

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE SWISS ABROAD

S W I S S

REVIEW

JANUARY 2011 / NO. 1



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on foreigners**

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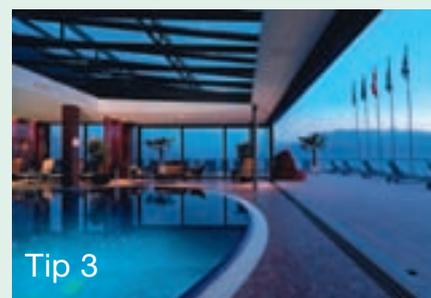
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Election year and farewell

2011 IS AN ELECTION YEAR, so it heralds a day of reckoning for Swiss parliamentarians. The National Council and Council of States will be re-elected on 23 October. Some parties are already gearing up for the election campaign. The Social Democrats (SPS) plan to move more to the left and attempt to overcome capitalism, as was decided at the delegates' conference. The Free Democrats (FDP) want to ward off the European Union, and the Swiss People's Party (SVP) is also focusing on the issue of EU accession as well as on education and immigration. This suggests that a long and uncompromising electoral campaign awaits us. Come what may, the SVP wants a member of its own choice on the Federal Council instead of Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf. As you will recall, Widmer-Schlumpf was elected to national government in 2007 in place of Christoph Blocher and was punished with expulsion from the party. She now belongs to the Conservative Democratic Party of Switzerland (BDP), which broke away from the SVP after Widmer-Schlumpf's expulsion and today has five National Councillors and one member of the Council of States. "Swiss Review" will provide in-depth coverage of the federal elections and will present the parties standing for election together with their manifestos in a special edition in September.

When the right to a postal vote was introduced for the Swiss residing abroad in 1992, 13,000 people initially cast a vote. At the 2007 federal elections, 111,250 Swiss abroad were entered on an electoral roll, and this figure reached 130,017 by the end of 2009. The numbers should be even higher as the votes of the Swiss abroad are important and much sought after. We have therefore enclosed an electoral roll flyer with this edition for anyone who has not yet registered. Take advantage of this opportunity, send the form to your representation and play an active part in Swiss political life. You will give more weight to the valid concerns of the Swiss abroad and will help ensure they are resolved successfully.



Heinz Eckert

After six years and 32 editions of "Swiss Review", I would like to say farewell to you in this editorial as I am now of an age when it is time to open a new chapter in my life with new challenges. Since November 2004, I, together with my editorial team, have kept you up to date with political, economic and social developments in Switzerland and have attempted to produce a magazine worth reading. Judging by the incredibly positive response we have received from all over the world, I can only assume that you have found our work of interest. Whether by letter, e-mail or telephone, dialogue with you has always been positive and constructive. I would like to thank you most sincerely for your great interest, for the goodwill you have shown towards our work and for your many valuable suggestions.

I wish my successor, the experienced Bernese journalist Barbara Engel, every success and satisfaction as the new editor-in-chief. And I wish you, dear readers of "Swiss Review", good fortune and happiness in the New Year.

HEINZ ECKERT, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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Echo

Cover photo: How would the Swiss football team fare without second-generation immigrants? Xherdan Shaqiri, who has Kosovan origins, plays for FC Basel and Switzerland. Photo: Swiss Football Association

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SWISS NEWS, WORLD WIDE

Whitewashing

I am a reader of your magazine by being married to my wife who is a Swiss citizen. The article "Clean money" by Lukas Hässig is a great piece of whitewashing typical of the financial world at present. Maybe this kind of blinkered view will always happen when specialists write about their own narrow section of knowledge but it is not hard nowadays to stand back from this situation to see we have entered a period long expected by anyone who read "The limits to growth" when it was published in 1972. To be brief: We have reached Peak Oil, therefore the age of cheap energy is over and our industrial system cannot function without this input. Neither can the financial world work without the pyramid system of perpetual growth. S. ALLIN, IRELAND

Account with BEKB

I would like to thank Mr Crabtree-Ruggli for writing a letter to the mailbag on CS's charges. I was equally annoyed with CS and their treatment of Swiss clients abroad. I have now closed my CS account and opened one with the Berner Kantonalbank. I have received service to my full satisfaction and can fully recommend this bank to Swiss abroad disappointed with CS and who just want a straightforward Swiss account.

V. BADER, HAMBURG, GERMANY

Kindergarten

Mr Eckert really hit the nail on the head. His article should be hung on the walls of the corridors in the Federal Palace as a "reflection" to remind the politicians WHO and WHAT they are actually supposed to be



representing. Self-interest, narcissism and a general detachment from the people (without exception) have been prevalent for a long time in the Federal Council. The abilities of Federal

Councillors may be evident, but so too are their egos. The media, primarily driven by sales figures, are, of course, only too willing to satisfy the desire of the people, who are tired of politicians, for sensationalism. From abroad, you can only look at this "kindergarten" and shake your head in disbelief. If we carry on like this, we will end up with a situation like in the USA. No thanks!

H. BLOCH, CALGARY, CANADA

Like a mirror

I just read your article "Poor Colleagues" and heartily agree with you. It is one of the best articles in a long time. There are times it feels to me as though this is like a virus circling the world; most governments seem to suffer from the same personality cult rather than working together for the good of the country. This, as you probably know, is especially true for the U.S.

Thank you for this insightful article. Let us hope the Federal Councillors read it and work to find common ground.

S. SHIMAZU-WEIBEL, WASHINGTON, USA

Many thanks

Many thanks for your editorial "Poor Colleagues" in "Swiss Review". You said exactly what needed saying.

T. WALLACE, TEXAS, USA

"Sennentuntschi" – the story behind the film

CINEMATIC PROJECTS sometimes have to surmount many obstacles before reaching the big screen. The fantastical thriller "Sennentuntschi" and its director Michael Steiner ("Grounding: The Last Days of Swissair", "My Name is Eugen") had to overcome some tremendous hurdles. This feature film is about a Swiss legend – the Sennentuntschi (the herdsman's doll) – widely known throughout the entire German-speaking alpine region. The author Hansjörg Schneider's play on the subject (1972) provoked outrage and condemnation when it was broadcast on Swiss-German television in 1981, with its storyline telling of how three herdsman in the Alps make a straw doll to satisfy their sexual urges but the doll comes to life and takes revenge on its tormentors.

With a budget of 5.5 million Swiss francs, the Swiss blockbuster initially appeared set for completion without any hitches. But, after having completed filming in October 2008, Michael Steiner's Kontraproduktion company announced that it had run out of money. Actors and production staff had not received their wages. The lab fees had not been paid and the Bernese company Schwarz Film was holding the negative. An estimated 2.8 million Swiss francs was needed to complete the film. The accountants confirmed a shortfall of one million. Protracted negotiations between the Federal Office of Culture, the Swiss state broadcaster and the Zurich Cinema Foundation came to nothing. Unable to find any potential investors in France, Avventura Films, the French subsidiary of Vega Film, withdrew. As a result, only two countries (Switzerland and Austria) were now involved in the production of the film, and Eurimages, the Council of Europe's cinema support fund, blocked its promised funding. The Federal Office of Culture also considered a request for the restitution of its million-franc contribution. Industry professionals and the general public looked on with dismay.

In February 2010, after more than a year of uncertainty over investment, the Swiss subsidiary of the German company Constantin Film decided to save the sinking ship and ensured the film's completion and release. It injected an initial 1.6 million Swiss francs to cover the payment of wages and the Kontraproduktion debt. In return, it secured the collaboration of Michael Steiner and his team for one film a year. "Sennentuntschi" was finally presented at the opening of the Zurich Film Festival on 23 September. The critics loved it, and the film has been running in cinemas in German-speaking Switzerland since 14 October, drawing over 100,000 people to see it by early November. The accursed film has won acclaim with an accursed Swiss myth.



ALAIN WEY

"AUF UND DAVON" – NEW ADVENTURES OF SWISS EMIGRANTS

The second series of the hit documentary programme on Swiss emigrants starts on SF1 on Friday, 7 January 2011 at 8.55 p.m. The six-part series was produced by the "Redaktion DOK" team.

"Up and away" – another four Swiss families and couples dare to set off on an adventure abroad by emigrating. Christine and Hermann Schönbächler are moving to Canada with their children. Ali and Jennifer Wettstein hope to find a better life in Peru with their young son, Sven. Anja Kinsky and Claude Wegmann are building themselves an "agriturismo" in Italy. And Anni Kuhn and Orlando Stamm have plans for a holiday resort in Bali. The DOK cameras followed the emigrants in Switzerland and their

new homelands for a year. The six-part documentary series "Auf und davon" (Up and Away) shows the everyday situations the emigrants encounter and the highs and lows of their new lives. The series soundtrack and theme tune are provided by "Gölä und Band", among others.

The series reveals the balancing act between adventure and a secure existence. The emigrants are faced with the challenges of everyday life in a foreign environment. The stars of the "Auf und davon – Die Auswanderer" series have to contend with the unfamiliar customs of their new homeland while managing their own financial resources.

The series can also be watched online at: www.sf.tv

Wrong or right?

I keep old issues of your Review, I hoard them and treasure them and once in a while I browse through an old issue. I just glanced through one dating back to 2006 – relatively new to my collection. There was a kind of jubilation in one article about the prospect of more and more Swiss abroad voting in Swiss elections.

I can't decide whether or not this is a good thing. I can't quite imagine people living in Switzerland voting on issues of concern here in Honolulu!! What do you know about our street potholes, our overflowing prisons with excess numbers exported to the mainland? A shameful thing.

How can people who do not pay taxes in Switzerland and do not know conditions firsthand make really informed decisions on what is right and what is wrong for the country??? I certainly would not want to vote with my very limited knowledge. People living

in Switzerland who occasionally visit or call tell me that "everything has changed" or "you wouldn't like it anymore".

I'm still homesick for the land of my childhood that I have not seen since 1985. I feel very nostalgic but I do not feel qualified to vote – because I just don't know what's up!! Call me "Globi in der Verbannung" (since January 1947).

R. H. TUCKER, HAWAII, USA

Mailbag contribution on Credit Suisse

We too received this letter from CS. After contacting CS by telephone, its contents were simply confirmed. Without any interest in continuing the business relationship, account closure was acknowledged as the appropriate solution. However, this can only be done in person at a CS branch.

We have two "savings accounts" – my wife has had hers for around 30 years as it was opened by her father. The most recent balances were 600

Swiss francs in one account and 1000 in the other. We have used them during our visits to Switzerland to avoid currency exchange charges and to save money.

We have booked a flight and a hotel to close the accounts.

This "holiday" is costing us 712 Swiss francs.

We are extremely disappointed in CS and hope it comes to appreciate its small savers again.

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Silvesterchlausen. In recent decades, the tradition of the “Silvesterchläuse” in Urnäsch, which dates back over 200 years, has developed from going door-to-door wearing simple costumes into a much more elaborate affair. Today the “Chläuse” wear costumes and masks that require a great deal of effort to make. Silvesterchlausen is held in a similar format on two days, New Year’s Eve and 13 January. When Pope Gregory XIII introduced his calendar reform, various reformed cantons refused to acknowledge this papal innovation and continued using the old calendar, which differs from the Gregorian calendar by 13 days, until the 18th century. Some popular calendars printed both systems alongside one another and the “Chläuse” appeared on both New Year’s Eves. ^{EC}



Immigration creates prosperity – and brings new concerns

Switzerland has been a nation of immigration for more than a hundred years. After the watershed year of 2002, immigration from the rest of Europe increased dramatically. The new immigrants are contributing to Switzerland's prosperity. However, new problems and concerns have emerged – in the housing market, on the labour market, in social welfare and, last but not least, in terms of social integration. By Rolf Ribi

There is a major problem in the magnificent Swiss Alps. When the cattle are led onto the alpine pastures in early summer, there is a shortage of milkers, shepherds and herdsmen. The work in the solitary mountain environment is hard, with long days and modest pay. Consequently, last summer, there were not enough men lending a hand in some alpine areas. The people were delighted to see Germans, Austrians, Italians and Poles supporting local alpine farmers. Farming in the Swiss Alps would not be possible without workers from abroad.

The situation in the local alpine economy essentially reflects that of the economy as a whole. Foreigners have made a huge contribution to Switzerland as a business location and centre of learning for more than a century. Large numbers of Italian workers helped build the large tunnels through the Alps at the end of the 19th century and numerous German workers, industrialists and artists helped shape cultural and economic life in the new Swiss federal state from 1850 (including Heinrich Nestlé, Georg Wander, Walter Boveri, Rudolf Diesel, Georg Büchner and Richard Wagner). Switzerland was traditionally a nation of emigration until the end of the 19th century. Thousands of young Swiss emigrated back then, primarily to North and South America. The population census of 1880 revealed a turnaround: Switzerland had become a nation of

immigration. "Alongside France, Switzerland is the country with the longest tradition of immigration in Europe", according to former Swiss ambassador Alfred Defago.



Young immigrant worker from Italy in the early 1960s.

Figures on migration

Key figures on migration in Switzerland: at the end of 2009, Switzerland's permanent resident population was 7.78 million people, of whom 1.71 million, or around 22%, were foreigners. This was a total of 84,000 people or 1.1% more than in the previous year (following an increase of no less than 1.4% in 2008). These are significantly higher growth rates than in the rest of Europe. They represent a projected doubling of the size of the population every 50 to 60 years. The key indicator is the migration balance, i.e. the

difference between immigration and emigration. In 2009, there were 160,600 immigrants compared to 86,000 emigrants, producing a positive migration balance of 74,600. 79,000 foreigners came to Switzerland as new permanent residents (in the previous year, the figure was as high as 103,000, which is equal to the population of the town of Winterthur). The migration balance of the foreign resident population has been positive ever since 1979.

Among Swiss citizens, 4,400 more people emigrated abroad last year than returned home. The migration balance for the Swiss has been negative since 1992. In 2009, 22,400 Swiss abroad returned to their homeland, primarily for economic reasons (at the end of last year, 684,974 Swiss citizens were living abroad, 76.5% of them in western Europe and North America).

Migration trend

A review of recent decades reveals the following time-lapse picture thanks to Swiss migration policy: from the end of the Second World War to the 1960s, strong economic output resulted in a shortage of labour. Seasonal workers, primarily from Italy, came to Switzerland for nine months at a time in large numbers. At the end of the 1950s, it was made easier to bring family members. The proportion of the foreign resident population rose from 6% in 1950 to 13.6% in 1963. Growing fears of foreign domination emerged and the Schwarzenbach initiative "against superalienation" was only narrowly rejected in 1970. From then until the 1990s, immigration was mainly managed with quotas. However, the proportion of foreigners continued to rise (seasonal workers were given one-year residency and it was made easier for family members to join them).

Migration policy changed course at the beginning of the 1990s with the three-circle model. The origin of the immigrants became

the decisive factor: the inner circle contained citizens from the European Union (EU) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), the second circle embraced citizens from Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA, and the third circle encompassed citizens from all other countries. The aim was to favour influx from the first and, if need be, the second circle at the expense of the third. At the end of the 1990s, migration policy was changed to the dual system still in place today: the Bilateral Agreements I with the European Union brought the free movement of persons with the European area of that time (15 EU states, EFTA countries), together with restricted immigration from all other countries. The new migration policy aimed to attract qualified workers to Switzerland based on economic requirements. In 2005, the Swiss people approved the extension of the agreement to ten new EU Member States. Then in 2009, the Swiss people voted in favour of the continuation of the free movement of persons with the EU and its extension to Bulgaria and Rumania.

Watershed in immigration

In retrospect, 2002 marked a real watershed. From this point on, immigration from the rest of Europe increased sharply and the influx from other countries fell accordingly.

6,000 EU citizens have migrated to Switzerland on average each month since 2006, even during the economic downturn. "Switzerland has lost control of its external borders. It is now powerless with regard to immigration policy", wrote the editor-in-chief of "Weltwoche". Is this statement correct? There were quotas for the 15 "old" EU states until mid-2007 and such restrictions will apply to the eight "new" EU states until 2011 (and even longer for Bulgaria and Rumania). Swiss diplomats have also negotiated a special protective clause with Brussels until 2014

"in the event of an excessive increase in immigration" which would allow new quotas. And the regulation that only those who have an employment contract with a Swiss company can stay in Switzerland continues to apply to all EU and EFTA citizens.

One fundamental change resulting from the introduction of the free movement of persons in Europe is that 70% of migrants today come from the European Union. And 60% of all new immigrants hold a university degree (that is twice as many as among the Swiss themselves). This new trend is confirmed by the Federal Office for Migration: "Since 2002, the majority of immigrants to Switzerland are well to very well qualified workers." Immigration is high among the academic professions



Lebanese-born businessman Nicolas Hayek saved the Swiss watch industry.

(scientists, doctors, university lecturers), technicians and engineers, and among company managers in general. "Immigration is shifting towards the highly qualified, which meets the requirements of the economy" (according to a Credit Suisse study).

Contribution to prosperity

In the general debate on immigration from abroad, opinion-makers on the left and right, from progressive and conservative parties, agree that foreign labour has made a significant contribution to Switzerland's prosper-

ity. In the past, it was immigrants from the south doing the jobs that were unpopular among the Swiss (in construction, agriculture, industry and hospitality). Today, it is well educated new immigrants from the north and west occupying top jobs in business and science. "If we want to maintain our economic performance, then we will need even more foreign workers in future", said Francis Matthey, former Social Democrat (SP) politician and incumbent president of the Swiss Federal Commission for Migration Issues. "Switzerland is dependent on immigration from the European Union given the birth rate, demographic trends and the shortage of specialist workers", explained Federal Councillor Doris Leuthard.

"Switzerland as a business location requires expertise and ideas. Thanks to immigration, the country has achieved a level of performance that would not have been possible with its own human resources", writes the specialist publication "Der Arbeitsmarkt". Boris Zürcher, of the neo-liberal think-tank Avenir Suisse, believes that Switzerland is one of the most globalised nations in the world. He says: "Thanks to its open approach to the production factors of labour and capital, it has achieved a level of performance that could not be sustained with Swiss labour alone."

Beat Hotz-Hart, a university professor from Zurich, holds the view that Switzerland today boasts an "extremely high degree of internationalisation" in university lecturing, in research and development, and in management and on boards of directors in the business world. The global network that comes with this provides an "enormous advantage in international competition". The high level of internationalisation in top management positions at Swiss companies is confirmed by a study carried out by specialist Guiding AG among the 121 companies with the highest number of employees: 44% of top

managers in Switzerland are foreigners – of these 31% come from Germany (43% in fact at CEO level), followed by increasing numbers of US and British citizens.

New problems, new concerns

Immigration creates prosperity but also brings with it new problems and concerns. In the housing market, strong immigration is impacting on the issue of limited space with repercussions for the price of property ownership and rent. Immigration of foreign workers has been the major reason for the construction of residential accommodation over the past four years, according to the property consultancy Wüest & Partner. They say: “The market is going through the roof in some hotspots in the Geneva and Zurich areas.” This is resulting in prices “no longer in touch with reality”, particularly for luxury properties. However, while the local construction industry and estate agents are happy, the trend is having an effect on local residents. “Housing shortages and price rises are increasing the economic pressure on the socially disadvantaged classes, causing a greater risk of poverty in the major cities”, according to the study “Immigration 2030” by the Zürcher Kantonalbank.

Is the predominantly well qualified new wave of immigrants pushing local workers, with and without a Swiss passport, out of the employment market? “There is hardly any displacement of local labour”, said Serge Gaillard, Director of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs. “Contrary to fears, immigrants are not forcing the Swiss out of the labour market on the whole”, maintains the specialist publication “Der Arbeitsmarkt”, though a certain degree of displacement is taking place among the middle classes. Economic researchers estimate that there has been hardly any or only a very slight in-

crease in unemployment as a result of immigration. Immigration does not just bring labour into the country, but also consumers and tenants, boosting the economy and creating new jobs.

And what about the impact on wages? The verdict of the State Secretariat concerned within the Federal Palace is that there is no evidence of a resulting fall in wages for employees on low and average incomes. In the case of highly qualified workers, immigration has subdued wages, but significantly more so among foreigners than for the Swiss. Greater pressure on wages has been avoided thanks to “accompanying measures” that go with the freedom of movement of persons in Europe. These ensure that Swiss salaries and

former price regulator, Rudolf Strahm, believes the main reason for these social payments are “the shortcomings in the integration of foreigners and vocational training”. He says that a lack of vocational training generally results in unemployment and a need to claim social benefits and insurance.

The current social burden also has an historical background. The seasonal workers who arrived from southern Europe, and later from the Balkans, up until 2002 were largely uneducated. Switzerland brought them in as cheap labour. Alain du Bois-Reymond, Director of the Federal Office for Migration, confirms this: “The high proportion of foreigners on unemployment and invalidity insurance benefits is an historical burden from

the days of the seasonal worker law.” Francis Matthey, from the Commission for Migration Issues, identifies additional reasons: the foreign population is younger and less well educated, many migrants work in sectors with a high invalidity risk and in industries that depend heavily on economic conditions.

However, migration also benefits the social welfare system: “The immigration of predominantly younger employees will improve the ratio between active members of old-age and invalidity insurance schemes and pensioners. Immigrants are contributing to the financing of these schemes”, says the “Neue Zürcher Zeitung”. In the case of old-age and survivors’ insurance alone, around 20% of all salary contributions come from EU citizens, who only receive 15% of the benefits. In addition, entitlement to a full old-age and survivors’ insurance pension is only granted in Switzerland after 44 years of contributions. Anyone who has only worked in Switzerland for one year therefore only receives 1/44 of the full pension.

However, there are unanswered questions, such as why are 10% of Turks aged 30 to 39 receiving an invalidity insurance pension com-



Switzerland's top footballers are foreign by birth: Yakin, Barnetta, Behrami and Fernandes (from left to right)

working conditions are maintained in all sectors and regions of the country.

Impact on social welfare?

Is immigration increasing or decreasing the burden on our social welfare institutions and the state? 42% of the unemployed are foreigners, as are 44% of the recipients of welfare benefits (60% if we include naturalised citizens), and 37% of invalidity insurance pensions go to foreigners. Yet foreigners make up 22% of the resident population. The

pared to only 2% of Swiss? Why have one in three Turks or former Yugoslavians aged 50 to 59 taken early retirement on social insurance as opposed to only 9% of Swiss, as a study claims? Is it fair, for example, that Germans can receive full unemployment benefit after just one day's work provided they have paid social insurance contributions for a sufficient length of time in their country of origin?

Scientific studies have been conducted into how much foreigners pay into the social insurance schemes and how much they receive in benefits (the so-called net transfer balance). Their tax contributions and the fact that another country has funded their education are also taken into account. An in-depth immigration study by the Zürcher Kantonalbank produces a positive balance (i.e. more payments than benefit claims) for all persons of working age (Swiss and foreign). This is slightly lower for foreign passport holders than for the Swiss, which has to do with the lower income of foreigners. In other words, taking taxes into account, foreign immigrants are "viable" from a government perspective.

Integration and naturalisation

"They called for labour, and people arrived" – this famous quote from the author Max Frisch in 1965 refers to the social integration of foreign workers into our society. Switzerland, with its large number of foreigners, has undoubtedly achieved impressive integration since the 1960s. For 50 years, nationalist-conservative groups have repeatedly used the foreigner debate to stoke the political fire. Those on the right of politics do not want to acknowledge that Switzerland is a nation of immigration and call for assimilation instead of integration. The left often naively glorifies multiculturalism and fails to recognise the everyday problems of coexistence, particularly in schools.

The integration of the new foreign elite causes the fewest concerns – they have their own networks, live in communities, speak English and send their children to international schools. However, there is no disputing the fact that there is still much to do before "the foreign population has equal opportunities to participate in economic, social and cultural life", according to the Federal Council. Zurich's mayor, Corine Mauch, believes there are fears among the population of domination by foreigners. "This is why it is absolutely vital that we pursue an active integration policy", she said.

The highest level of integration is naturalisation – becoming a Swiss citizen. Anyone who has resided in Switzerland for twelve

years were naturalised in 2009, with most of these coming from the Balkans, Italy and Germany. Switzerland's naturalisation process remains stringent by international comparison. This has not stopped right-wing politicians calling for an even tighter approach – no Swiss passport for the unemployed or for applicants who have committed a crime (such as going through a red light on the road).

The cultural dimension

In October, Melinda Nadj Abonji was presented with the German Book Prize at the Frankfurt Book Fair. In November, the author also won the Swiss Book Prize. The 42-year-old writer from Senta in Vojvodina, an autonomous Hungarian province in Serbia, lives with her family in Zurich. Her prize-winning novel "Tauben fliegen auf" (Falcons without Falconers) tells of a family who came to Switzerland from Vojvodina at the start of the 1970s. Last year's Swiss Book Prize was won by the author Ilma Rakusa, who has Slovenian-Hungarian roots. Her autobiographical work "Mehr Meer" (More Sea) poetically describes an immigrant's observations about her new home.

"German-language literature has received major new impetus from immigrants and second-generation migrants in recent decades", writes literary critic Manfred

Papst. Immigration does not just have economic and social dimensions but – fortunately for Switzerland – a cultural one too.



Switzerland also attracts many rich foreigners: popstar Phil Collins has lived near Geneva for many years.

years can apply for Swiss citizenship. Federal government assesses two factors – whether candidates have obeyed the law and whether they represent a security risk. It allows the cantons and communes to define additional criteria, such as familiarity with the local way of life, good character, linguistic knowledge and financial self-responsibility.

8,658 citizenship applications were granted in 1990 and 28,700 ten years later. This figure then rose sharply over the next five years to reach 46,711 in 2006. 43,440 foreign citi-

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Documentation centre www.doku-zug.ch

The unparalleled experiment

The coldest place in the universe and the world's largest particle accelerator are to be found north-west of Geneva. We visit a parallel world – the European Organization for Nuclear Research, CERN. By Joel Frei

A hundred meters below the earth, narrow passageways lead through a maze of pipes, cables and tubes. Physicist Niko Neufeld grins mischievously: "It's a bit like a Harry Potter film here – you never really know where these winding paths will end." Neufeld is one of 7,000 scientists at CERN, the world's largest particle physics research centre. Answers to the big questions are sought here – Where do we come from? Why this world and not another one? How did the universe develop? This "global laboratory", where researchers from more than 80 countries work, is the size of a small town.

The labyrinth

The streets in CERN are named after famous physicists such as Heisenberg, Curie and Einstein. This town of physicists has its own post office, a bank, a travel agency and a theatre. CERN's energy requirements are also on a par with those of a town; the research facilities consume a tenth of the canton of Geneva's electricity. The giant laboratory's budget stands at around one billion Swiss francs. By way of comparison, CERN's budget is larger than the GDP of the Central African state of Burundi.

Neufeld heads further into the labyrinth and goes down a passageway that passes through giant reinforced concrete blocks. "We're now coming to what we call the dark side", he reveals. What sounds like a Hollywood-style struggle between good and evil is actually part of the matter-of-fact world of science. The concrete blocks protect people and electronic equipment located on the "good" side against the radiation of stray particles. The passageway through these concrete blocks eventually leads to a giant, surreal-looking machine. It is one of the six detectors in the ring of the world's largest particle accelerator, which is known as the LHCb. This piece of equipment aims to shed light on one of the last mysteries of antimatter: when the big bang occurred, why was all matter that came into contact with antimat-

ter not destroyed? Why was there a small residual amount of matter which would form our universe?

The particle accelerator

The new, more powerful LHC (Large Hadron Collider) particle accelerator was built in the old accelerator's ring-shaped tunnel. This underground storage ring has an impressive 27-kilometre circumference and extends far into neighbouring France. In the LHC, protons are accelerated to almost the speed of light and fired in both directions in the circle. They inevitably collide with one another and new particles emerge from these collisions. The detectors in the particle accelerator's ring record these collisions and generate a mass of data for physicists to evaluate. Countless extremely powerful magnets hold the protons in their path. These are cooled to -271° Celsius – nowhere in the universe is as cold – to fully exploit their capacity. In their experiments the researchers reconstruct the original physical state of the universe, when the world was a billionth of a second old. To see the enthusiasm and delight on the physicists' faces, you would think they themselves were going on a journey back in time with their detector time machine.

A huge metal device hangs in a cavern that can only be reached through a narrow entrance. The ATLAS detector is the largest of the six detectors in the ring and constitutes the main component of the new particle accelerator. The workers clambering over it look like dwarfs by comparison. Next year, the protons will collide with one another in the centre of this machine. Physicists hope the ATLAS detector will provide evidence of the Higgs particle, which currently only exists in theory and which they believe will explain why particles have a mass.

The physicists

A large part of the research centre complex is located on French soil. The border

runs through the research site. At lunchtime, physicists whose offices are in France eat at the restaurant on the Swiss side. The physicists, who come from all over the world to carry out research at CERN, can sometimes forget which country they are in. The cliché of the absent-minded professor is alive and kicking in the land of CERN. A physicist who was overly enthusiastic about his work is said to have fallen ill with scurvy because he spent too much time thinking about his experiments and not enough on eating healthily. Tour guide Sophie Tesauri leads the way into a hall on French territory. Sheep graze peacefully on a nearby meadow. The hall is in poor condition and the shabby toilets are part of an outside annex. "The money is used for research – my office doesn't even have double glazing", says Tesauri with a smile.

The boundaries of science

Inside the hall, physicist Michael Doser demonstrates an antimatter experiment that he conducted research on several years ago. The research team succeeded in artificially producing an anti-hydrogen atom. The discussion with Doser drifts into the obscure world of metaphysics. When asked whether physics will ever be able to explain what preceded the big bang, he replies that asking the question was futile based on the current level of scientific knowledge: "Time first emerged with the big bang and we still don't know what time means." Doser does not believe that the current generation of physicists will succeed in solving the mysteries of gravity and time. Researchers are unable to explain why we stick to the earth, and time remains an abstract concept. However, he has faith in the future generation of physicists: "I believe in mankind's ingenuity. New tools will be found to answer new questions." As in science fiction movies, he believes that mankind will one day be able to artificially extend its intelligence, enabling him to discover what preceded the big bang. "The aim of physics

is to show how everything fits together and that the universe could not have been any different”, says Doser.

A visit to CERN, near Geneva, is like entering a parallel world. What is reality and what is metaphysics? At the end of this tour through the world of basic research, many questions remain unanswered. The main one is: What are 7,000 scientists actually doing in this labyrinth of grey buildings, detector caverns and tunnels?

“There’s definitely nothing dangerous going on”

What is the research being carried out at CERN at a cost of billions actually aiming to achieve? What do the physicists in Geneva hope to discover through their work? Joel Frei interviews Peter Jenni, a physicist from Berne who has worked at CERN since 1980, about his work.

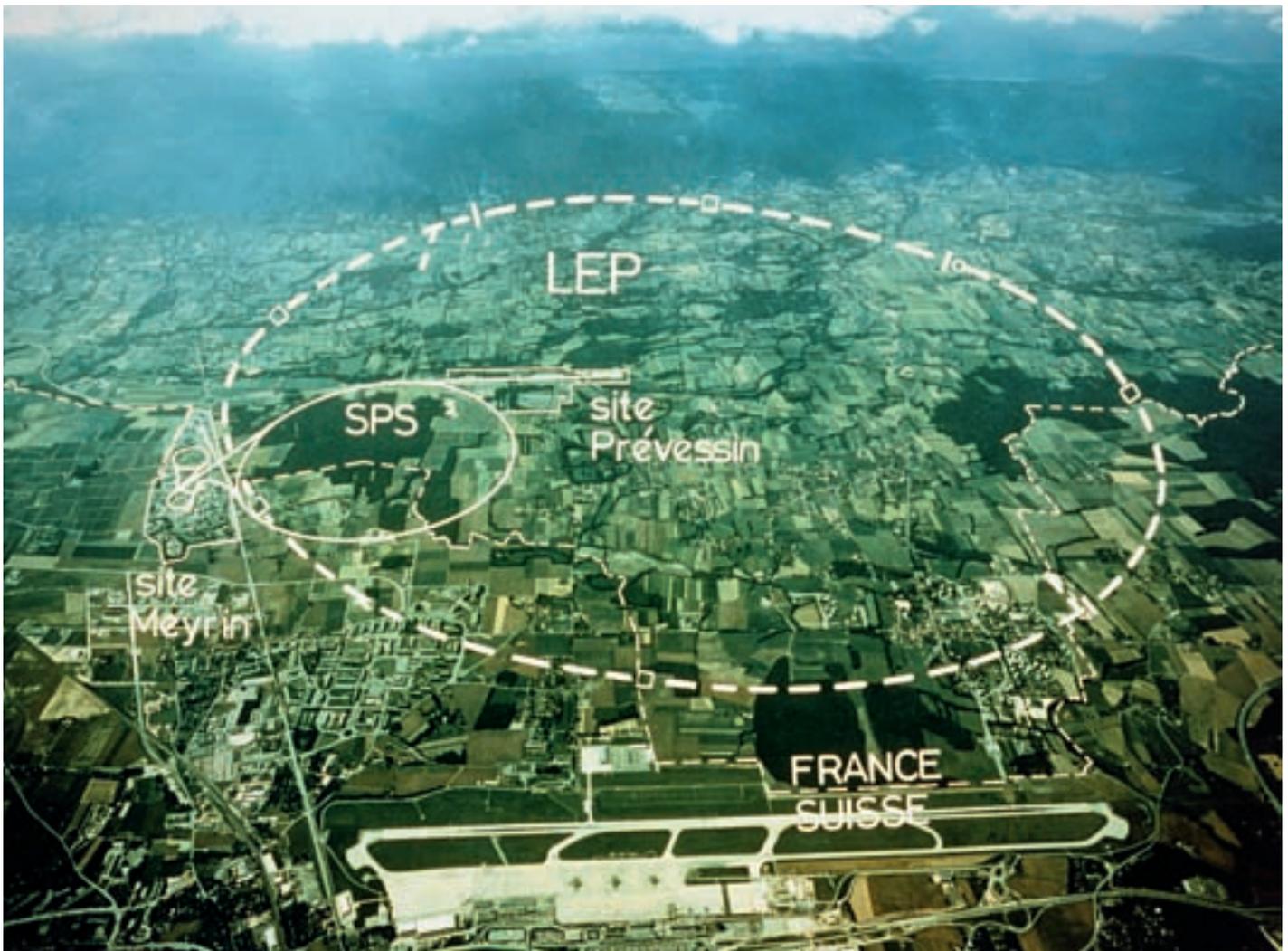


What has been the most exciting moment in your career as a physicist?

There are three moments that have been very special for me. In the early 1980s, when we carried out the proton-antiproton accelerator experiments and discovered the W and Z bosons (mediators of weak interaction), that was CERN’s greatest discovery. The approval of the ATLAS project in 1995 was also a great moment. And, of course, the

Picture below:
CERN in Geneva is the size of a small town and is the workplace of research scientists from 80 different countries.

Peter Jenni has worked as a physicist at CERN since 1980.



first collisions in the LHC on 23 November 2009 were a very special moment after 20 years of development work.

Has the new LHC particle accelerator already produced concrete findings?

Yes, there are already many publications on the standard model in physics. This is the first time it has been tested at such high energy levels. We are observing that this model is generally behaving as we expected. And we have also broken new ground. For example, some hypothetical particles can already be ruled out. Thanks to the high energy levels we are working with, we are able to acquire more knowledge than our competitors at the Tevatron accelerator in Chicago. We haven't discovered anything earth-shattering yet, but we are making more progress than before. Naturally we hope that the LHC will help produce many new discoveries over the coming decades.

String theory, which is also being researched at CERN, is one of the symmetry theories. Is it likely to help us discover the "theory of everything" soon?

(Laughs). That's still a long way off. String theory makes no clear statements about things that might be observed in the LHC. However, there are follow-up theories to string theory, such as supersymmetry theory, that suggest the existence of new hypothet-

ical particles. This is a very exciting theory because the LHC can help and could enable research results to be obtained in the search for the mysterious dark matter. Back in the 1930s, Swiss physicist Fritz Zwicky observed that visible matter alone cannot explain what holds galaxies together. Another kind of matter must exist with a fundamentally different structure. We cannot see any stars made of dark matter, but there are certainly lots of them – many more than those composed of visible matter. Dark matter is one of the biggest mysteries in physics and cosmology.

How would you respond to criticism that basic research at CERN costs too much money, with an annual budget of one billion Swiss francs, and consumes too much energy, 10% of the canton of Geneva's electricity?

Basic research is vital to mankind's technological advancement. We all depend on technological achievements. When research was carried out into electricity and magnetism, nobody could foresee how important this work would become. Basic research is the engine of progress. One of mankind's most basic attributes is a desire to understand the laws of nature. This is what differentiates us from animals. Another aspect is that there are many positive applications for the technologies developed at CERN. The World Wide Web was developed at CERN,

and discoveries have also been made in the field of medicine. But perhaps even more important is that many young people are trained in leading-edge technologies, and quite simply the fact that our work here is based on international cooperation. We are well aware that cutting-edge research is expensive and understand the importance of keeping energy consumption under control and managing quality.

What would you say to people who fear that the LHC will create a black hole?

What happens in the LHC has been occurring naturally for many billions of years. Much more powerful particle collisions also occur in the universe. Yet we're all still here. There is no real risk and any fears are unjustified. CERN has taken such warnings seriously and commissioned expert reports which have given the all-clear based on probability calculations. This issue has often been raised, but since the LHC has been in operation such concerns have subsided because nothing has happened.

GLOSSARY

Standard model

This model of elementary particle physics is a physical theory that describes known elementary particles and their interaction. The model describes three different types of interaction: strong interaction, weak interaction and electromagnetic interaction.

Higgs particle

Named after the Scottish physicist Peter Higgs, this particle, which still only exists in theory, is important for explaining particle mass. It is predicted in the standard model of elementary particle physics.

Dark matter

A hypothetical form of matter that cannot be seen as it neither emits nor reflects light. Dark matter is in gravitational interaction with visible matter.

Antimatter

Matter composed of antiparticles that is the counterpart of the matter of which "our" world consists. Antimatter has a very short lifespan here because, when a particle-antiparticle pair collides, both are destroyed. Massive quantities of matter and antimatter were destroyed in this way during the big bang, leaving behind a small residual amount of matter, which is our world today.

String theory

Hypothetical physical models that attempt to provide a uniform explanation of all fundamental physical forces observed to date. In particular, this theory tries to combine gravitational theories with quantum theories. It goes beyond the standard model, but has never been tested in practice.

The theory of everything

This physical and mathematical theory attempts to integrally explain and link all known physical phenomena. A single model aims to explain all of nature's fundamental interactions.

Black hole

An astronomical phenomenon whose gravitational pull is so great that it even sucks in light. It distorts space/time so severely that nothing can escape from inside the hole.



The XIII Francophone Summit in Montreux addresses the topic of “future challenges and visions for the French-speaking world”

The XIII Summit of the heads of state and government of the French-speaking world, which took place in Montreux on 23 and 24 October 2010 under the presidency of Swiss President, Doris Leuthard, also opened its doors to the public with various thematic, literary and cultural events. It resulted in the Declaration of Montreux, which was adopted with several resolutions. Switzerland is holding the presidency of the Francophone Summit from October 2010 to October 2012, while the Democratic Republic of Congo will host the next summit in 2012.

Several days before the opening of the XIII Francophone Summit, the head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), Micheline Calmy-Rey, highlighted the importance of this meeting.

“The French-speaking world exerts significant influence. It represents a third of the states in the UN. An area which fosters democracy, human rights and development, the French-speaking community provides a platform for debate to tackle the challenges which face and concern the entire world”, underlined Micheline Calmy-Rey at the ministerial conference.

Seventy countries were represented in Montreux, with about 40 heads of state or government in attendance. The ambassador Jean-François Paroz, commissioner for the organisation of the Francophone Summit, used specific examples to illustrate

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL FRANCOPHONE ORGANISATION (OIF) WITH THE COMMISSIONER FOR THE ORGANISATION OF THE XIII SUMMIT AND THEIR MAIN ADVISORS

The Secretary-General of the OIF, Abdou Diouf, alongside (on his left) ambassador Jean-François Paroz, commissioner for the organisation of the XIII Summit, and (on his right) Claude Berberat, deputy commissioner for the organisation of the Summit. Also in the photo: Clément Duhaime, Director of the OIF, Pierre de Cocatrix, Head of the Secretary-General's office, and Lautaro Sancho, liaison officer for the Secretary-General of the OIF.

the challenges involved in organising an event of this kind in terms of logistics. 1,750 delegates, around 600 journalists, 1,700 staff, more than 1,000 organisers and over 1,000 police officers and fire service personnel had to be accredited for the summit. The head of the Swiss diplomatic service also emphasised the importance of the Montreux Summit to Switzerland, underlining the fact that the entire country and not just the French-speaking part is a member of the International Francophone Organisation. “Multicultural Switzerland, with its four national languages and federal state, feels at ease in the French-speaking world which contains 870 million people on five continents”, she said. The summit raised Switzerland's profile and gave it the opportunity to affirm its policy of hosting international conferences and organisations. “In a world where networks are being superimposed, this positioning is beneficial”, added the Federal Councillor.

As 2010 coincided with the 40th anniversary of the Niamey Convention, the founding act of the institutional French-speaking world, Switzerland wanted the heads of state and government to reflect on the “future challenges and visions for the French-speaking world”.

Three topics, in particular, were therefore on the agenda: “The French-speaking world as a player in international relations and its position in world governance”, “The French-speaking world and sustainable development” and “the French language and education in a globalised world.”

The summit topics were made accessible to the public through a dozen roundtables which tackled topics such as food security, water and AIDS. They were complemented by enjoyable events such as the “francophone village” in Montreux, an audiovisual evening organised by French-language television stations to celebrate the 40th anniversary.





sary of the Francophone organisation, and various activities held at the Château de Chillon.

The XIII Summit welcomed the creation, at Switzerland's initiative, of a network of excellence for engineering in the French-speaking world (RESCIF) under the leadership of the Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL). A collaboration initiative will be launched from January 2011 between 14 francophone universities from industrialised and developing countries.

The XIII Francophone Summit also admitted five new observer-status members into its ranks: Bosnia-Herzegovina, the United Arab Emirates, Estonia, Montenegro and the Dominican Republic. The Secretary-General of the Francophone Organisation, Abou Diouf, was elected for a third term. Switzerland will hold the presidency of the Francophone Summit from October 2010 to October 2012 as well as the presidency of the ministerial conference of the Francophone Organisation from December 2009 to December 2011. This task falls to the head of the FDFA, Micheline Calmy-Rey.

The Francophone Summit concluded with the adoption of the "Declaration of Montreux" accompanied by several resolutions. This text formalises the debate on the "future challenges and visions for the French-speaking world." It confirms the commitment of the heads of state and government to cultural diversity, multilingualism and francophone economic solidarity. They called for a reform of global economic governance through the strengthening of cooperation between the UN, the heart of world governance, and the economic forums, including the G20, as well as respect for and application of UN agreements on the threats of terrorism, piracy, organised crime, drugs trafficking and corruption. They also welcomed the creation, in July, of the UN Women agency for equality and strengthening of the posi-

tion of women and encouraged the International Francophone Organisation to work in tandem with it. Furthermore, they reaffirmed their support for efforts towards achieving a fair, sustainable and overall peace in the Middle East and expressed their solidarity with the victims of the earthquake in Haiti. With regard to sustainable development, the Francophone Organisation voiced its willingness to achieve the UN's Millennium Goals by 2015. These include the reduction of infant mortality, food security and specific projects, such as the African Great Green Wall initiative and the saving of Lake Chad. Finally, the heads of state and government stated their commitment to promoting the use of French in the international and regional organisations and, in view of the XIV Summit, called on the International Francophone Organisation to adopt a policy of promoting the French language which integrates and synergises the organisation's initiatives.

The Democratic Republic of Congo was named as host of the next summit in 2012.

Further details can be found at <http://www.francophoniemontreux2010.ch>.

Important information on the online "Swiss Review"

You may have wondered why you keep receiving "Swiss Review" in printed form when you selected the online version. It is possible that the e-mail in which we wanted to send you "Swiss Review" could not be delivered. In such cases, the representation changes your distribution profile and you again receive the printed version. This way we ensure you continue to receive information.

THE LIAISON OFFICERS OF THE 73 DELEGATIONS

At the centre of the picture, ambassador Jean-François Paroz, commissioner for the organisation of the XIII Summit, ambassador Johannes Matyassy, Director-General of the Summit, and Jacques Lauer, deputy commissioner for the organisation of the Summit.





Various reasons can explain the non-delivery of an e-mail but in most cases you can help us to resolve the problem:

- The online version has been sent to an e-mail address that is incorrect or has expired. It is therefore important that you notify the Swiss representation where you are registered of any change to your e-mail as it has the sole authority to change the information in your file. If the representation finds your correct e-mail address, you will of course receive the electronic version of “Swiss Review” again.
- The e-mails that are blocked by your anti-spam filter are not delivered. Take a look at your “spam” settings and mark the e-mail so that it is recognised by the system.
- The memory capacity limit of your e-mail provider has been reached. Empty part of your mailbox.

It could also be that you registered for the online version when the technical preparations for delivery had already been completed, i.e. around a month before distribution. Any change of distribution method carried out later cannot be taken into account for the next

NEW POPULAR INITIATIVES AND REFERENDA

At time of going to press, the following new popular **initiatives** had been launched since the last edition:

- “Peine de mort en cas d’assassinat en concours avec un abus sexuel” (The death penalty for murder in conjunction with sexual abuse), initiative committee: “Comité pour la peine de mort”. Deadline for collection of signatures: 24.02.2012.
- “Pour la transparence de l’assurance-maladie (Halte à la confusion entre assurance de base et assurance complémentaire)” (For health insurance transparency – stop the confusion between basic and supplementary insurance), initiative committee: “Pour la transparence de l’assurance-maladie” AMG-Initiative fédérale. Deadline for collection of signatures: 28.03.2012.
- “Stop à la bureaucratie!” (Stop the bureaucracy!), initiative committee: PLR. Les Libéraux-Radicaux comité d’initiative “Stop à la bureaucratie!”. Deadline for collection of signatures: 12.04.2012.

The following laws are subject to a **referendum**. The deadline for signatures runs until 20 January 2011.

- Federal Law on the Organisation of the Confederation’s Criminal Justice Authorities
- Federal Law on Road Traffic
- Federal Law on the Infrastructure Fund for Urban Traffic, the National Road Network and the Main Roads in Mountainous and Peripheral Regions
- Federal Law on the Restitution of Unlawfully Acquired Assets of Politically Exposed Persons
- Federal Law on Financial Assistance for Childcare Places
- Federal Law on the Coordination of Asylum and Extradition Procedures
- Federal Law on the Organisation of the Government and Administration (Data Protection Concerning the Use of Electronic Infrastructure)
- Federal Law on Aviation
- Federal Law on Dams
- Federal Law on the Approval of the Agreement between Switzerland and Serbia on Cooperation between Police Forces in the Fight against Criminality
- Federal Law on the Approval of the Exchange of Notes be-

between Switzerland and the EC regarding the Assumption of the Legal Basis for the External Borders Fund and the Agreement on Switzerland’s Participation in the External Borders Fund (Development of Schengen Acquis)

■ Federal Law on the Approval of the Maritime Labour Convention

■ Federal Law on the Approval of the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways

■ Federal Law on the Approval of the Statute of the International Renewable Energy Agency

■ Federal Law on the Approval

of the Agreement on the European Forestry Institute

Please visit the site www.bk.admin.ch/aktuell/abstimmung. This contains a list of pending referendum proposals and popular initiatives in addition to the signature forms, if available. Please complete, sign and send the forms directly to the relevant initiative committee.

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“Switzerland is not governed badly”

Does Switzerland need government reform, more Federal Councillors and a two-year term of office for the position of Swiss President? Is our political system outdated, cumbersome and no longer fit-for-purpose? Heinz Eckert interviews Zurich-based political scientist and professor emeritus, Leonhard Neidhart.

“SWISS REVIEW”: *The German current affairs magazine “Der Spiegel” recently reported that Switzerland has a unique system of government. Is that the case?*

PROFESSOR LEONHARD NEIDHART: Every nation’s system of government has its own unique characteristics. Two fundamental distinctive features are particular to Switzerland – firstly, federal government combines three different principles of political/governmental organisation, namely federalism, representation and direct democracy. This means that Switzerland, a small nation, actually has an organisationally “large” and complex system of government. The second aspect specific to Switzerland is the fact that it is governed politically by a collective body, by Councillors, and not by an individual leader, such as a president or chancellor.

Is it true that direct democracy is more cumbersome than less democratic systems of government?

A system where important decisions are made by the entire electorate is clearly more complex than if policy is determined by a parliamentary majority and a leadership in the form of heads of state or coalition committees. But, it’s about the effect on policy-making.

However, the term “reform backlog” originated in Germany and refers to political life in Germany.

“Reform backlog” is a buzzword that does not really mean much. In Switzerland, with its system of federalism and direct democracy, reform is often a slower process, as shown, for example, by the late introduction of the vote for women and accession to the UN. However, this does not mean that Switzerland is more modern than Germany, for example, in various cantons and also at federal level.

The Federal Council has been under constant criticism recently. Has this been justified?

Actually, individual members of the Federal Council, specific Federal Council resolutions and its organisational structure have



Professor Dr. Leonhard Neidhart gained a doctorate at the Free University of Berlin and completed post-doctoral studies at the University of Zurich’s Department for Political Science. Until his retirement ten years ago, Neidhart was Professor of Political Science at the University of Constance. He is one of Switzerland’s leading political scientists and has published numerous works on the Swiss system of government, direct democracy, and state and government reform. Leonhard Neidhart lives in Zurich.

come in for repeated criticism recently. We must therefore differentiate. The Federal Council as an institution has continually been criticised over its electoral system, number of members and composition ever since the foundation of the federal state in 1848. However, this system of a collective exercise of power has remained extremely stable and also legitimate. Despite its small number, it has proven flexible and adaptable with regard to the integration of the linguistic regions, the parties and also the sexes. This is why people talk about the “magic formula”. The Federal Council is the cornerstone of Switzerland, a multilingual nation governed by the will of the people. It is one of the country’s special characteristics. The fact that the Federal Council cannot work miracles and that its resolutions can and should be criticised is perfectly normal. We have a problem with the collegial system. Collegiality means that responsibility and accountability for success and failure should be borne jointly. However, collegiality does not mean that there cannot be differences of opinion on the Federal Council. This is inevitable as politics is a conflict-ridden, complex business. Neither should Federal Council members be expected to always put on a perfect display of collegiality in public. If you look at the rows in German coalition governments, our conduct is

still very collegial by comparison. We should not idealise collegiality. The Federal Council is not a monastery.

The Federal Council has been under constant scrutiny since the election and de-selection of Christoph Blocher. Was the biggest error his election or his de-selection?

There has never been a “perfect” Federal Council election and there has always been conflict between the “alpha political figures”. Parliament has the right to elect, de-select or not elect any person it chooses. Blocher’s de-selection is explicable and had its reasons, but I don’t want to judge.

The principle of collegiality, above all, often no longer seems to work. How important is this to the work of the Federal Council?

As federal government and therefore the Federal Council has an increasing number of ever more extensive and complex tasks to carry out, and the departments and main federal offices have become more and more influential, collective government has certainly become more difficult. However, Switzerland must live with this because it does not want a senior leadership figure.

Did things once run more smoothly in Berne?

When looking at the Federal Council’s past we have to distinguish between specific periods. The National Council was elected based on a majority system from 1848 to 1918, which produced a politically homogeneous Federal Council. This was overburdened from the start because it only had a very small administration behind it. As a result, there was constant talk of reform, which is explained in my book on the early parliament. Governments everywhere became more powerful at times of war and crisis, including the Federal Council. Federal Council proportional representation, the magic formula, was introduced in the 1950s after the Second World War as a late consequence of National Council proportional representation. Neither individual members nor the Federal Council as a whole have since committed major errors of judgement, transgressions or blunders, which has meant that, almost without exception, no member has been de-selected or had to resign. That is also a characteristic specific to Switzerland – it is a politically settled nation. Switzerland’s political performance shows that it has not been governed badly.

Does the Federal Council perhaps work better together and in a more collegial manner than is continually suggested in the media?

The press used to aim severe criticism primarily at the Federal Assembly.

With television, personalisation and the importance of viewing figures, a whole new aspect has entered politics. Just think about Obama in the USA, Berlusconi in Italy and Guttenberg in Germany, all of whom have generated massive media hype. This shift towards personalisation and media attention is a double-edged sword for our collective government. On the one hand, television brings the politicians closer to the people but, on the other, it does so very selectively, which can completely disrupt the collegial system.

How important actually is the allocation of the departments? Shouldn't a good Federal Councillor be able to run any department?

The allocation of departments is a key aspect of collective government and one which causes conflict. That is why the founders of the constitution left it to the Federal Council itself. It has become increasingly difficult in light of growing disparity between the departments. Of course, a lawyer is required for the justice department. In this respect, the most recent solution is not ideal. But if you consider how many players (two chambers, the people, the cantons, the associations, the major parties and a large coalition) determine Swiss politics, this puts the importance of the distribution of the departments into perspective. Majority support and consensus must be achieved for all major issues.

The Federal Councillors are always referred to as ministers and portrayed in the media as though they can make decisions themselves and power does not lie with Parliament and ultimately with the people. Do we need better education about politics?

In principle, it can be said that if the people want to have a say through direct democracy they also need to have knowledge. But the referenda are also a form of applied or practical education in citizenship. This education needs to be provided in the schools. General study courses have all but disappeared in the universities, which are now dominated by specialisation. This means people can know a great deal about one very specific area and highly qualified engineers or doctors, for example, do not have to know a thing about politics. Pressure on performance is also squeez-

ing general studies out in the grammar schools. Society only has itself to blame if people are then taken in by populists.

People are always saying that our system of government dates back to 1848 and no longer meets modern requirements. Do you share this view?

Some parts of our system of government, as in all historical democracies (USA, UK), are of course outdated. That is an element of traditional legitimacy, which a nation governed by the will of the people needs. On the other hand, Switzerland is also highly modern with its decentralisation and direct democracy. With its three organisational principles, Switzerland has a highly complex political system that can successfully overcome new challenges, such as environmental issues.

How much distance should there be between Federal Council members and their party?

The dual loyalty required of our Federal Councillors is one of the unique characteristics of our system of government. The Federal Council must display a high degree of impartiality because we have no head of state and since it represents the political will of the nation. Members must therefore show loyalty to this body. At the same time, Federal Councillors also represent their parties, national regions and gender to which they are also bound to ensure power is exercised collectively. Switzerland depends heavily on Federal Councillors displaying dual loyalty transparently and appropriately.

Federal Councillors travel much more often these days than in the past. Is this a necessity in a globalised world?

Switzerland has always had a frugal approach to financing politics, which is why there was opposition to allowing Federal Councillors to travel. Another case in point is that, before 1900, no shorthand reports were made of parliamentary meetings owing to the cost. Switzerland is now interlinked with and dependent on the European community and economy like no other European country, yet battles against it. So, our members of government need to have intensive contact with their counterparts abroad and need to travel.

Does the Federal Council need to be expanded? Should departments be organised and allocated differently?

This issue has been the subject of relentless debate since 1848. There are arguments

for and against. I tend towards the arguments against. Our Federal Council is a collective body of equals who must share responsibility for policy. If this principle is to take priority then this Council must be small in number. A membership of seven is practically ideal. The larger the Federal Council, the more factions are likely to be formed internally, making collegiality impossible. In any case, nine Federal Councillors would not resolve the problems of excessive workload and management. Making the Federal Council larger creates more problems than it resolves. However, the departments do need to be reorganised. The Federal Council cannot achieve this itself and Parliament probably can't do it. This is indeed a problem.

What is your view on a two-year term of office for the Swiss President? Is that in keeping with our system of government?

I believe that the collective exercise of power should be based on the original Swiss notion of rotation of leadership positions, which is why the Federal Council should also be maintained. If we had a mediocre Swiss President, he or she would remain in office for two years if we changed the system. Under the current system, they would remain in office for just one year. Leadership problems have to be resolved in a different way. The longer someone remains in charge, the greater the potential for conflict. It's therefore a case of the better the devil you know.

Will the Federal Council ever be elected by the people?

The election of the Federal Council by the people is a big issue. I don't think there is majority support for it, especially not from the cantons. The French-speaking and smaller cantons would reject it. There are more reasons against than for the election of the Federal Council by the people.

What are the reasons against it?

The direct election of the Federal Council would centralise and personalise the entire political system to a great extent and create even more disputes in direct democracy, which is already laden with conflict. An already powerful government would also be made even stronger at the expense of the part-time Parliament. Parliament would face an even sterner task in controlling the administration.

Breakthrough in the world's longest railway tunnel. The 57-kilometre Gotthard tunnel is the centrepiece of the new flat rail link through the Alps. The breakthrough in the east tube was achieved in October, while the same stage is expected to be reached in the west tube by April. Trains will be running through the Gotthard by 2017 at the latest. By René Lenzin

Switzerland was celebrating a world record on the Gotthard in mid-October with the breakthrough in the east tube of the new railway base tunnel. This is a superlative feat as, at 57 kilometres, it is the world's longest tunnel. The breakthrough was achieved on schedule, 30 kilometres from the south portal in Bodio (Ticino) and 27 kilometres from the north portal in Erstfeld (Uri) with a minor deviation of eight centimetres horizontally and one centimetre vertically. The Gotthard base tunnel consists of two parallel, single-track tubes, which are connected by 40-metre intersections every 325 metres. The

total length of the tunnel system, including all the shafts and galleries, is 151.8 km.

The excavation teams from the north and south should also be able to shake hands in the west tube this April. Installation of the tracks and railway technology has already begun in the excavated tunnel sections. The first passenger and freight trains will hurtle through the tunnel, designed for maximum speeds of 250 kilometres per hour, by 2017 at the latest. However, the Gotthard line will only become a continuous flat rail link when the 15.4-kilometre base tunnel in Monte

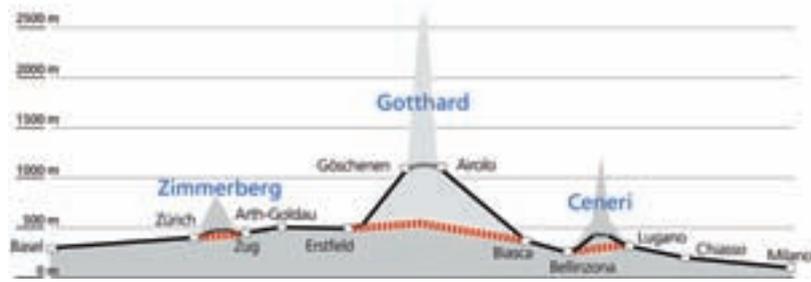
Celebrations at the Gotthard breakthrough last October.



Ceneri is opened. This section between Bellinzona and Lugano, which also has two tubes, is set to open in 2019.

Together with Lötschberg, opened in 2007, Gotthard and Ceneri will make up the New Railway Link through the Alps

(NRLA), which the Swiss people approved in principle in 1992. Six years later, they voted in favour of a financing proposal that earmarked a total of 30 billion Swiss francs for major railway projects. Just under half of that amount has been allocated to the NRLA project. The estimated final costs for the Gotthard section amount to 12.25 billion Swiss francs, with 2.42 billion being spent on Ceneri.



NRLA is the cornerstone of Swiss transport policy, which aims for rail to handle as much freight transport through the Alps as possible. NRLA is also part of the European railway corridor from Rotterdam to Genoa. However, it now looks as

though this line will not be fully completed when NRLA opens. Switzerland has had to make cuts to the access lines to the base tunnel for financial reasons, and neighbouring countries, Germany and Italy, are unlikely to complete the access links to the north and south before 2019.

For more information, visit www.alptransit.ch

Trains will travel to and from Italy through this giant hole from 2017.





OSA ADVICE

QUESTION:

I live abroad and am expecting a baby soon. I would like to know whether my child will automatically receive Swiss citizenship, as I am Swiss, or whether there are procedures to be completed? Could my child hold dual nationality?

ANSWER:

Under the law on the acquisition and loss of Swiss nationality, Swiss nationality is acquired from birth. This applies to children of married couples where at least one of the parents is Swiss as well as to children of Swiss citizens not married to the father of the child. Children who are minors and have a Swiss father who is not married to the mother obtain Swiss nationality as though from birth once their parentage has been confirmed.

However, the Swiss representation where you are registered must be notified of the birth. This is important because children born abroad to parents where at least one of them is Swiss lose Swiss nationality at the age of 22 if they still have another nationality and a Swiss authority abroad or in Switzerland has not been notified of their birth or they have not provided notice themselves or have failed to state in writing that they wish to retain Swiss nationality. After this age, the granting of Swiss nationality remains possible for a period of 10 years if justifiable reasons exist for the failure to provide notice. If the child has close links with Switzerland, the granting of nationality remains possible beyond this period. However, in order to avoid future administrative procedures, it is advisable to provide notice of the birth as soon as possible to your embassy or consulate, which will check the documents and pass on the information to the authorities in Switzerland for registration of the child in the civil status and commune of origin registers.

Switzerland recognises dual nationality without restriction. From Switzerland's perspective, it is therefore possible to hold Swiss nationality and that of another state. In contrast, this is not necessarily the case for other countries. In some countries, obtaining Swiss nationality can result in the loss of the other nationality. Please contact the authorities in the other country concerned for further information on this matter.

OSA's Legal Department provides general information on Swiss law in areas which specifically concern the Swiss abroad. It does not provide information on foreign law or intervene in disputes between private parties.

SARAH MASTANTUONI
HEAD OF THE LEGAL DEPARTMENT

Young Swiss abroad enjoy the winter in Switzerland

Switzerland offers everything you could ever want from a dream winter holiday.

Young Swiss people abroad are advised to book their holiday or educational visit with OSA now.

Switzerland's ski resorts are the highest in Europe on average. You won't get as close to the heavens anywhere else. The Swiss abroad discover the alpine landscape at OSA's winter sports camps. Enjoying a holiday as part of a group is great fun. Swiss abroad from all corners of the globe exchange experiences, give an insight into the countries they live in and discover the land of their forefathers. Inhibitions about speaking a foreign language are quickly overcome as what really matters is personal contact. OSA's trained ski and snowboard instructors ensure a fantastic experience in a safe, fun environment. A highly diverse fringe programme provides entertainment and a great atmosphere. There are still places available for the following offers:

Winter sports week in Wengen (Berne) (26.02. – 05.03.2011)

Wengen is a car-free, sun-kissed chalet village with real character. The winter sports week is open to young adults aged 18 and over and is set amidst the majestic mountain scenery of the Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau. Both sport enthusiasts and night owls will find exactly what they are looking for in Wengen.

Price: CHF 800

Easter camp in Fiesch (Valais) (16.04. – 24.04.2011)

Those looking for snow in spring can enjoy the longer days to the full in the Aletsch region. This famous ski resort offers magnificent panoramas. The modern holiday village also provides a wide range of sports in

indoor halls and outdoor facilities.

Price: CHF 700

Visit a university and discover Switzerland

If you are looking to enhance your educational prospects during your holidays, you will find the perfect offers and support from OSA. You will stay with one of our welcoming host families who will give you a real insight into everyday Swiss life. We will arrange a day-time programme tailored to your individual needs.

Information on the offers mentioned is available from:

*Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Youth Service, Tel.: +41 (0)31 356 61 00
youth@aso.ch, www.aso.ch*

Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad: summer camps for children aged 8 to 14

Are you aged 8 to 14? Would you like to spend 14 days in Switzerland getting to know your homeland better? Then sign up for a holiday camp run by the Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad. We organise summer holiday camps in Switzerland's most beautiful regions during July and August.

Programme

Our camps give you the opportunity to see the sights, to discover lakes, mountains, rivers and incredible scenery, to go on short hikes and perhaps even visit some cities. Some days are also spent at the camp, where we organise games, sporting activities and various workshops.

You will also have the chance to learn lots of useful things about Switzerland. For example, we look at the Swiss languages, Swiss songs, Swiss recipes and typically Swiss games and sports.

The interaction between participants beyond all linguistic, cultural and national boundaries provides an opportunity to enjoy an unforgettable experience and to make lots of new friends.

Prices

The prices of the offers are set out in the list below. The Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad wishes to give all Swiss children abroad the opportunity to have a holiday in Switzerland at least once if possible.



We therefore offer reduced camp rates. The relevant application form can be requested with the registration form.

Travel/meeting point

The meeting point is at Zurich airport around lunchtime. Travel to and from Zurich airport is organised and paid for by parents.

Leaders

Experienced, multilingual teams of leaders ensure that the two-week holiday camps are well-organised and offer a wide variety of activities.

Registration

The exact details of the individual holiday camps and the registration form can be found, from Tuesday, 1 February 2011, at www.sjas.ch. We are also happy to post you our information brochure on request. The deadline for registration is 15 March 2011.

Summer camps 2011

Sat. 2.7. – Fri. 15.7.11: Enney (Fribourg)
for 36 children aged 8–11,
price: CHF 900

Sat. 2.7. – Fri. 15.7.11: Schönried (Bern)
for 24 children aged 11–14, price:
CHF 900

Sat. 16.7. – Fri. 29.7.11: Lantsch/Lenz (Grisons)
for 36 children aged 11–14,
price: CHF 900

Sat. 16.7. – Fri. 29.7.11: St. Cergue (Vaud)
for 36 children aged 8–11,
price: CHF 900

Wed. 20.7. – Fri. 29.7.11: Swisstrip
for 20 children aged 12–16,
price: CHF 950

Sat. 30.7. – Fri. 12.8.11: S-Chanf (Grisons)
for 40 children aged 11–14,
price: CHF 900

Sat. 30.7. – Fri. 12.8.11: Flühli (Lucerne)
for 36 children aged 8–11,
price: CHF 900

Sat. 30.7. – Sun. 7.8.11: exclusive: "Pipistrello",
circus project for around 30 children aged 8–14,
price: CHF 900

Sat. 13.8. – Fri. 26.8.11: Melchtal (Obwalden)
for 48 children aged 8–14,
price: CHF 900

Please contact the office in Berne for further information:

Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad
Alpenstrasse 26, CH-3006 Berne
Tel. +41 (0)31 356 61 16, Fax +41 (0)31 356 61 01
E-mail: sjas@aso.ch, www.sjas.ch, "Our forthcoming activities"



89th Congress of the Swiss Abroad: 26 to 28 August 2011, Palazzo dei Congressi in Lugano

Participants at the 89th Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Lugano will debate direct democracy in an international context. More about the topic and the latest information on the 2011 Congress can be found at: www.aso.ch/de/angebote/auslandschweizer-kongress.

Put the Congress dates in your diary today. We look forward to seeing you.

Please send me the registration documents for the 89th Congress of the Swiss Abroad (26–28.8.2011 in Lugano) in spring 2011.

My contact details are:

Surname/first name: _____

Address: _____

City/postcode/country: _____

E-mail: _____

Please write clearly in block capitals.

Please send the completed form to: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad, Communications & Marketing, Alpenstrasse 26, CH-3006 Berne, Fax: +41 (0)31 356 61 01 or send us an e-mail to communication@aso.ch.

Comment

Victory for the SVP, defeat for the left

A year after the ban on minarets, a majority of Swiss voters has once again overlooked the legal reservations of the Federal Council and Parliament to approve a popular initiative, the implementation of which might bring Switzerland into conflict with international law. While the deportation initiative is not at odds with binding international law, it is however contrary to the requirement for proportionality and assessment of cases on an individual basis. Depending on how the proposal is implemented, it could also violate the agreement with the EU on the free movement of persons. The counterproposal put forward by the Federal Council and Parliament aimed to tighten up deportation practice without breaching international standards. But it was defeated in every canton. One reason for this is that the supporters of a tougher stance on foreign offenders did not have faith in it. Another is that many who opposed the initiative did not want measures to become any more stringent.

The legislator is now faced with the almost impossible task of implementing the initiative in a way that is in line with the will of the people, but also respects constitutional rights. This is now the fourth time in the past few years that this situation has arisen. This begs the question of whether a more rigorous preliminary assessment of popular initiatives might be appropriate. This would have to be carried out as early as possible and most certainly before campaigners start collecting signatures.

The tax fairness initiative did not give cause for any such debate. Almost three fifths of voters and 22 out of 26 cantons rejected minimum tax rates for high incomes and assets. Cantons that would not have had to increase their taxes and which would have benefited from the initiative, at least in the short term, also voted against it. The result can therefore also be seen as an endorsement of federalism and a rejection of intervention in cantonal tax autonomy.

The defeat of the tax initiative meant the Federal Council and parliamentary majority at least enjoyed partial success at the ballot box. The Swiss People’s Party (SVP) was the big winner, while the left/green camp suffered an all-out defeat.

RENÉ LENZIN

Yes to deportation, No to tax harmonisation

Switzerland is to deport foreign criminals more systematically. 53% of voters supported a Swiss People’s Party (SVP) initiative. In contrast, an initiative by the Social Democrats (SP) aimed at restricting tax competition between the cantons was rejected. The turnout was 53%. By René Lenzin

Referenda on issues concerning foreigners or integration tend to attract a strong turnout. As with the ban on minarets in November 2009, the turnout for the deportation initiative also exceeded the average in recent years. The intensive campaigns and the demonstrations, some of which unfortunately turned violent, after the announcement of the results highlight just how emotional these issues are.

The rallies were in opposition to the Swiss People’s Party (SVP), which had launched the initiative and was able to celebrate a major victory. 53% of voters and 20 of the 26 cantons backed the SVP proposal. All the French-speaking cantons – with the exception of Valais – and Basel-Land voted against it. A close look at the voting map shows that besides the split between the German and French-speaking parts of the country, there was also a divide between urban and rural areas in German-speaking Switzerland. Rural regions voted in favour, while urban areas tended to vote against. The counterproposal put forward by Federal Council and Parlia-

ment did not stand a chance and was rejected by over 54% of voters and all the cantons.

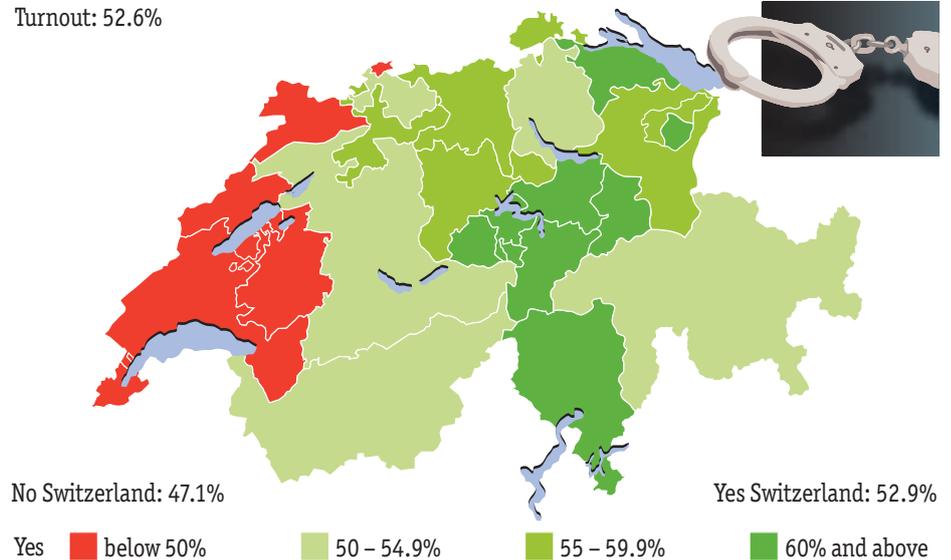
The popular initiative that has now been passed requires foreigners to be deported from Switzerland without exception if they “have been convicted of premeditated homicide, of rape or other serious sexual offences, of other violent offences such as robbery, of people trafficking, of drugs trafficking or of burglary”. Foreigners who have “abused the social insurance or welfare benefit systems” also face deportation. Instead of specifying individual offences, the counterproposal had focused on sentencing as the criterion for deportation. It had also aimed to take greater account of obligations under international law and had provided for mandatory measures to ensure better integration of the foreign resident population.

Tax initiative heavily defeated

Voters rejected a popular initiative by the Social Democrats (SP) for restrictions on tax competition by a surprisingly clear margin. The SP wanted to stipulate minimum

Referendum – Deportation Initiative

Turnout: 52.6%



Source: Federal Chancellery, SDA (Swiss News Agency)

SDA

February referendum: Weapons initiative

cantonal tax rates for taxable income upwards of 250,000 Swiss francs and taxable assets of two million Swiss francs or more. However, 58.5% of voters and 22 of the 26 cantons rejected the initiative. The strongest opposition was found in the rural regions of central and eastern Switzerland which would have had to amend their tax rates had the initiative been approved. 80% of voters in Nidwalden, Obwalden and Zug voted against the proposal, while opposition in Schwyz was almost as high. With the exception of Basel-Stadt, all other German-speaking cantons also opposed the initiative. Ticino and the three French-speaking cantons of Fribourg, Vaud and Valais also rejected it. Those in favour, in addition to Basel-Stadt, were Geneva, Jura and Neuchâtel.

On 13 February, the Swiss people and the cantons will vote on the popular initiative entitled "Protection against armed violence". It calls for the storage of military weapons in an armoury and a national weapons register. It also demands evidence of the need to purchase and use weapons as well as competence in using them. The campaigners say that around 300 people die in Switzerland each year in incidents involving firearms. If these were not so readily accessible, fatal irrational acts could be avoided. The initiative also calls for a better system of control for the 2.3 million weapons kept in private households. The parties on the left and the Greens are backing the initiative, while the Federal Council and the conservative parties are opposed to it. They argue that existing measures aimed at protection against armed violence are sufficient. They say that weapons can be deposited at armouries voluntarily and that keeping weapons at home is part of Swiss military tradition and an expression of the state's trust in its citizens. RL

Warning shot for Calmy-Rey Micheline Calmy-Rey is elected Swiss President by the tightest margin since the introduction of proportional representation. By René Lenzin

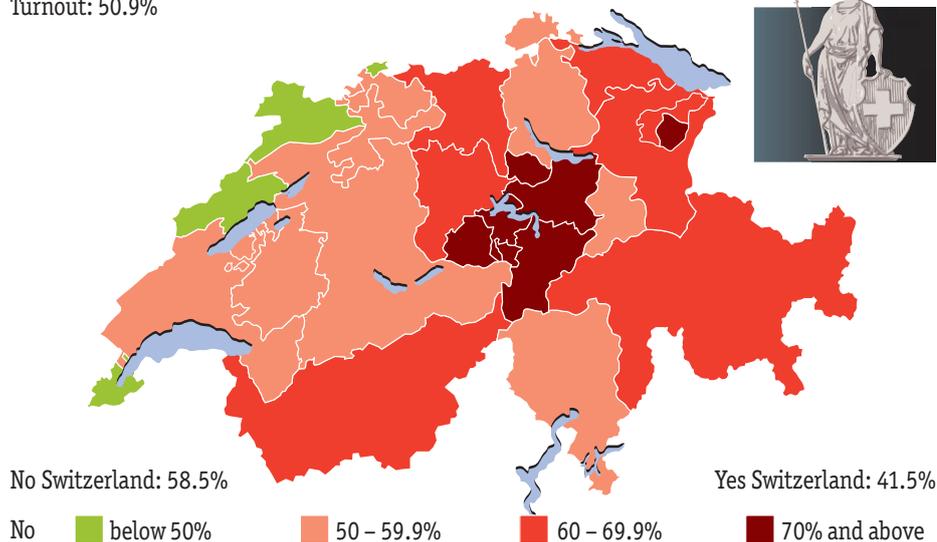
The complete re-election of national government and the election of the President of the Swiss Confederation are repeatedly used by Parliament to settle party-political and personal scores and to fire warning shots. However, no member of the Federal Council has ever been as badly hit as Micheline Calmy-Rey. The United Federal Assembly elected her Swiss President for this year with just 106 out of 246 possible votes. Only a large number of absences and invalid or blank ballot papers saved her the humiliation of a second round of voting. It is the tightest margin since the introduction of proportional representation in 1919.

The 65-year-old Social Democrat from Geneva was punished mainly for the Federal Council's handling of the affair concerning the two Swiss hostages in Libya. After Hans-Rudolf Merz, who has since stepped down, the Foreign Minister was seen as the person most responsible for an uncoordinated and disunited government policy on this issue. Conservative politicians in particular also levelled criticism at her for going it alone and demonstrating a lack of discretion in other matters as well. Calmy-Rey took the result in her stride and played it down as "insignificant political gamesmanship". Having already held office in 2007, she is serving as Swiss President for the second time. She is widely expected to stand down at the end of the year.

Parliament elected Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf as Vice-President. However, her re-election to the Federal Council in a year remains far from certain.

Referendum – Tax Fairness Initiative

Turnout: 50.9%



Source: Federal Chancellery, SDA (Swiss News Agency)

SDA

Switzerland – an ice hockey nation. After football, ice hockey is Switzerland's second favourite sport. A love story that has stirred Swiss passions for more than a century. We take a look at the legendary virtuoso world of Swiss ice hockey.

By Alain Wey



Emotional scenes at the SC Bern vs. Langnau Tigers match: it's not just in Berne that ice hockey attracts sell-out crowds.

The puck flies into the back of the net triggering a deafening roar from the fans. Ice hockey in Switzerland has a long and glorious history dating way back. To say that Switzerland is an ice hockey nation would be stating the obvious. The headquarters of the International Ice Hockey Federation are in Zurich and its president (since 1994) is René Fasel from Fribourg. The Swiss championship rates as the third-best league in Europe after Russia and Sweden. In 2008, the national league celebrated its centenary. As for the Swiss team, it has enjoyed some historic victories in recent years against the leading nations, in particular against Canada (2–0) and the Czech Republic (3–2) at the Olympic Games in Turin in 2006. It finished in fifth place at the World Championship in Germany in 2010 after a regrettable defeat at the hands of the Germans at the quarter-final stage. Let's delve into the history of Swiss ice hockey.

On the ice in French-speaking Switzerland at the start of the 20th century

Legend has it that, in winter 1887, Tom Griffith, a football player with Grasshoppers of Zurich, told his teammates for the first time about this game from Canada. However, Swiss ice hockey first got off the ground in French-speaking Switzerland where Lake Geneva meets the Vaud Alps. At the end of the 19th century, two forms of the sport were played – bandy, imported from Great Britain (a cross between football and field hockey), and Canadian ice hockey. Educationalist Max Sillig, the “father of Swiss ice hockey”, encouraged his pupils in Vevey, canton of Vaud, to play ice hockey. He founded the first identified club in Switzerland in 1904, Bellerive Vevey, and established the Swiss league in 1908. The first Swiss championship took place in the same year with eight teams from French-speaking Switzerland. The first club

in German-speaking Switzerland was set up in Zurich in 1910. In 1916, the national team played its first international match, four years prior to the first Olympic tournament in Antwerp, Belgium, in 1920. This combination of two sports had been played well before then by the upper classes during their winter holidays, but this is merely incidental given that ice hockey's popularity with general society soared after that. From 1908 to 1933, a Swiss international championship was held without any limits on foreign players, and the national league was established in 1915.

The supremacy of the mountain regions

With Davos and Arosa, etc., Grisons quickly established its dominance of Swiss ice hockey from the 1920s. This total supremacy lasted until the start of the 1960s. Davos has also hosted the Spengler Cup since 1923. This is the second oldest international club compe-

tition in ice hockey after the Stanley Cup (1894) in North America. The host club has also won the most honours with 14 titles. Other legendary clubs from high-altitude regions include Ambri-Piotta from Ticino, winners of the Swiss Cup in 1962, and La Chaux-de-Fonds (canton of Neuchâtel), Swiss champions six times consecutively between 1968 and 1973.

Legendary derbies

Rivalry between neighbouring clubs brings out the best and worst kind of passion. More than in any other sport, derby games in ice hockey are the highlight of the championship season. The derby between Ambri-Piotta and Lugano, which sets the valley against the town, dominates ice hockey in Ticino today. The Zähringen derby between Fribourg-Gottéron and Berne also has aspects of an anthological battle. You only have to look at the number of police officers in riot gear on duty at every encounter between these two rival towns. In the Zurich region, Zurich and Kloten also contest cantonal supremacy. As for Langnau vs. Berne, the importance of this match is so great that,

in 2007, the two teams played their 100th derby in the Swiss national stadium with an ice rink replacing the pitch. Berne eventually won 5–2 in front of over 30,000 fans.

Swiss goaltenders in the NHL

Few Swiss ice hockey players play in the NHL, the highly regarded championship of North America. With the exception of Bernese defender, Mark Streit, who plays for the Islanders in New York, Switzerland mainly exports goaltenders across the Atlantic. Fribourg-born David Aebischer defended the goal of Colorado Avalanche (2000–2005), then Montreal (2006) and the Phoenix Coyotes (2007). Goaltender Tobias Stephan from Zurich played for the Dallas Stars from 2007 to 2009. Thurgau's Jonas Hiller has been with the Anaheim Ducks in California since 2007. Currently, the most high-profile Swiss goaltender is without doubt Martin Gerber from Berne who has played for the Anaheim Ducks (2002–2004), the Carolina Hurricanes (2006), the Ottawa Senators (2007–2008) and the Toronto Maple Leafs (2009) and is now with the Edmonton Oilers (2010).

“Go again” – a sporting and ice hockey philosophy

In the movie “Miracle” (2004), which recounts the story of the US team against the USSR at the Lake Placid Olympic Games in 1980, the coach yells “go again” relentlessly at his players, who sprint from one blue line to the other at the end of a disappointing performance against Norway. This mindset is found in ice hockey in both North America and Switzerland. Over the last 30 years, there has been an incredible leap forward both in the professionalism of the players and staff at the clubs and in the quality of the matches. In spring 2011, the Swiss national team will take part in the World Championship in Slovakia where it will face Canada, Belarus and France in the first round. We anticipate some thrilling performances from the team in red and white in the hope of reaching the holy grail of the semi-finals.

SOME FIGURES ON THE SWISS NATIONAL LEAGUE

The Swiss ice hockey league has 25,000 registered players, around 1,200 teams and 900 referees. The LNA championship involves 50 matches with 12 teams: HC Davos (founded in 1921), the bears of SC Bern, the Zurich Lions, the airmen of HC Kloten (1934), Rapperswil-Jona Lakers (1945), the dragons of HC Fribourg-Gottéron (1938), the eagles of Geneva-Servette (1905), HC Biel (1939), the tigers of SC Langnau (1946), HC Ambri-Piotta (1937), the panthers of HC Lugano (1941) and EV Zug (1967). The eight best teams in the league contest the play-off elimination series. The clubs with the most honours are Davos, Swiss champions 29 times, Bern (12), Arosa (9), Lugano (7), Chaux-de-Fonds and Zurich (6) and Kloten (5).

THE NATIONAL TEAM'S GREATEST MOMENTS

In 2010, the Swiss team ranks seventh in the world hierarchy, which is dominated by Russia, Canada and Sweden. The German-Canadian Ralph Krueger coached the national team from 1998 to 2010 and succeeded in taking his protégés to the quarter-finals of the World Championship several times. His greatest achievement was a fourth-place finish in the 1998 World Championship. Since March 2010, Switzerland has been coached by the Canadian, Sean Simpson, who, as head coach of the Lions of Zurich (2008–2010), won ice hockey's European Champions League against Metallurg Magnitogorsk from Russia and the Victoria Cup against the Chicago Blackhawks in 2009. Zurich's European champions title is one of Swiss ice hockey's greatest achievements alongside bronze medals at the Olympic Games in St Moritz in 1928 and 1948.

The Swiss team and the European Championship. The first European championship was organised in Avants near Montreux (canton of Vaud) in 1910. In 1925: 3rd place in Czechoslovakia. In 1926 and 1935: European champions in Davos. In 1939: European champions in Basel and Zurich. Incidental detail: Switzerland beat Germany 3–1 in Zurich in 1941.

World Championships in Switzerland. Olympic Games and World Championship in St. Moritz in 1928: 3rd place for Switzerland. World Championship in Davos in 1935: 2nd place. World Championship in Basel and Zurich in 1939: 3rd place. Olympic Games and World Championship in St. Moritz in 1948: 3rd place. World Championship in Basel and Zurich in 1953: 3rd place. World Championship and “B” World Championship in Lausanne and Geneva in 1961: 3rd place and promotion. “B” World Championship in Berne, La Chaux-de-Fonds and Lyss in 1971: 1st place (B) and promotion. World Championship in Berne and Geneva in 1971 and “B” World Championship in Biel and Val Gardena, Italy, in 1981: 3rd place (B). “B” World Championship in Fribourg in 1985: 2nd place. World Championship in Berne and Fribourg in 1990 (Switzerland was in the “B” World Championship). World Championship in Zurich and Basel in 1998: 4th place. World Championship in Berne and Zurich in 2009: 9th place.

“100 visages, 100 histoires. 100 ans de hockey sur glace en Suisse” (100 faces, 100 stories and 100 years of ice hockey in Switzerland), book and DVD, published by Orell Füssli, 2008. www.planetehockey.ch, www.swiss-icehockey.ch, www.iihf.com

“Being an actor means a life of perpetual motion”

Lausanne-born actor Carlos Leal gives an outstanding performance in Michael Steiner’s new film “Sennentuntschi”.

Inquisitive and insatiable, the former rapper has moved to Los Angeles to pursue his dreams. A trans-Atlantic telephone interview with a rising star. By Alain Wey

“Approach life and new experiences with the curiosity of a child and try to seek out new things every day” – this is the philosophy that Carlos Leal has put into practice with considerable panache. The Lausanne-born actor is living proof that a career switch can be successful. The former vocalist of hip-hop group Sens Unik entered the acting profession around ten years ago. In 2006, he was awarded the Swiss Film Prize for his performance in “Snow White” and he played the casino manager in the James Bond movie “Casino Royale”. Picking up roles in both international feature films and TV series (in France and Spain), Leal got his career off the ground firstly by spending seven years in Paris and then three in Madrid. His desire to progress in his career logically took him to Los Angeles, where he moved to in October 2010. This imposing character, the son of Spanish immigrants, is currently on the billboard poster for “Sennentuntschi”, the new hard-hitting film from Zurich director Michael Steiner. Leal speaks to us in a telephone interview from his home in Melrose, Los Angeles.

SWISS REVIEW: *What was the crucial factor in your decision to leave for L.A.?*

CARLOS LEAL: As an actor, when you start to take an interest in acting methods, you realise that books on acting are often written by the leading American coaches. It’s a little bit like going to New York for hip-hop; for acting you go to Los Angeles. It’s a city with no end of workshops, courses, classes and schools. You meet some very good actors who are not necessarily well known. You only have to take an acting course to come across an excellent director and a group of talented actors. It’s only natural to want to develop. There came a moment

when I said to myself that I needed to take a bigger step forward. This meant crossing the ocean and continent to find out what was going on here for no other reason than the firm desire to progress career-wise and develop my acting technique. But I move around a lot. If tomorrow I had a project elsewhere, I’d go. The acting profession is like that. You move somewhere but always know that everything is in perpetual motion.

What films have you made this summer?

In Switzerland, I was in “Jasper, le voyage immobile” (Jasper, the Motionless Journey) by Julien Nicoud, the first feature film from this promising young director. In Spain, I had a part in “La Rosa de nadie” (Nobody’s Rose) by Ignacio Oliva. I was also in a film in India, “Escape From Tibet”, by Maria Blumencron, which had an international production team and cast, including the talented German actress Hannah Herzsprung.

What role does your wife, the actress Jo Kelly, play in your life?

An extremely important one. With such a busy life and the travelling involved in my movie work, I really need to have a stable home. Being with my wife (who’s half Belgian, half Irish) and my son is extremely important for my emotional stability. She has always supported me in my career and has an excellent understanding of the acting process and how to approach a role. She has knowledge of various techniques, studies a lot and gives acting classes. When I prepare for a role, she often helps me to understand the different facets of the character. As an actress, she recently featured in “I Want To Be A Soldier” with Danny Glover.

What inspired you to become an actor?

When I was still singing with Sens Unik, Gianni Schneider, a director from Lausanne, offered me a part in a theatre production, an adaptation of a book by Pedro Almodóvar, “Patty Diphusa, y otros textos” (Patty Diphusa and Other Writings), where I had to play a pimp. It gave me a freedom that I no longer had in rap. I was constantly labelled a rapper. I enjoyed the experience and gradually became interested in the art of acting. I then went to Paris where I did an intensive workshop at the Jack Garfein studio.

And what about theatre?

I think I’d like to work on stage later in life when I’m properly settled somewhere and have stopped moving around. I think I’d really enjoy acting in plays with good actors and being able to perform the same piece over a long period of time in the same place.

Which actors do you admire?

I really admire some of the new generation of actors: Ryan Gosling (“Fracture” with Anthony Hopkins) and James McAvoy (“The Last King of Scotland”, “Wanted”). They are prime examples of freedom in acting. Then, of course, there’s the older generation with Dustin Hoffman and Kevin Spacey and, among the women, Meryl Streep, who has surpassed everyone.

What was the response to “Sennentuntschi” like?

It’s a box-office success in Switzerland and was number 1 in the movie chart for two weeks ahead of the American blockbusters. It’s extraordinary. I take my hat off to Michael Steiner. I’m proud to have been part of this adventure, which was difficult to complete owing to financial problems. After a long struggle, Michael Steiner has succeeded in producing a highly entertaining feature film that has also sparked considerable debate.

Your character is – again – full of contradictions...

These are the most interesting roles. Even if a character has less depth, I try to add a dimension, provided of course it’s in keeping with the script. In “Sennentuntschi”, Martin Delacroix is a character with two sides, and to make him as credible as possible you can’t give everything away right at the start of the film. Then, when his other



Carlos Leal: a Swiss actor of international stature.

side is revealed, you have to go all out. It's a job I really enjoy. I often play characters who seem inconspicuous and quite unassuming and then all of a sudden they explode into life halfway or three quarters of the way through the movie.

What kind of director is Michael Steiner?

He's very smart and passionate. He likes to use real Swiss stories and turn them into thrillers. He makes them highly entertaining and quite out of the ordinary.

Have you met any other Swiss people in L.A.?

Of course. There's quite a sizeable Swiss community, and the people at the consulate work really hard to promote Swiss film-making and organise theme nights with different Swiss actors. This gives me the opportunity to meet other Swiss people living and working here in various fields.

Your philosophy on life?

There's a song by Jacques Brel called "Rester debout" ("Serait-il impossible de vivre debout?") – Keep your dignity (Is it impossible to live with dignity?). In my life, I'd like to do that for as long as possible. In other words, to always push myself to constantly improve and raise my performance. In that sense, coming from quite a modest background and a small town (Renens) is a real driving force. You feel that you have to do justice to the people there.

Did you get this drive from your parents?

Yes, of course. In the 1960s, they showed great courage. They were a Spanish family who fled from the Franco dictatorship and left everything behind to discover a new world. My parents have a great work ethic and they've passed on to me this drive and determination with regard to work.

www.carlosl.com

SELECTIVE FILMOGRAPHY

"Love Express", by Elena Hazanov, 2003

"Snow White", by Samir, 2005

"Casino Royale", by Martin Campbell, 2006

"Tarragona", by Peter Keglevic, 2006

"Dirty Money – L'infiltré", by Dominique Othenin-Girard

"Verso", by Xavier Ruiz, 2008

"Carré Blanc", by Jean Baptiste Leonetti, 2008

"Los Abrazos rotos", by Pedro Almodóvar, 2008

"El Mal Ajeno", by Oskar Santos, 2008

"There be dragons", by Roland Joffé, 2009

"The Way", by Emilio Estevez, 2009

"Sennentuntschi", by Michael Steiner, 2010

Dissatisfaction among Swiss abroad

The Swiss abroad are no longer popular with Swiss banks.

This is infuriating many Swiss people living abroad who want to keep a bank account in Switzerland. By Heinz Eckert

UBS' problems with the US tax authorities have also had negative repercussions for the Swiss abroad who want a bank account in Switzerland. UBS and other Swiss banks have been trying to get rid of their US clients since the end of 2008. This is not just affecting potential US tax evaders, but also Swiss people living in the USA who have a Swiss bank account. Many Swiss abroad have encountered difficulties owing to the loss of their Swiss bank account. There are no problems with securities accounts, for which there are special units, as these are not subject to US regulations. However, clients residing in the USA who have an account for payment transactions or have mortgages with a Swiss bank are facing major problems. This is because no US bank will provide finance for property in Switzerland.

The Organisation of the Swiss Abroad's Legal Department advises Swiss abroad to approach Postfinance or smaller Swiss banks in an effort to find a solution. These still welcome Swiss living in the USA in many cases.

UBS says it is attempting to minimise any inconvenience to clients abroad. The bank has declined to comment on the specific issue of Swiss in the USA with mortgages.

"Credit Suisse and the Zürcher Kantonalbank only want the rich Swiss abroad" was the headline in the "Tagesanzeiger" and the "Bund" in September of this year, when it was discovered that Credit Suisse had informed clients living abroad in writing that a monthly charge of 40 Swiss francs would be levied on their accounts from 1 July 2010 – that's 480 Swiss francs a year. The reason given was: "In recent years, we have constantly enhanced the scope and quality of our country-specific approach to consultation and service. This involves meeting regulatory requirements concerning your place of domicile and, in particular, the proactive implementation of the highest investor protection standards." Strangely enough, Credit Suisse clients with over a million Swiss francs in their accounts are exempt from this charge. At Zürcher Kantonalbank, Swiss abroad need to have at

least 100,000 Swiss francs in order to open an account in the first place. The account management fee is then six francs a year.

The Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) believes the conduct of the banks towards the Swiss abroad is unfair and fears that the measures taken will discourage Swiss clients and cause them to turn away from the Swiss financial centre and take their deposits elsewhere. "The measures, which primarily concern small clients, are disproportionate and unsuitable for resolving the problems facing the financial centre", wrote OSA in a letter to Credit Suisse, with a copy sent to the banking ombudsman. It called on the bank to examine new options to enable Swiss abroad to continue to maintain a "reasonable relationship" with the banks in their homeland. Credit Suisse blamed the higher charges on greater pressure on the Swiss banks from abroad and the consequent increased expenditure on the management of clients living abroad.

The banking ombudsman's office, however, stated that, under its regulations, it has no authority to intervene in the commercial affairs of banks. It recommended that Swiss abroad attempt to reach individual solutions with the banks, even if just for an acceptable transitional period.

The latest information on this topic can be found at www.aso.ch.



The Swiss abroad feel they are being treated badly by the Swiss banks.

■ The book “**Glaciers**, passé-présent du Rhône au Mont-Blanc” (Glaciers - Past and Present from the Rhône to Mont-Blanc) unsurprisingly reveals that some vast alpine glaciers have lost up to 50% of their surface over the past 150 years. The effect of global warming is three times greater at altitude than the European average.

■ Voting on the **revision of unemployment insurance**: the poor turnout (35.5%) allowed cuts to social unemployment benefits to go through unhindered, with 53.4% in favour.

■ Having just been elected, the **new Federal Council** experienced its first crisis when allocating departments. Tributes were paid to outgoing councillors. Doris Leuthard is leaving Economic Affairs to take over the reins at the Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications. As for Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf, she is leaving Justice to take over at Finance. The newcomers have inherited the vacant posts. Free Democrat Johann Schneider-Ammann is delighted to get Economic Affairs, while Social Democrat Simonetta Sommaruga has settled for the Department of Justice and Police.

■ The **Cardinal** brewery in Fribourg will close its doors in June 2011. In response to the demands of the Danish Carlsberg group, Feldschlösschen has announced that production of Switzerland's second most popular beer will be relocated to Rheinfelden (Aargau). Fourteen years ago, when it found itself in dire straits, this symbol of Fribourg was saved thanks to unprecedented popular and political support. This time, it's the end.

■ **Steve Lee** (aged 47), the singer in the band Gotthard, has been killed in a road accident near

“I would recommend every woman to find a husband who does military service. Anything else is a bit like shopping in a discount store. You never really know what you are getting.”

Ueli Maurer, Federal Councillor and Minister of Defence

“Whether Tell lived or not is irrelevant. What matters is that we discover Tell and his values in ourselves – responsibility, courage and independence.”

Thomas Maissen, historian

“Along with Japan, Switzerland is the safest country in the world. Our system of criminal law is very effective. Despite the death penalty, criminality is higher in the USA than in Switzerland.”

Marcel Niggli, Professor of Criminal Law at the University of Fribourg

“The Swiss postal service is one of the best in the world. No other postal service in Europe ensures that 98% of letters are delivered on time.”

Jürg Bucher, CEO of Swiss Post

“Look in the Larousse encyclopaedia where people are ‘canonised’. Ziegler comes immediately after Zidane, the football star.”

Jan Ziegler, politician, author, UN Special Rapporteur

“First and foremost, I am a confederate. Anyone can become Swiss, but not a confederate.”

Christian Stucki, a top Swiss wrestler

“My dream is of a beautiful African-Swiss girl who is a member of Amnesty International, campaigns for fair trade and can yodel.”

Peter Rothenbühler, on the issue of Miss Switzerland

“I showed my most beautiful films of hundreds of thousands of starlings in the sky to the gentlemen of the Rotary Club and said: “You have a responsibility, you have to act!””

Andreas Moser, biologist and wildlife filmmaker



The new Bear Park in Berne attracted almost 2.4 million visitors in the space of one year. At 250,000, visitor numbers were at their peak in April and August. Numbers increased tenfold thanks to the birth of the cubs Ursina and Berna.

Las Vegas in the USA. At the forefront of Swiss hard rock, the band has sold more than two million albums worldwide.

■ Before stepping down from his position as **Federal Councillor**, **Hans-Rudolf Merz** gained ground in the struggle over tax-

ation between Switzerland and the European Union. Germany and the UK accept the principle of a source tax on assets deposited in Switzerland by persons domiciled in those two countries. For the time being, banking confidentiality is intact.

■ The Federal Council's Expert Committee has put forward a series of measures aimed at strengthening the equity capital of **UBS and Credit Suisse**. If introduced, the measures will cost the two banks CHF 75 billion. Analysts hope the measures will enter into force in 2013.

■ **The 2010 Human Development Index** published by the UN ranks Switzerland in thirteenth position. The “quality of life” award goes to Norway, Australia, New Zealand and the USA.

■ In Thun (Berne), tightrope walker **Freddy Nock** crossed from the town's church to the castle on a high wire strung 30 metres above the ground: a distance of 320 metres. In April he set his sixth world record, walking 900 metres to cross Lake Zurich's harbour.

■ Of the 73 million visitors to the World Expo in Shanghai, 2.7 million visited the **Swiss pavilion**. It was even listed as one of the ten best stands by the press agency China News. The only downside was the continual breakdown of the chairlift.

■ The procedure for purchasing new **fighter planes** has already cost CHF 50 to 100 million without any decision being made. The Federal Council has postponed the partial replacement of the Tiger fleet, which will probably take place in 2015. However, the FA-18s can easily be used until 2025/2030.

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“The SwissCommunity platform networks Swiss people worldwide via the web.”



Ursula Deplazes

Researcher from Graubünden, living in Rome



“Networking plays an important role among the Swiss abroad – both personally and professionally.”



Urs Steiner

Teacher from Berne, head of the Swiss School in Peru



“Get to know other Swiss people abroad, exchange useful addresses, find out about Switzerland ... I can do all these things on SwissCommunity.”



Daniel Keller

Manager from Zurich, living in Hanoi



“The local experience of Swiss people can be very valuable to an international consultant like me.”

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- ✓ Keep up to date on relevant news and events
- ✓ Find an apartment – or the best fondue in town
- ✓ Discover Switzerland



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