurich, 1948



Municipal councillors in Ruederswil, 1938



Fluhli, Entlebuch, 1941



Dancers, Geneva, 1941



Potato load in Obersaxen, Platenga GR, 1948



Traffic, Canton of Zurich, around 1949



Bicycle racecourse, Zurich-Oerlikon, 1930s

Heady days for Swiss football. The European Football Championship, Euro 2008, will soon be kicking off. Walter Lutz, editor-in-chief of the "Sport" newspaper for many years, knows Swiss football inside out. He takes a look back, for "Swiss Review", at the greatest achievements of the Swiss national football teams of the past.

The European Football Championship will take centre stage between 7 and 29 June in four Swiss cities (Basle, Berne, Geneva and Zurich) and four Austrian cities with 16 countries involved in 31 matches. The Swiss taxpayer will shoulder the burden for the most expensive sporting event ever held in Switzerland. Whereas the 1954 World Cup was self-financing thanks to support from the Sport-Toto organisation, CHF 182 million of public money will be used to stage this event. The federal government will provide half that amount, essentially the full cost of the security measures. Security is a crucial part of the tournament, but also an Achilles heel. It involves a national operation and means the government will have to take security measures that go far beyond the field of sport. Four hundred to a thousand police officers will mingle with the spectators for each match. Higher demands from UEFA and the plan to set up fan zones for visiting supporters in the cities, where they can watch matches on giant screens, have contributed to escalating costs. Expectations have changed dramatically since 1954. While the Brazilian and Swiss teams of the day stayed alongside one another in Spartan accommodation in the Magglingen sports college – the buildings they used still bear the names of the teams – with minimum comfort, almost like a scout camp, most of the delegations will be staying in five-star hotels this time around.

Switzerland and its football federation (SFV) have contributed enormously to football's global development. When the SFV was founded in 1895, it had to overcome deep-rooted opposition and prejudice from teachers, the Church, the authorities and parents. Switzerland was one of the seven founding members of FIFA, world football's governing body, in 1904. FIFA's headquarters have been in Zurich since 1932. Five Swiss people have run FIFA as General Secretary. Sepp Blatter from Valais has been the head of world football since 1998. Half a century later, UEFA was born

in Switzerland, which has been its home for 50 years.

The sun never goes down in FIFA's empire today. Football is the world's most popular sport and attracts the most media attention. Two hundred and eight countries with over 250 million active footballers belong to FIFA. Thirty-two billion TV viewers watched the 2006 World Cup. Being simpler than any other, football is the number one sport. The small number of rules (17) seem to have been set in stone. They form the only set of laws in the world, which apply to all languages, races, cultures, rich and poor, young and old, and the illiterate and the educated, and they must be adhered to by people of all political systems and ideologies, with no ifs and buts.

Despite the fact that the game only became professional relatively late in Switzerland, Swiss footballers have enjoyed remarkable success on the pitch. Switzerland was one of the great footballing nations for 32 years (1934–1966), when no other country, except Brazil, could better the six times Switzerland qualified for the World Cup finals during this period.

The series of incredible performances by the Swiss amateur team began at the Olympic tournament in Paris in 1924. They returned home as European champions. This tournament, held six years before the first World Cup, is seen as the birth of international football. This is because in Uruguay a tournament featured a South American team for the first time. The Swiss team travelled to Paris by train with a return ticket valid for only 10 days. All the players had worked up until two days before the first match and were back in work two days after the final. Every member of the team had taken unpaid holiday. Success in the six matches caused unimaginable levels of excitement back home. It made football popular overnight in Switzerland. Newspapers dedicated extra pages to a sporting event for the first time and in the corridors of the Federal Parliament they were saying: "The



1924 Olympic Games in Paris. The Swiss national team lines Swiss won the Silver medal, becoming European champions Pulver (YB), Faessler (YB), Ramseyer (YB), Oberhauser (Nord Old Boys), Ehrenbolger (Nordstern Basel), Dietrich (Ser

only diplomats that Switzerland needs are eleven men and a ball." The President of Switzerland, Ernest Chuard, sent words of encouragement to the side before the final in the first telegram ever sent from Parliament to a Swiss sporting team. He said he was "conveying the feelings of the whole Swiss nation", and hoped "that their courage and stamina would continue to serve them so well".

Switzerland enjoyed new highs 14 years later in 1938. On 21 May, Switzerland became one of the first European teams to beat England with a 2-1 victory in Zurich. And on 9 June, Switzerland achieved its most spectacular success to date at the World Cup finals in Paris. A few weeks after Austria became part of Hitler's empire, the Swiss beat the great German team of the day 4-2 in a replay after a 1-1 draw. Never before and never again would a football match find such resonance in Switzerland on account of the tense political situation back then. Extra sports pages, match reports on the front pages, even of the NZZ, victory parades, messages of congratulations from the Federal Council and Parliament – the win still goes down as the most significant in Swiss footballing history. Before the second match, the "Völkischer Beobachter" newspaper, Hitler's mouthpiece, mockingly warned the Swiss: "Sixty million Germans will be playing against Switzerland in Paris!" After the match, the "Sport" in Zurich sarcastically replied: "We were playing against 60 million Germans, but we only needed eleven players."

On three more occasions Swiss national teams have pulled off famous victories at World Cup tournaments. The Swiss knocked the Italians out of the tournament in 1954 in Switzerland in two momentous matches.



up for the national anthem before the start of the match. The as well in the process. From left to right: Xam Abegglen (GC, stern Basel), Reymond (Servette), Pache (Servette), Pollitz vette), P. Schmiiedlin (FC Bern).

Then in 1994 in the USA and in 2006 in Germany the Swiss progressed at least past the group stages.

What made the 1924, 1938, 1954, 1994 and 2006 teams so strong? All these teams benefited from diversity in language, race and culture and from different approaches to the game. The teams were made up of players from different parts of Switzerland drawing on a combination of Swiss characteristics. They blended German-Swiss endeavour with Latin temperament. Half the players in these teams came from German-speaking Switzerland and the other half from the French-speaking part. And in the 1954 team, arguably the strongest of all, there were nine French speakers. A similar approach has been adopted in recent years, with the inclusion of second and third generation foreigners in the national team.

The European Championship will raise excitement levels to fever pitch. An army of more than 30,000 Swiss fans invaded Germany two years ago to support their team at the World Cup finals. Football fever meant that many teams could not cope with the surge of young players signing up. There are more than 242,793 active footballers in Switzerland today and around 60% of them play in youth teams. And there are 80 Swiss professionals playing abroad. Many of these are squad players, though, rather than first-team regulars. This factor and the large number of injured players have to be taken into account when weighing up the team's prospects at this latest tournament under the management of Köbi Kuhn. Though some dreamers are talking up their team's chances, Switzerland are highly unlikely to become European champions.

"The Swiss team can go all the way"

Will Köbi Kuhn's team shine at Euro 2008? The success of a football team depends on more than the ability of its players. The former Swiss international Umberto Barberis looks at the Swiss team's chances. Interview by Alain Wey.

SWISS REVIEW: *What do you make of Köbi Kuhn's tactics?*

UMBERTO BARBERIS: He has got it spot on. It's a shame that he's retiring after this tournament. He'll of course be dreaming of going out on a high. I believe he will do everything possible to ensure the team performs at its best. In tournaments such as these the early results are often decisive: they can give the team the required momentum and get the fans behind them. Rationality has very little to do with it. As regards the build-up, you have to take into account that we qualified automatically as one of the host nations. As a result, there are lots of factors that Köbi Kuhn cannot influence. Over the past year his team has played lots of friendly matches that he has no doubt taken very seriously. Given that the matches had nothing to do with qualification, however, the players themselves will have been focused in part on their club football.

I often got the impression that when the Swiss team went ahead, they became over-confident and stopped giving their all. Their game dropped off, exposing weaknesses that the opposition frequently exploited with great success. Is that because these were friendly matches, or does it go deeper than that?

I don't see it that way. The team looks good in defence when everyone plays defensively, but we don't possess the qualities of the Italians, as the art of defending requires a great deal of precision. Defending without making errors requires a great deal of class. The Swiss team attacks, puts the opposition under pressure, and as soon as they have scored a goal, sometimes even against weaker teams, they try to hold onto their lead. This is still a rather Swiss approach, but they do it much better than they did before. You've always got to put yourself in the opposition's shoes. If you go 1-0 down against Switzerland, you change your tactics. If the team has played well in the first half, the tempo can drop off in the second half, but that does not necessarily have anything to do with over-confidence.

Are Switzerland difficult to play against?

Yes, very difficult. Especially for countries like Italy and France, who do not like playing against Switzerland. Switzerland are not such a tough proposition for the Spanish, the Portuguese or the Germans, as they know we have little chance against them if they play to their systems. By contrast, we have caused Italy and France serious problems in recent years. They switch from their usual formation when they play Switzerland. When making comparisons, you can't just look at things from a Swiss perspective. You have to look at the opposition, their style, how they approach matches and how the tournament is progressing.

What are the strengths of the Swiss team?

It has a lot of spirit. Köbi Kuhn has been working on developing team spirit for several years, and the supporters have responded well to that. Perhaps it was a little less evident in the most recent friendly matches, but the Swiss do genuinely have team spirit. The sponsors and the fans wouldn't give their support unless they believed in the team. There is a good atmosphere in the camp. With the European Championships just around the corner, however, the Swiss media is being hyper-critical of the team. If you want to be one of the top eight footballing nations in Europe, then of course you have to perform at the very highest level. Switzerland still has a lot to prove, but it has already achieved great things. It's only to be expected that from time to time it will quite simply be out-classed by other countries such as Germany. There are no miracles, you simply have to play exceptionally well.

What about Switzerland's other strengths?

I believe Switzerland's greatest strength is as a unit. We have a few outstanding individuals, but not many. There is Alex Frei, but we've seen little of him this year. He is a player who can turn matches. And there's Ludovic Magnin, who when he puts his mind to it can completely change a match, as he can

do a lot of damage to the opposition down the flanks. Then there's the younger generation. Our strengths are how we perform as a unit, our youth, our hunger and our individual talent.

And our weaknesses?

We don't have enough belief in our chances. Any team, perhaps with the exception of a few great European footballing nations like Italy and Germany, can have an off day. These two teams have such a good track record and are so good in both attack and defence that it will be difficult to get the better of them this summer. They can soak up waves of pressure, something which the Swiss team has not yet mastered. We also lack creativity and depth in attack.

What is our biggest weakness?

Our media let us down. They heap unbelievable praise on the sporting stars of other countries, even when our home-grown talents are doing just as well or even better. Sportsmen and women are sensitive and turn their backs on the Swiss press after severe criticism. They are happier to talk to the foreign sporting media, who don't give them any special treatment, but do show them much more respect. In Switzerland, however, we seem to enjoy knocking people.

Do you think the Swiss team would get through in a penalty shoot-out?

I wasn't a bad player, but I hated taking penalties. I'd always put them away in training, but I didn't volunteer to take them. Although the penalty spot is so close to the goal, it always felt to me like I was 200km away, because so much was going through my mind. You can't accuse Köbi Kuhn or his staff of not preparing for penalties. But when qualification depends on it, you have to understand that a new chapter opens with each penalty. That is the only moment in which a player can start to think negatively and say to himself: "I'll be torn to shreds if I miss this." It is a huge responsibility to bear. Maradona and Platini missed penalties. All great footballers have failed on at least one occa-



UMBERTO BARBERIS (55)

■ Umberto Barberis, the former manager of Lausanne Sport, made 54 appearances for Switzerland between 1976 and 1985. The playmaker, an Italian born in Sion who became a naturalised Swiss citizen, won the Swiss title with FC Servette in 1979 and 1985, and the Swiss Cup in 1978, 1979 and 1985. He won the French title with Monaco in 1982, and was voted the best foreign player in France in 1981 and 1982.

sion to put a penalty away in an important match.

What can we expect of the Swiss team?

To go all the way, of course! First of all, just like all the teams, we have to qualify from the group. The first objective is to get through the early stages. Switzerland can do that. We'll already be familiar with all of our opponents, as teams have been put together to monitor them. They will watch the matches of the other teams and analyse their game plans. There are seldom surprise results in the finals, making allowances for current form. You also have to ask whether it is an advantage to be a host nation. I can't really answer that one. A lot will depend on how the media approaches the event. Will they provide the team with a solid foundation that allows them to build momentum, or will they create a fear-laden atmosphere of mistrust? Factors like these are crucial. I'm not saying that Switzerland has a better chance than other sides, but our chances are just as good. The tournament favourites, like Germany and Italy, will be under much more intense pressure.

And your predictions?

Like lots of people, I speak from the heart. In view of my Italian roots I always have to go for Italy, because they are always able to compete with other football nations. Then Switzerland, as I've genuinely got a lot of confidence in them, and finally France.

Are Switzerland's games in Group A all equally difficult?

Switzerland are fortunate not to be facing Portugal in the first match, as we have a very poor record against them. Portugal show great ambition, play a high-tempo game and are not afraid of Switzerland. Switzerland have difficulty playing against technically gifted and quick teams. Turkey are also good technically, but are also very temperamental. Switzerland can beat them if they have an off day. The Czech Republic, by contrast, are not better than us technically, but the system they play is more sophisticated. We are capable

of getting a result against both of the last two teams. In my view, however, the game against Portugal will be crucial. It would be better if Portugal were to win their opening matches to put the other teams under pressure. The fixtures favour Switzerland. To have faced Portugal first would have been the worst possible scenario. I believe Portugal will definitely qualify from the group.

Who will be the key men for Switzerland?

For me there are two. Firstly Tranquillo Barnetta, who is a very complete player. He perhaps lacks the charisma to really put his stamp on a game, but Euro 2008 could be his tournament. And of course Alex Frei, who scores a lot of goals, but to do that he also has to get good service. I'm not sure about Blaise N'Kufo. He has enjoyed a lot of success in Holland, and I'd be delighted if he could replicate that with Switzerland. We have to have the same atmosphere in the Swiss camp that he is used to in Holland. Maybe we need to make him feel more welcome. And finally my favourite player, Zuberbühler, who I think is fantastic. He deals with criticism extraordinarily well, an indication that he is one of the greats, both as a player and as a man. Our quarter-final appearance in the World Cup Finals was down to him. He is also a great motivator.

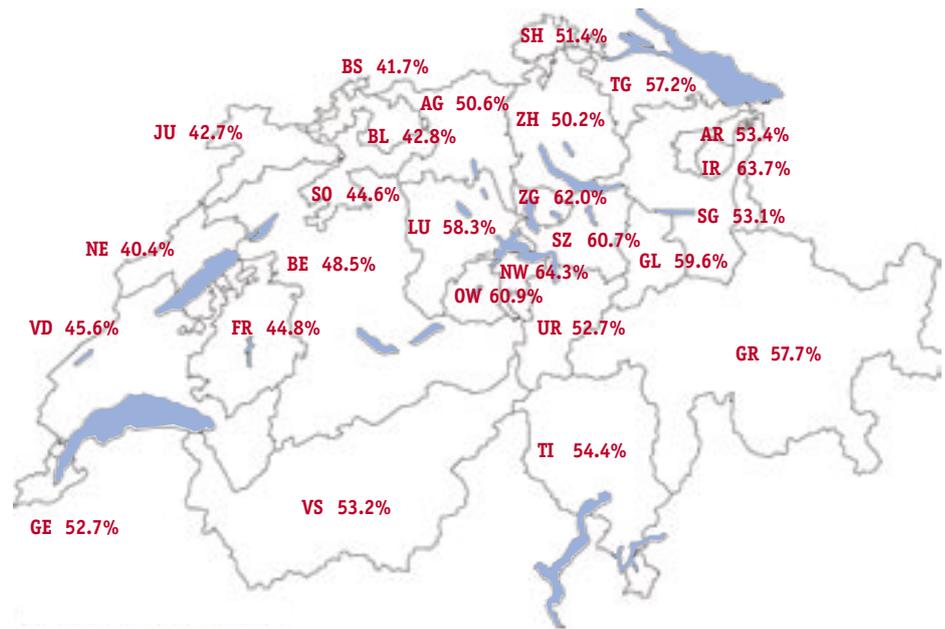
Will the Swiss fans get behind the team?

They certainly did at the World Cup Finals in Germany. They were unbelievable, and only the South Koreans generated more atmosphere in the stadiums. It gave the team a tremendous lift.

Tax reform passed by a whisker. 50.5% of the electorate voted in favour of the corporate tax reform. Initiative against fighter jet noise pollution doomed.

Narrow victory for the Federal Council and the middle-ground parties. The people approved tax relief for shareholders holding more than a 10% stake in a company by a margin of just 20,000 votes. Eighteen cantons approved the proposals, but they were rejected by a wide margin in Basle and in French-speaking Switzerland. The initiative against fighter jet noise pollution suffered a heavy defeat: rejected by 68% of the electorate and all the cantons.

RL



Percentage of "yes" votes for the corporate tax reform in the individual cantons.

The naturalisation process – a long-running political saga

Should naturalisation applications be decided by the electorate? The people and states will decide on 1 June. They will also vote on the initiative against official propaganda and on a constitutional article concerning health insurance. By René Lenzin

There is a tradition of popular voting on naturalisation, especially in German-speaking Switzerland, but it remains a controversial issue. In 2003, the Federal Court described the rejection of numerous naturalisation applications in the Lucerne commune of Emmen as autocratic. Contestable grounds were required to turn down an application, which were not constituted by a ballot-box vote. The court ruled that the vote was therefore invalid.

In the view of the Swiss People's Party (SVP), the people should, under the Swiss direct-democratic system, have the right to vote on naturalisation and reject applications without providing grounds. Through a pop-

ular initiative, the party is calling for each commune to be able to decide for itself which body should deal with naturalisation. And it says there should be no appeal procedure against this body's decisions.

The Federal Council, the Social Democrats (SP), the Green Party, the Free Democrats (FDP) and the Christian Democrats (CVP) all oppose the initiative. However, there are many people in the ranks of the latter two parties who have difficulty accepting the Federal Court's decision. They have therefore drawn up an indirect counter proposal to the initiative. This would prohibit popular voting on naturalisation, but would continue to allow the communal assemblies to vote on it. However, they would have to provide grounds for turning down an application. This would give the applicant the opportunity to appeal. This counter proposal will only come into force as law if the popular initiative is defeated.

A muzzle for the Federal Council?

The "sovereignty of the people rather than official propaganda" initiative aims to severely restrict the information provided by the Federal Council and administration in the run-up to popular votes. Only a single brief appearance by the Federal Councillor responsible for the matter being voted on and the government's information booklet, which is sent out with the electoral documents, would be permitted.

The Federal Council is opposed to the initiative. It says the electorate has a right to know about its government's position and objectives and to be informed about the possible impact of the ballot results on the state, society and individuals "in a comprehensive, factual and objective way". A parliamentary majority supports these arguments. Only the SVP has backed the initiative. Parliament has passed an indirect counter proposal to this initiative as well. This obliges the government to provide "consistent, factual, transparent and appropriate" information on ballot proposals. As with the naturalisation bill, this law will only come into force if the initiative is rejected.

More competition in healthcare?

A parliamentary majority wants competition and transparency to be written into the constitution as key principles on which compulsory health insurance should be based. It is a counter proposal to the withdrawn SVP popular initiative entitled "For lower health insurance contributions". In addition to the SVP, the FDP and CVP are also advocating the constitutional article. However, the SP and Greens are opposed to it as they favour state management of competition in the healthcare sector. The Federal Council's position on the scheme is somewhere between reticent and sceptical. It would prefer to press ahead with the gradual reform of health insurance.



Changes to social insurance law

Various changes relating to social insurance came into force on 1 January 2008. Some of these changes are of interest to Swiss living abroad.

Voluntary AHV/IV (old age, survivors' and disability insurance scheme)

With effect from 1 January 2008, contributions to voluntary AHV/IV are now based on current income. In other words, the calculation of contributions is no longer based on the average income of the previous two years, but on the income of the current year of contributions. This brings the method of calculating voluntary AHV/IV contributions into line with that of compulsory contributions. The compulsory AHV/IV contributions have been calculated using the current-year assessment system since 2001. The admission and exclusion conditions remain unchanged.

Central management of voluntary AHV/IV in Geneva

With effect from 1 January 2008, the services concerning voluntary AHV/IV abroad are no longer carried out by the AHV/IV services abroad, but instead at the headquarters of the Swiss Compensation Office in Geneva. We reported this last year in "Swiss Review" 6/07.

5th review of IV (disability insurance)

The 5th IV review and the necessary implementing provisions came into force on 1 January 2008. The review has two main objectives:

1. Measures will be introduced to ensure early recognition and intervention as well as ways of improving the integration of the disabled into working life (these measures are basically restricted to residents of Switzerland).

2. As part of cost-reduction measures, the existing supplementary pension for the spouses of IV recipients and the so-called "career supple-

ment" will no longer be included in the pension calculation.

The legislator hopes these measures will reduce the billion-franc deficit in IV insurance.

Increase in the minimum interest rate for the occupational pension schemes

The Federal Council decided last year to increase the minimum rate of interest on occupational pension assets from the current level of 2.5% to 2.75% in view of the strong performance of the financial markets in recent years. This change came into force on 1 January 2008.

Alignment of occupational survivors' and disability pensions with inflation

On 1 January 2008, the occupational survivors' and invalidity pensions that were first paid out in 2004 were brought into line with inflation. The increase in pension amounts to 3%. These pensions, together with those paid out before

2004, will in future be brought into line with inflation at the same time as AHV/IV pensions, which is generally every two years. The AHV and the current survivors' and disability pensions were last adjusted on 1 January 2007.

New AHV insurance number

The new number for AHV, IV and the loss-of-income fund will be introduced gradually from 1 July 2008. The new number contains 13 digits, is anonymous and, unlike the old 11-digit AHV number, cannot be traced back to the insured person. Swiss citizens will in future be issued with the new number automatically based on entries in civil records.

The new AHV insurance number can be used by all institutions and bodies working in or closely associated with social insurance (e.g. for additional health and accident insurance and voluntary occupational pensions). An extension to other areas would require changes to legislation at federal or cantonal level.

Versichertennummer
Numéro d'assuré
Numero d'assicurato

468.11.332.118

HERZ, FRANZ

01.01.08	100	1.3	43
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Kontenführende Ausgleichskassen - Caisse de compensation

1.3

Versicherungsausweis

Alters-, Hinterlassenen- und Invalidenversicherung (AHV-IV)
Assurance-vieillesse, survivants et invalidité (AVS-AI)
Assicurazione per la vecchiaia, i superstiti e l'invalidità (AVS-AI)

Certificat d'assurance

Certificato di assicurazione

1. Le certificat atteste l'inscription au registre des assurés et doit être conservé soigneusement.

1. Il certificato conferma la registrazione nell'elenco degli assicurati e deve essere conservato con cura.

2. Nei rapporti con gli organi svizzeri dell'AVS e dell'AI il numero di assicurazione deve essere indicato a tergo del certificato.

The persons insured will receive information automatically and in good time from either their employers or their compensation offices. This is set to happen in the second half of 2008, or in 2009 at the latest. Swiss living abroad will receive the necessary information from the Swiss Compensation Office in Geneva.

The creation of the new AHV insurance number also means that new AHV certificates will have to be issued. Employees will receive these from their employers. The self-employed, the unemployed and pensioners will receive them directly from their respective compensation offices.

An additional insurance document will be introduced at the same time as the new AHV insurance number: the insurance attestation. It will essentially replace the stamp on the old AHV certificates and will be issued if the insured persons have been registered with a compensation office by their employers. This provides the employees with confirmation that the issuing compensation office is managing an individual account for them. Consequently, during the course of their careers, insured persons may receive several such insurance attestations from various compensation offices. The new certificates will only be issued in the event of a change of employer after 1 July 2008. The old AHV certificates therefore need to be kept safe.

Additional information in German is available in the information sheet "Die neue AHV-Nummer" from the AHV/IV information office. It is also available online at:

www.bsv.admin.ch – Themen – AHV – neue AHV-Nummer.

Further information in German on the changes relating to social insurance can be found in the publication "Soziale Sicherheit" 6/07 of the Federal Social Insurance Office. It is available online at:

www.bsv.admin.ch – Dokumentation – Publikationen – Soziale Sicherheit CHSS, Ausgabe 6/07.

Rights of initiative exercised even from abroad

Swiss initiative committees and the Swiss Federal Chancellery have been making signature forms available to Swiss abroad in electronic format for some time now. This makes it much easier for our compatriots abroad to exercise their rights of initiative.

Swiss abroad can download the signature forms in German for current initiatives from the following website:

www.admin.ch/ch/d/pore/vi/vis_1_3_1_1.html

Conditions

You can only sign a popular initiative if you are entitled to vote and if you are registered with an electoral commune. Indicate your electoral commune and canton on a printout of the signature form. Write your details legibly by hand on the signature form and sign it yourself.

Enter your official address abroad as your place of residence.

Please note that only persons from the same electoral commune can sign the same signature form. If a form is signed by persons from different electoral communes, the signatures will be invalid.

THE SWISS REPRESENTATIONS ABROAD ON THE INTERNET

■ Are you familiar with the website of the embassy or consulate responsible for you and what it has to offer? Would you like to download information sheets or forms? Do you want to register a change of address electronically?

The websites and contact addresses of all Swiss representations abroad can be found at: www.eda.admin.ch/eda/de/home/ reps.html

Send the signed form to the Initiative Committee.

Further information on political rights in Switzerland is available at:

www.bk.admin.ch/themen/index.html?lang=de

Attack on tobacco tax

The Swiss popular initiative entitled "Prävention statt Abzockerei – Für eine Neuausrichtung der Tabaksteuer" (Prevention instead of rip-off – for a change to tobacco tax), the so-called tobacco initiative, was launched in December 2006.

The initiative calls for a change to article 131 of the Swiss Constitution. It suggests the addi-

tion of a new paragraph 4 to this article which governs the levying of consumer taxes by the federal government.

The initiative aims to set the rate of taxation on tobacco and tobacco products at a maximum of 20% of the retail price of the taxed product. This would mean a huge reduction in tobacco tax. The current rate of taxation stands at 60%.

The initiative also seeks a change in the appropriation of these tax revenues. It no longer wants the net income generated by this taxation to be used for old age insurance, but instead to be used to support measures aimed at preventing the consumption of tobacco. Preventative measures would then be financed by smokers in line with the user pays principle.

This initiative can be signed until 12 June 2008.

POPULAR INITIATIVES

The following initiative has been launched since the last issue:

■ "6 Wochen Ferien für alle" (Six weeks holiday for everyone), until 15 July 2009

Signature forms for current initiatives can be downloaded from www.admin.ch/ch/d/pore/vi/vis_1_3_1_1.html

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The Emperor from Switzerland. A Swiss citizen as Emperor of France? Napoleon III was the last Emperor of France from 1852 to 1870. Prior to that he spent 23 years in Arenenberg Castle in the Canton of Thurgau. He was a Swiss freeman, a captain in the Bernese artillery, and he spoke the dialect of Thurgau. By Rolf Ribi

When the last Emperor of France took his dying breath on 9 January 1873, a document from Switzerland lay on his deathbed – the Thurgau Passport of 1838. Of course, Napoleon III's homeland was always the "Grande Nation". But when Prince Louis Napoleon, as he was then, thanked the Canton of Thurgau in 1832 for the right of citizenship, he referred to that part of Lake Constance as "his home". "Can there be

more compelling evidence of a person's devotion to his home?" asks Dominik Gügel, curator of the Napoleon Museum in Arenenberg Castle.

April 20th this year marks the 200th birthday of the last French monarch who controlled France's destiny with an iron fist, a liberal spirit and a sociable heart for more than two decades as president and emperor. What role did Thurgau's Arenenberg Castle play in the life of the prince who was to become Emperor?

Louis Napoleon was the youngest son of Queen Hortense de Beauharnais and Louis Bonaparte, King of Holland and brother of the great Emperor Napoleon I. Hortense was also the daughter of the Empress Joséphine, Napoleon Bonaparte's first wife. Queen Hortense, mother of Napoleon III, was therefore the step-daughter and sister-in-law of Emperor Napoleon, who was in turn the grandfather and uncle of his nephew Louis Napoleon.

Asylum in Arenenberg

The young prince came to know Switzerland at just seven years of age. After Napoleon Bonaparte's defeat at Waterloo in 1815 when his reign as Emperor came to an end, Hortense and the entire Bonaparte family were



Emperor Napoleon III.

driven out of France. At the end of an audacious escape, the exhausted queen and her youngest son reached Constance in Germany in December 1815. As the eminent guests could not stay there either, they sought and found sanctuary in Arenenberg. "The government of the Swiss Canton of Thurgau allowed me to buy the castle. In doing so, it allowed me time to rest", Hortense later wrote.

The Thurgau authorities boldly asserted themselves against the concerns of the Swiss Diet, granting the queen the right to stay. And so a new era began in 1817 on the hill with the panoramic view of the lake, the island of Reichenau and Constance in the distance. Arenenberg and its castle became the centre of the infamous Napoleon family's social and political life. An aura of monarchy and world history surrounded the republican Canton of Thurgau. From 1823, Queen Hortense and Prince Louis Napoleon lived in Arenenberg on a permanent basis during the summer.

The magnificent residence overlooking Lake Constance, which is known locally as Untersee, was built as a castle in the 16th century. After her arrival in Arenenberg, Hortense refurbished the estate in the style of a French country house with a neo-gothic chapel. She adorned the interior with carpets, furniture, figures and paintings in memory of Emperor Napoleon I, whom she greatly admired. Until her death in 1837, the former queen, who now called herself duchess, received many eminent guests from all over Europe, from the fields of literature, music, art and politics as well as from the ranks of Europe's high nobility, in her summerhouse. According to the historical lexi-

con of Switzerland, "Arenenberg became an enclave of French culture in the petit-bourgeois region of Lake Constance". The "duchess" was a popular figure amongst the people because of her good work for the poor.

"The next Emperor"

All visitors were aware that the next Emperor of France was growing up in Arenenberg, close to his mother's bosom. Napoleon Bonaparte's first marriage to the Empress Joséphine had been childless. Napoleon I had decreed that the future children of Hortense would succeed him on the throne. Following the early death of Napoleon I's only legitimate son from his second marriage to Marie-Louise, the daughter of the Austrian Emperor, Prince Louis Napoleon was first in line to succeed the Emperor. "It fell to Hortense's youngest son to restore power and glory to the fallen dynasty, as Napoleon III in the second French empire", reads a text in the Napoleon Museum.

The same text says: "Having grown up in the glory of the first empire, his uncle, the Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, had sat him on his knee and told him of a great future that lay ahead for him." It adds: "His mother Hortense never failed to keep the imperial past alive in him." During his time at Arenenberg, all the rooms in his part of the building faced west, where Paris lay. Incidentally, Emperor Napoleon I never visited Arenenberg.

Adventure and love affairs

Prince Louis Napoleon received his first communion in Einsiedeln monastery with which he formed a life-long attachment. It is said of the 20-year-old prince that: "He enjoyed spending time with local youngsters of his own age and turned the heads of many a pretty girl." He apparently spoke the Thurgau dialect better than his own French mother tongue. He helped to found the Thurgau Rifle Association and was heavily involved in the organisation of the first cantonal shooting event. In 1832, the commune of Salenstein, where Arenenberg is situated, made him a freeman, an honour which he gratefully accepted. When the Thurgau Great Council confirmed his status, the prince became a citizen of the Swiss confederation. "I live in a free country", he said proudly in his acceptance speech.

As he could not undergo military training in his homeland, he attended the military school of Colonel Dufour in Thun. He vol-

unteered to take part in military exercises and slept like everyone else on a bed of straw in freezing conditions (as he indicated in letters). The young officer won the favour of General Henri Dufour, as he was to become, and remained in contact with him until his death. From 1834, the prince performed regular military service and even wrote a “handbook on the use of artillery”. He was held in such high esteem in the Canton of Berne that he was made a captain of the artillery.

The Prince as a revolutionary

The July revolution of 1830 in France, the fall of the Bourbons and the seizure of power again by the bourgeois stirred the prince’s political passion. He wrote pamphlets such as “political and military reflections on Switzerland”. Arenenberg even became a meeting place for young revolutionaries. The prince gave his support to the revolt of the patriotic Carbonari in Italy. After two unsuccessful coup attempts in France,

Paris demanded his extradition from Switzerland. But the majority of the Diet refused to comply, referring to the prince’s Thurgau citizenship. As the conflict between the neighbouring countries escalated to the dispatch of military contingents, the prince left Switzerland on the advice of friends.

But this did not suppress his revolutionary zeal. He attempted to seize power in 1840 through another coup from England. The attempt failed and the prince was sentenced to imprisonment for life. His time in prison became his “university years”, during which he planned his political future. He escaped to England after five years in prison.

Emperor of France

With the bourgeois-democratic February revolution of 1848, Louis Napoleon came close to realising his dreams. He was firstly elected to parliament and then declared president of the second French Republic on 10 December 1848. With the coup of 1851, he extended his presidency and was declared Emperor Napoleon III a year later. France became Europe’s strongest power in the two

decades under his rule. The Parisian court was the epitome of elegance under the beautiful Empress Eugénie. The Suez Canal was also completed at this time. The world exhibitions of 1855 and 1867 put Paris in the spotlight. “Napoleon III took France into the modern age”, says Christina Egli, a curator at the Napoleon Museum.

self filled his guests’ glasses with champagne.

Napoleon III never returned to Arenenberg again. After France’s defeat in the battle of Sedan in September 1870 in the German-French war and his surrender, a new era also seemed to dawn for Arenenberg. Yet the death of the monarch on 9 January 1873 in



Idyllic setting: Arenenberg Castle

Even at the height of his power, Napoleon III never forgot Arenenberg. Since the death of Queen Hortense in 1837 and the forced departure of her son, it had become tranquil. But there was great excitement on the Untersee in the summer of 1865 as the Emperor of France and his wife Eugénie would be staying at Arenenberg Castle from 17 to 21 August. More than a quarter of a century earlier, the prince had been forced to flee from the region. The Salenstein male voice choir performed for their former fellow citizen. The Emperor was delighted to revisit “the place where he spent the happy years of his youth”. The freeman’s return was celebrated with great merrymaking – the Emperor him-

self was to dictate otherwise. Empress Eugénie and her young son Prince Louis Napoleon stayed in Arenenberg. The castle, which had been extended again, now became the focal point for the supporters of a Napoleonic restoration. The prince’s tragic death in 1879 in South Africa while serving with the British colonial army thwarted this plan.

The Empress visited Arenenberg less and less often and in 1906 bequeathed the entire estate to the Canton of Thurgau as a mark of gratitude for the hospitality shown to her family in difficult times. The valuable empire clock, which the grateful queen gave to the canton, is on display in the Napoleon Museum.

NAPOLEON MUSEUM

The Napoleon Museum, which was founded in Arenenberg Castle in 1906, provides a good insight into Napoleonic history and society during the period. The museum contains many pieces of original

furniture and items from the time of Queen Hortense. In addition to the valuable collections, the residence also houses a research library. An historical exhibition will be held in the Napoleon Museum and in the City

Museums of Constance (20 April to 19 October 2008) to mark Napoleons III’s 200th birthday.

www.napoleonmuseum.tg.ch



Congress of the Swiss Abroad from 22 to 24 August 2008 in Fribourg

Switzerland without borders?

The Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) will be holding its 86th Congress of the Swiss Abroad from 22 to 24 August. Lots of exciting events have been lined up in the delightful Canton of Fribourg.

Switzerland's accession to the Schengen area is a big issue for the Swiss living abroad. What would become of Switzerland if it opened up its borders and discarded border controls? What would happen if Switzerland isolated itself from Europe? There is going to be an optional referendum on the introduction of the free movement of people. The 650,000 or so Swiss citizens residing abroad are following developments at home with a close eye. Crossing borders, being a foreigner and looking for work as a foreigner are all issues they are familiar with from their own experience. Their country's future concerns them, whether they themselves currently live inside or outside the Schengen area. Leading experts

will discuss the background to the Schengen agreement and the free movement of people at this year's congress, while the Swiss abroad will bring their own experiences to the debate and delve into unresolved issues in workshops.

The Canton of Fribourg's history of migration makes this year's venue especially appropriate. In 1818, at least three hundred families left the canton, where people were starving, to establish a new home in Brazil. They founded the town of Nova Friburgo, which today has more than 180,000 inhabitants, in the state of Rio de Janeiro. Those who attend the congress will also find out more about the Fribourg emigrants.

Programme

The 86th Congress of the Swiss Abroad has much to offer the heart, the intellect and the palate.

Prominent speakers will look at the opportunities and risks presented by Schengen and the free movement of people in short presentations and debates.

Congress participants can find out exactly how the Schengen information system works in workshops.

There will be breaks in the programme where visitors can

enjoy an exhibition of art by the children of the Swiss school in Santiago, Chile and a primary school in Neuenegg (Canton of Berne). The boys and girls will show how they approached the theme of the congress. Participants will also have the chance to see a fascinating photographic exhibition on Nova Friburgo.

The congress is also a very sociable occasion. There will be plenty of time to enjoy each other's company over fine Swiss cuisine during the opening of the congress on Friday evening and during the excursions on Sunday.

Look forward to summertime in Switzerland

Holidays in Switzerland. The Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) is offering you the chance to explore nature, plus lots of entertainment, adventure and fun besides, at its holiday camps in Flumserbergen this summer. OSA provides interesting and educational holidays just as you want them. And during Euro 2008 we'll be close to the action. We have the perfect holiday for you.

OSA expects around 160 young people to attend its big summer camps in Flumserbergen this year. Visitors from more than 30 countries will enjoy the spectacular alpine scenery of Churfirsten. OSA gives you the

opportunity to discover new outdoor activities or to improve your performance in one of your favourite sports. You'll be able to take part in workshops relating to creative, IT and musical activities. You'll make lots of new friends too during a summer in the mountains in 2008. The camp dates are:

Flumserberg I: 13.7.-25.7.2008

Flumserberg II: 27.7.-8.8.2008

Workshop on the 2008 European Football Championship

Young Swiss people abroad will also get a taste of football fever this summer. OSA is offering you the opportunity to spend a week in June 2008 close to the action at the big event, Euro 2008. Trips to the Swiss cities hosting the tournament, tours of the stadiums and visits to the headquarters of FIFA or UEFA and the Swiss Football Federation are all part of the programme. We'll take a look behind the media coverage and celebrate a wonderful festival of football with visitors from all over Europe in the fan zones.

A great way to learn a language

Our programme for young people has so much to offer. Swiss youngsters living abroad can learn to speak German or French on two-week language courses. Our welcoming host families will allow you to experience everyday life in Switzerland. We'll provide you with advice on educational matters, and of course we need

86TH CONGRESS OF THE SWISS ABROAD, 22 TO 24 AUGUST 2008

Please send me the information pack on the 86th Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Fribourg (please use block capitals).

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Please complete and return the coupon to the following address by 30 May 2008: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad, Congress, Alpenstrasse 26, CH-3006 Berne. For organisational reasons, the registration deadline for the Congress is the end of June. The registration form is included in the Congress information pack that can be ordered using the coupon above. The Congress information pack can also be ordered by e-mail from communication@aso.ch. Please remember to give your full postal address.

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young people to attend the Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Fribourg. The theme for this year's congress is "Switzerland without borders?" concerning Switzerland's relationship with its big neighbour, the European Union.

Youth Service

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www.aso.ch

Education in Switzerland

Young Swiss people abroad who return to Switzerland for their education are often faced with certain problems, which may concern starting school, taking up an apprenticeship or

admission to a university. The Association for the Education of Young Swiss Abroad (AJAS) provides advice and support to help young people adjust to life in Switzerland. The association provides information on educational opportunities in Switzerland including work-experience placements, apprenticeships, university courses, accommodation and student finance, etc. If need be, it also places inquiring parties in touch with the relevant agencies. Lots of information and guidance is available on the AJAS website: www.ajas.ch.

AJAS also provides young people with advice on financing their studies. Young Swiss people abroad whose parents cannot afford, or can only partly pay for, education in Switzer-

land can apply for a grant from their canton of origin. AJAS can make contact with the department responsible and act as a mediator. If the cantonal grant does not cover living and educational costs, an application can be made to AJAS for an additional grant or loan.

Please contact us at the following address with any ques-

tions you may have concerning educational opportunities in Switzerland.

AJAS

Alpenstrasse 26

CH-3006 Berne

Tel. +41 31 356 61 04

Fax +41 31 356 61 01

E-mail: ajas@aso.ch

www.ajas.ch

ORGANISATION OF THE SWISS ABROAD

Our services:

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- 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)

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Saving the skin of the Cervelat sausage. The Cervelat as we know it is in danger of disappearing because of a lack of the Brazilian cows' intestines used for the sausage casing. Swiss meat industry experts have stepped in and, together with politicians, are now looking for alternatives. A report by Alain Wey

The days of Switzerland's favourite sausage are numbered. It all began with the ban on imports of the Brazilian cows' intestines traditionally used in Cervelat production. Switzerland followed the lead of the European Union, which introduced the ban on 1 April 2006. Now stocks of the intestines are running out, and there is a distinct possibility that Euro 2008 may be a Cervelat-free zone! The Swiss Meat Association has stepped in to help find a solution. Supported by the Federal Department for Veterinary Affairs, it has formed a task force to identify new sources of supply. Calls have also been made in Parliament for Berne, Brussels and Brazil to seek a political solution.

How did this situation arise?

Most people will find it astonishing at the very least that the skin plays such a key role in Cervelat production. However, the skin possesses characteristics that determine a sausage's size, shape, how it is unwrapped and its suitability for grilling. Moreover, not all intestines are suitable for the Cervelat: Swiss cows' intestines are too thick, and since the BSE crisis are now always destroyed in any case. The imports from Brazil began precisely at the time when the measures to counter BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy) were introduced in Europe twenty years ago. So why have imports of the renowned Brazilian cows' intestines now been banned? The European Union and now Berne, in line with the so-called equivalence procedure, have placed Brazil in the category of countries with "controlled BSE risk", to which Switzerland also belongs. To date there has never been a single recorded case of BSE in Brazil, however, which is why it was originally categorised as a country with "negligible BSE risk". According to Balz Horber, head of the Swiss Meat Association, Brazil imported cattle from Europe in the 1990s, and this is the only reason for the change of category.

Stocks of intestines have been dwindling since the import ban. As the Cervelat is ex-

tremely important to the Swiss meat industry (see box), the Swiss Meat Association could not simply stand aside and wait while Switzerland's national sausage disappeared. Its chief strategy is to find replacement intestines or persuade Berne and Brussels to reconsider the import ban. Rolf Büttiker (FDP), member of the Council of States for Solothurn and President of the Swiss Meat Association, said: "We will have to fight for our Cervelat in Brussels." In December 2007 he tabled a motion in Parliament entitled "Sausage skins made of cows' intestines". He wants the Federal Council to petition the European Union to grant Switzerland an exemption that would allow it to import Brazilian cows' intestines. In addition to these lengthy political proposals, the research institute Agroscope Liebefeld-Posieux (ALP) has been asked to test possible alternatives to Brazilian cows' intestines.

The political route

Two strategies are being considered to obtain an import exemption from Brussels. Firstly, the task force will argue that only a part of the Brazilian intestines poses a BSE risk. "While this strategy may take longer, it is also the most likely to succeed", said Cathy Maret, spokesperson for the Federal Office of Veterinary Affairs. "BSE only affects a small part of the intestine, the ileum. We are therefore now focusing directly on es-

tablishing exactly what constitutes risk material, and will attempt to persuade the European Union that the intestines could be imported provided the ileum is removed beforehand. However, we do not believe we will achieve this before 2009."

An emergency solution for the Cervelat

The research institute ALP tested twelve alternative sausage skins, assessing them according to taste, shape, colour, variation from the standard size (12cm long, 3.8cm in diameter), the ease with which it can be removed and its suitability for grilling. Three alternatives – cows' intestines from Uruguay, pigs' intestines and collagen – made the shortlist. "They all have at least one disadvantage", admitted Rolf Büttiker. Uruguay is probably unable to meet Swiss demand. In the case of pigs' intestines the thickness of the Cervelat would vary considerably, meaning that the solution would be unsuitable for industrial manufacture. It also makes it harder to remove the skin and means it bursts very quickly on the grill. A collagen skin cannot be removed. The journalists who attended a press conference in Zurich in January had what can at best be described as mixed feelings about these emergency solutions. While many agreed that there was no difference with Cervelat salad, this was not the case with grilled sausages. For example, sausage skin made from pigs' intestines had an unpleasant burnt taste after grilling.

Stocks of Brazilian intestines will run out within months. The Cervelat task force must now be patient and wait for decisions to be taken on their proposals.

*The World Organisation for Animal Health, which has 167 member countries, divides BSE risks into three categories.

THE CERVELAT – FACTS AND FIGURES

■ Production – around 160 million Cervelats per year, almost 25,000 tonnes. Some 120,000 cows and around 360,000 pigs, almost 90% of them bred in Switzerland, are purchased for production. The Cervelat accounts for around 30% of Switzerland's total sausage production. Domestic consumption is 25 sausages per capita per year. The Cervelat as it is eaten in Switzerland today, however, has only existed since the 19th century. This was when machines were first introduced to produce sausage meat. It became the national sausage on 1 August

1891 and, together with chocolate and Emmental cheese, represented Switzerland at the World's Fair in Paris in 1900.



■ **A heist like in a Hollywood movie?** Four pictures by Paul Cézanne, Edgar Degas, Claude Monet and Vincent van Gogh were stolen from the Emil Georg Bührle Collection in Zurich. With the haul worth a total of CHF 180 million, the police believe this to be one of **Europe's biggest-ever art thefts**. Four days earlier, two Picassos with an estimated value of CHF 4.8 million were stolen in Pfäffikon in the canton of Schwyz.

■ The winter of 2006-2007, the warmest for more than a century, accelerated **glacial decline in Switzerland**. According to the Academy

"We have a problem that is currently getting worse. More and more children and young people are overweight, and suffering from motor deficiencies and coordination problems."

MATTHIAS REMUND, HEAD OF THE FEDERAL DEPARTMENT FOR SPORT, ON THE "HEALTHY BODY WEIGHT" CAMPAIGN.

of Natural Sciences in Berne, 88 of the 91 glaciers measured in 2007 had shrunk. The Vadret da Roseg in Grisons has retreated 127 metres within a year, while the Gauligletscher in the Bernese Alps has receded by 100 metres.

■ Last year 40% of the 38,000 young people due to undertake Swiss military or civil service were declared **unfit for duty**.

■ According to a report published by the Federal Statistical Office entitled **Equal Opportunities for Women and Men**, in international comparison Switzerland is

one of the European countries with the highest proportion of women in employment, behind Denmark, Norway and Iceland. 59% of women in Switzerland were in employment in 2005, compared with 49% in 1990. The significant increase is due largely to the high level of part-time employment. 58% of Swiss women work part-time, the second-highest proportion in Europe.

■ Since 1 January 2008, watch in the **army has generally been kept with a loaded weapon**. This decision by Defence Minister Samuel Schmid has caused so much uproar that the army's new commander-in-chief, Roland Nef, has been forced to take conciliatory steps. He has given reassurances that live ammunition will not be used in residential areas.

■ Television viewers of the three national broadcasting chains voted the wrestler Jörg Abderhalden **Swiss personality of the year 2007** at the sixth "Swiss Awards" event. He succeeds Köbi Kuhn. Swiss Awards were also presented in five different categories. Daniel Borel, the co-founder of Logitech (IT equipment), picked up the business award. The Swiss Award in the politics category went to Carla Del Ponte, former chief prosecutor at the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

■ The European Union has approved the agreement that will lead to the lifting of automatic controls at Switzerland's borders. Switzerland ratified the agreement in spring 2006 and must now make the necessary amendments to cantonal laws and introduce practical measures at airports to ensure they

comply with the new regulations. The agreement also covers a joint visa policy and a police database, the Schengen Information System (SIS). The Federal Council plans to accede to the **Schen-**

"That is the highpoint of my career. Only Olympic gold could top winning here."

DIDIER CUCHE, THIS YEAR'S WINNER OF THE WORLD'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS DOWNHILL SKI RACE ON THE LEGENDARY "STREIF" PISTE AT KITZBÜHEL IN AUSTRIA.

gen area on 1 November 2008.

■ There has been a sudden mysterious increase in demand for Swiss money. Production at the Swiss mint, the organisation responsible for **making Swiss coins**, increased threefold in 2007 from 32 million to 90 million units. Around 80 million

coins are to be minted annually until 2010.

■ **UBS announced the first annual loss** in its history. The deficit amounted to CHF 4.4 billion. The treasury has also felt the ef-

fects of the underperformance, with the federal government estimating a tax shortfall of more than CHF 1 billion. Credit Suisse, by contrast, posted record profits of CHF 8.55 billion for 2007, up 3% on the previous year, despite the subprime lending crisis. ALAIN WEY

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