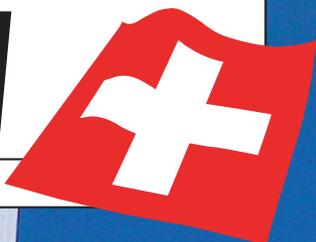


THE MAGAZINE FOR THE SWISS ABROAD

**S W I S S**

**REVIEW**

AUGUST 2012 / NO.4



**Reforms and new trends in  
education and learning**

**Swiss citizen in the Eastern  
European music industry**

**"Fat cat" initiative – four  
years to reach a decision**



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## Limits of direct democracy

**T**HE SWISS PEOPLE DO NOT WANT EVEN MORE DEMOCRACY. This is one way of interpreting the outcome of the vote on mandatory referenda for treaties that took place on 17 June. Over 75 % of the electorate rejected the “decision on state treaties by the people” initiative, which was essentially an extension of the rights of the people. Nobody anticipated such a clear verdict. The notion that the Swiss electorate does not want even more democracy and feels “over-burdened” with referenda on often highly complex matters is further borne out by the extremely low turnout, which stood at just 38 % on 17 June. Political scientists will undoubtedly analyse the referendum result over the coming months and attempt to shed light on the question of when a nation reaches its limitations with democracy.

The outcome of the vote on the “decision on state treaties by the people” initiative has been interpreted by some Swiss politicians as an expression of confidence in parliament and the government. This would appear to be a rather bold interpretation as the same voters overwhelmingly rejected the managed care proposal, supported by government and parliament, on the same day (details of the results on page 19).

Calls for more democracy and referenda are currently growing outside Switzerland, even in well-established democracies such as Germany and Austria. The sense of powerlessness as a result of globalisation, the constraints of the financial and economic crises, and EU decisions often perceived as too far removed from ordinary citizens may explain these calls. In Austria, the “MeinOE” committee is currently successfully collecting signatures for a petition for a referendum on democratic reform, with a view to basing more decisions on direct democracy. Several prominent politicians are surprisingly playing a leading role here.



In education policy, we have experienced over the past two decades how difficult decision-making and reforms often are in Swiss democracy with its great emphasis on federalism. The situation here has stabilised to some extent, the trench warfare is over and the most challenging issues appear to have been resolved. For this reason, we have made education in Switzerland a focal topic of this issue (from page 8). This choice also reflects the 50th anniversary of AJAS, the Association promoting Education for Young Swiss Abroad. AJAS is affiliated to the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad and provides great support for young Swiss abroad faced with the complex web of authorities and institutions in Switzerland.

Finally, I would like to return to the “Hildebrand affair”. The treatment of Philipp Hildebrand as President of the National Bank in the media and his resignation on 9 January 2012 have been the subject of fierce and contentious debate in Switzerland. The Swiss Press Council, as the complaints authority for the public and for media professionals which addresses issues of media ethics, has examined the case extensively and published its opinion shortly before the editorial deadline. As some readers – and the “Weltwoche” – also complained about my article on this matter entitled “How the story of a forced resignation unfolded” in the April 2012 issue of “Swiss Review”, we have published the Press Council’s statement on our website. It contains interesting reflections on the role of the media and background information on the Hildebrand affair. [www.revue.ch/editorial-en](http://www.revue.ch/editorial-en)

BARBARA ENGEL

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**Cover photo: The Rolex Learning Center at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL). This issue profiles Patrick Aebischer, EPFL President and the man behind the global acclaim the institute has enjoyed in recent years. This year’s Congress of the Swiss Abroad also takes place in Lausanne.**

**Photo: SANAA / donated**

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### Where is the balance?

We read your article on FIFA in consternation and exasperation. (...) Does this tirade against FIFA possess the balanced tone that you would expect from "Swiss Review"? (...)

WALTER DE GREGORIO,  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS, FIFA

### Outraged

I am outraged that you chose to publish a picture of Sepp Blatter to grace the cover of the April 2012 "Swiss Review". To many Swiss abroad he epitomises corruption and mafioso-type dictatorship. I would have thought the cover of your publication would depict something or someone worthwhile.

PROFESSOR MARC SCHÄFER,  
SOUTH AFRICA

### FIFA

What a shocker. Is it really worth having an organisation as embarrassing as FIFA based in Switzerland? Should we not fine them and expel them? Is the pittance they pay to Switzerland in terms of taxes really worth it?

DEXTER RONIGER,  
CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

### Incomprehensible

I read your article on FIFA with interest. It is incomprehensible why sporting associations, particularly the fat cats at FIFA, are not subject to Swiss anti-corruption law. Let's hope this situation soon changes.

ERIC THUERING,  
MAMBAJAO, PHILIPPINES

### What sort of country do I come from?

After reading the article "The mountain of asylum applications is growing all the time" in the April issue of "Swiss Review", I asked myself the question: what sort of country do I come from? Is it a country with a strong humanitarian outlook? This debate – recently stirred up by Nathalie Rickli – makes me feel ashamed. How would we Swiss abroad feel if the question of there being too many Swiss was suddenly raised? And how many Swiss People's Party (SVP) supporters have never eaten at Italian, Spanish, Turkish or Chinese restaurants? They are often very affordable. And isn't it foreigners who break their backs on our behalf? How many Swiss people, for example, clean up the mess that

they have left behind? How many Swiss chambermaids are there in our fine traditional Swiss hotels? So we can either completely shut ourselves off and stand alone or completely open ourselves up. But to open up just a little bit? That would be like having a shower and not wanting to get wet.

ROSWITH SCHLÄPFER,  
A NATIVE OF APPENZEL IN COLOGNE

### Destruction of the Swiss countryside

I have been living abroad for almost 40 years. I have returned to Switzerland every year and find myself increasingly disillusioned each time at what is happening to this wonderful country. Ghastly new buildings are being constructed in and around the towns without any respect for

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the landscape. Ugly, grey concrete buildings or sheet metal constructions in gaudy colours like mauve, red, lemon yellow and worse are scattered across the landscape.

In the valleys of Valais, where we enjoy spending our holidays, the meadows, fields and forests are increasingly making way for service stations, garages, small factories, shopping centres and rental properties, which are soulless as they are common and identical in all cantons. We are seriously considering spending our holidays in one of the many countries that have successfully maintained their beauty and soul.

WILLY HENRI PFISTER,  
BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

### Switzerland – a giant construction site

As a 17-year-old, I visited the National Exhibition in Lausanne in 1964. One image stuck in my mind – a new building constructed on a meadow, which was part of a slideshow illustrating urban sprawl in Switzerland. Even then calls were being made for the restriction of development zones and for more rigorous construction laws and spatial planning regulations.

After graduating as an architect, I worked in Cape Town, Kiel, Amsterdam, Pietarsaari, Athens, Los Angeles and San Francisco as well as in Berne and Interlaken. I now live in Bainbridge Island in the USA. Poorly regulated, unrestricted construction is taking place everywhere. The suburbs are growing rapidly here in the United States without well planned and designed development strategies. Switzerland is still an incredibly beautiful alpine nation and a dream destination for many foreigners. However, I have noticed with great concern on my visits

how urban sprawl is continuing and development is increasingly taking place in the alpine valleys. I dread to think of the future we are creating for our children and grandchildren.

ANTON HUGGLER, USA

### Prejudiced journalism

I am certainly not the only one to consider your coverage of the “Hildebrand affair” to be biased and incomplete. You are certainly entitled to dislike the Swiss People’s Party, Christoph Blocher and the “Weltwoche”, but your article is unquestionably “prejudiced journalism”. Most of the Swiss media conveyed a poor image in their coverage of the Hildebrand affair, preferring to shoot the messenger – Blocher – rather than read the message.

MICHEL TURBERG  
PHUKET, THAILAND

### Lack of judgement

Through his actions and his wife’s legally acceptable currency transactions, Philipp Hildebrand handed an opportunity on a plate to the Swiss People’s Party (SVP), Christoph Blocher and, in particular, the “Weltwoche”. His outstanding professional attributes were unfortunately accompanied by a lack of judgement with regard to the moral perceptions of the Swiss nation. It is a shame, that the Swiss banking centre should lose this highly qualified person through these unnecessary circumstances and, much more annoyingly, that Switzerland’s image should be tarnished by this. Mr Blocher and Mr Köppel will be rubbing their hands together with glee at the prospect of this coverage successfully conveying their nationalistic image of Switzerland. This is unacceptable to a liberal Swiss abroad.

ERNA BUNGER, GERMANY

## Icons and realities

THE GOTTHARD POST BY RUDOLF KOLLER is one of the most well-known Swiss paintings. The work of art produced in 1873 depicts a mail coach drawn by five horses travelling through the winding Tremola. A stray calf finds itself in front of the carriage thundering down the valley at great speed. The image frequently featured in calendars and magazines for many years. In his latest book “Das Kalb vor der Gotthardpost” (The Calf in front of the Gotthard Post), literary scholar Peter von Matt writes that as a child, with a “mixture of trepidation and fascination”, he often wondered whether the calf managed to escape or whether the horses trampled over the defenceless animal and the mail coach plunged into the ravine.

The mail coach scene is actually not a particularly cosy one. It is just that nobody really looked closely at it before

Peter von Matt. “An oppressive air” hangs over the high-speed scene. It is not just the calf immediately in peril that is placed in danger by the mail coach but also the startled cows standing in a cloud of dust by the edge. There are always victims who are left behind or lost when the speed of things increases. The height of irony is the fact that the painting was commissioned as a gift for “Switzerland’s greatest ever tycoon of progress”, Alfred Escher, a railway entrepreneur and the driving force behind the Gotthard railway. This is the man whose life’s work indirectly resulted in the disappearance of all mail coaches.

Peter von Matt sees the fact that the image has become an icon of the good old days as one of the painting’s paradoxes. It does not in fact portray such an idyllic image as otherwise the “horses would be trotting sedately, the cows grazing peacefully and the coachman blowing on his post horn”. In terms of art history, the startled herd represents a “spoilt idyll”, as von Matt writes. He adds: “What was perceived and admired as a conservative manifestation in truth bore the signs of upheaval in civilisation and its dangers.”

Based on and continually returning to the racing mail coach, von Matt explores Swiss politics and literature in his fascinating and brilliant text. The outcome is a subtle deconstruction of long-since-outdated Helvetian idylls that sometimes never even existed in the first place. He illustrates, for instance, how Gottfried Keller literarily papered over the cracks in the Swiss idyll. Von Matt outlines the phenomena of the relationships between faith in progress and conservatism and between an outward economic outlook and isolationist self-centredness in all their nuances. Although Switzerland is a highly developed nation, opinion-forming power largely remains in the hands of those who essentially regard the nation as a traditionalist, rural alpine republic.

The political, economic, cultural and literary correlations and insights that Peter von Matt, one of Switzerland’s most prominent intellectuals who celebrated his 75th birthday this year, sets out in his essay and other articles compiled in this book eclipse some major historical works on Switzerland. And he once again achieves this with his unmistakable symbiosis of pithy language and analytical depth.

JÜRIG MÜLLER



## The best Swiss press photos

For the past ten years, the Swiss Press Photo competition has regularly awarded prizes to the best Swiss press photos. In 2012, 213 photographers based in Switzerland submitted 2,586 photos to the jury. To be eligible for the competition, photos must have already been published in the media. The overall winner this year is Mark Henley, a British photographer who has been living in Switzerland for the past five years. His series of black-and-white photos on the subject of Swiss banks is particularly topical. The pictures could become icons for the way banks and banking confidentiality are evolving in Switzerland.



The winner of the 2012 Swiss Press Photo award was the picture of a banker running across Zurich's Paradeplatz to escape a downpour (photo above). This snapshot, as well as Mark Henley's photo of a banker lost in thought or perhaps in despair, belongs to the series "Bank on us".



For centuries, the "Silvesterchläuse" have been going from house to house in Urnäsch on 13 January dressed in elaborate costumes, yodelling and creating a cacophony to ward off evil. There are three different costumes: "Schöni" (beautiful), "Wüescht" and "Schöwüescht" (beautiful-ugly). Simon Tanner won the prize in the "Art and Culture" category for his reportage.



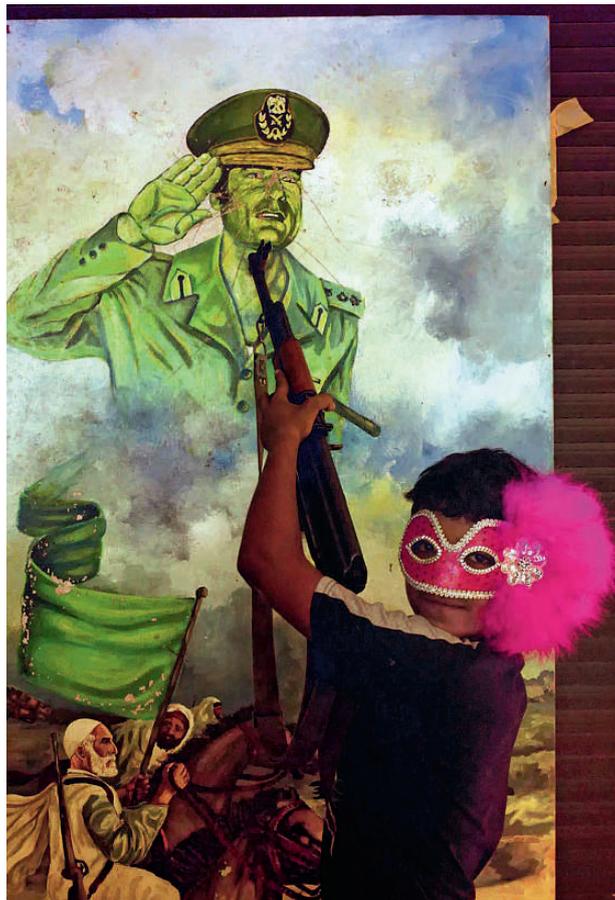
"He opened the door bare-chested and invited me in with a glass of wine. I suggested photographing him in front of the mirror. Sabine Papilloud (second prize in the "Art and Culture" category) won the prize at the Montreux Jazz Festival.



from house to traditional cos-evil spirits. There "Wüeschtli" (ugly), as awarded first e from Urnäsch.



The winner in the "Portrait" category, taken by Adrian Moser, shows Federal Councillor Simonetta Sommaruga as a forlorn woman standing in the Federal Palace under a Swiss cross. The photo was taken ahead of an official photo shoot while the photographer and the Federal Councillor's advisor were discussing the ideal location.



Libya in August 2011: Dictator Muammer al Gadhafi, in power for 42 years, is killed after a nine-month popular uprising and civil war. The people in Tripoli celebrate and plunder the Gadhafi clan's luxury villas. Geneva-based photographer Olivier Vogelsanger won the "Abroad" category with his "Tripolis libérée" series.



a friendly smile. His twins were playing in the dressing ror. It was all very simple." This is how photographer category) describes her meeting with Ricky Martin at



Sister Theresia Raberger has been a member of the Franciscan Order since 1978 and lives in the Rigi-Felsentor Centre in Vitznau (Lucerne). She likens motorcycling to meditation and dreams of riding a Harley-Davidson. Photographer Pius Amrein won third prize in the "Portrait" category for this photo.

## Education – a battlefield and political hunting ground

After 15 years of disarray, reform and political manipulation, education in Switzerland is regaining stability. It appears to be adopting a more pragmatic approach, focusing on the core subjects and geared towards the world of work.

By Tasha Rumley

Eleven years have gone by but the painful episode is still fresh in the memory. This is because Swiss pride has been damaged in an area to which it attaches great importance. A small nation without any natural resources, for decades it revelled in the quality of its education system, which was held up as an explanation for its economic miracle. Politicians, university rectors and lecturers repeated in chorus “grey matter is Switzerland’s most precious resource”.

A great slogan that has nonetheless been left in tatters. In 2001, the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) undertook an international comparative study of the abilities of pupils aged 15 for the first time in history – the PISA study. Switzerland, which believed it had one of the best education systems in the world, only narrowly achieved an average rating. In reading, the main area tested, it finished in 17th position in the rankings, just above Spain and the Czech Republic but light years behind Finland, which had the best pupils in the world.

Hammering home the message, PISA also revealed that the Swiss education system cemented social differences and did not offer pupils from less affluent backgrounds the same opportunities to succeed as more privileged children. Mediocre and segregationist – this is what had become of Switzerland’s most precious resource.

### The generalist approach abandoned

Since the PISA bombshell, educationalists and politicians have been desperately trying to make amends. The repetition of the study every three years provides an opportunity to improve performance. The process had to begin with Switzerland conceding that it had followed the wrong path. Several years earlier in 1995, it had completely reformed the grammar school-leaving diploma that provides access to university education. Numerous new optional subjects had been introduced, allowing grammar school pupils

to explore new horizons as a foretaste of university. These included religious studies, psychology, Spanish and many other subjects. However, PISA only takes account of the core subjects – the mother tongue, maths and the sciences. Switzerland had to abandon its generalist curriculum despite its popularity among pupils if it wanted to compete internationally.

The problem is that improving the general standard of education is much more complex in Switzerland than elsewhere. Federalism has created a tangled web of responsibilities between communes, cantons and the federal government, which differ according to primary, secondary, grammar school and university levels. Regional trends also exist. PISA revealed, to everyone’s surprise, that pupils in French-speaking Switzerland were slightly better than those in German-speaking Switzerland and Ticino.

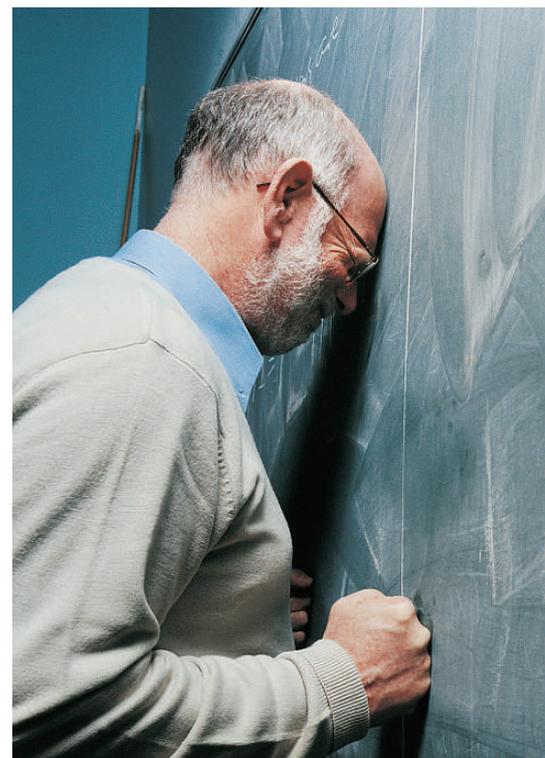
### HarmoS or the Swiss education system

These painful observations have nevertheless done some good. They have enabled Switzerland to introduce the most ambitious educational reform in its history. Allowing pupils to be educated differently in Appenzell to those in Geneva is now out of the question. This is partly because the tendency for Swiss people to settle in their region has been replaced by greater professional mobility among parents. It is no longer feasible for their children to repeat a class when moving from one canton to another. Switzerland has to unite vis-à-vis its neighbours in a globalised world where education is a factor in economic competitiveness. Compulsory education has therefore been set the task of adopting a uniform approach, broadly speaking, under the difficult-to-pronounce term of HarmoS.

HarmoS – a German acronym meaning harmonisation of compulsory education – is an agreement between the cantons that establishes the basic principles of Swiss education. It was the Swiss people who resolved to put an end to the 26 different systems when



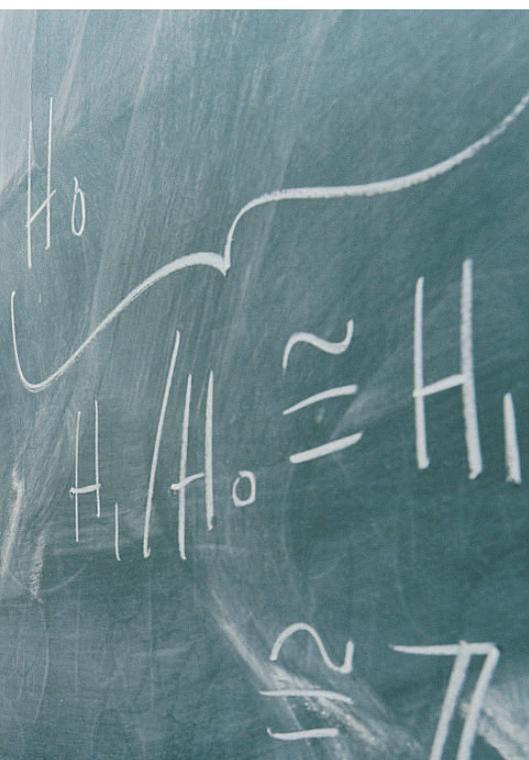
School in the 1940s – teachers had a clear role and pupils were



Reforms and interference from politicians have demotivated



well disciplined and obedient



teachers in recent years

they overwhelmingly approved these constitutional articles at a referendum in 2006 with 86% in favour. With an air of revolution, HarmoS has set key practices in stone. It has established four as the age when schooling begins and has set the total duration of compulsory education at 11 years, including two years of nursery schooling. This has forced some cantons that only provided one – Fribourg, Lucerne, Obwalden, Schwyz and Uri – to create classes. The more delicate matter of educational content has also been defined, specifying mandatory subjects, when they begin and the standards to be achieved.

### A political godsend

All cantons must adopt the HarmoS framework by 2015. A fierce battle involving the entire nation was fought before arriving at this consensus. Harmonisation has had an unexpected consequence as, by creating a single foundation for everyone, it has made debate possible at national level. Both the structure and the content of education can now be discussed across Switzerland. The political parties were quick to see this was a godsend as never before had they been able to make education a national issue.

The Swiss People's Party (SVP) soon seized the opportunity. Switzerland's biggest party, which has a conservative outlook, focused on the school entry age. It portrayed this as the premature removal of children from the family unit and "state interference" in the educational role of parents. It overlooked the fact that 80% of Swiss children already started school at this age. By attempting to collect signatures in every canton to trigger referenda, the party demonstrated its phenomenal power in 2008 and 2009. Public spaces were inundated with posters of a little girl in tears at the prospect of being forced to go to school. This was a tug at the heart strings of parent voters. The press has since revealed that the photograph did not show a four-year-old child as claimed but rather a little girl aged two. Despite this piece of manipulation, the Swiss People's Party won the referendum in seven German-speaking cantons (AG, GR, LU, NW, TG, UR, ZG). If these do not adopt HarmoS by 2015, the federal government will have to bring them into line.

### A laboratory for an ideal society

The intensity of the Swiss People's Party's campaign set a precedent. All the major parties have attempted to position them-



SVP poster against starting school at the age of four

selves on education, putting the institution at the centre of a battleground. The politicians are very sharp – education works incredibly well as a laboratory for the ideal society. The parties can communicate the key elements of their message through education policy. If the Swiss People's Party is fighting for school to start later and to be less stringent, it is to defend its traditional family model embodied by the mother staying at home. In the same vein, the party scored a victory with its initiative on dialect as the main language at nursery school, which was adopted in Zurich in 2011. By going beyond the issue of education, the Swiss People's Party has been able to proclaim its vision of a rural, regionalist and traditional Switzerland.

At the other end of the spectrum, the Swiss Social Democratic Party (SP) has used education to convey its egalitarian and pro-immigration message. It is campaigning for classes that mix all pupils without streaming according to ability as well as for "integrated special-needs education", enabling disabled children to attend normal classes with the support of assistants. The Free Democrat-Liberals present education as the antechamber of the labour market. They are calling for all-day schooling with lunch and after-lesson care to enable parents to work. The party also advocates a competitive and pragmatic dimension to the curriculum, which should educate pupils in line with economic requirements.

While public apathy in politics always presents a challenge for politicians, educational

issues guarantee heated debate, media coverage and the emergence of political figures. Such political opportunism has seen the appearance of new players such as the supporters of private schools, who introduced the idea of “school vouchers” in 2008. This would involve the state giving parents a cou-

pon worth 15,000 Swiss francs so that they could place their child in the establishment of their choice, public or private. This model has seen the development of some interesting educational concepts in the Netherlands. But it has also led to alarming segregation. The native Dutch have abandoned schools

attended by immigrant children where standards have fallen further. A divide into “black” and “white” schools with undertones of apartheid has emerged. While the «school vouchers» have attracted greater attention in German-speaking Switzerland than in French-speaking cantons, nobody is taking them seriously. They have been heavily defeated in cantonal referenda (80% on average) in St. Gallen, Thurgau, Basel-Landschaft and Zurich.

## *Bologna leaves bitter taste at the universities*

**Switzerland's universities have become EU-compatible. But the Bologna reform has sparked student protests and encouraged the approach of achieving the end result with the least amount of effort**

Creating an education area in which a Swiss degree would be equivalent to a Polish or Norwegian one represented the final step for Europe. Signed by 29 countries in 1999, the Bologna Declaration reorganised higher education into two stages – the bachelor's degree, a basic three-year course followed by possible specialisation lasting one or two years known as the master's degree, which is equivalent to the Swiss licentiate degree under the old system. In order to obtain these qualifications, candidates have to collect “credits” that are awarded for each course successfully completed.

### **The hunt for credits**

A decade on and the Bologna system is still unpopular. Whereas previously the university allowed students greater room for manoeuvre to put together their curricula, the reform has made study programmes much more rigid by establishing mandatory courses. Attendance lists have sometimes been introduced for monitoring purposes. This would have been inconceivable in the 1990s when sacrosanct academic freedom was based on economic factors. 78% of students work while studying, 23% out of through necessity. A much fuller and fixed timetable has made doing student jobs a headache. In response to this “infantile education policy”, students have demonstrated an apathetic approach by choosing courses that are easiest in order to obtain credits rather than the ones in which they are most interested. “Doing the minimum is becoming the norm. Students are hunting for and collecting their credits”, complained Martin Roeck, President of the Student Council in Zurich, to Zurich's “Tages-Anzeiger” newspaper.

### **Failed freedom of movement**

One of the hopes carried by Bologna was that of “mobility”, a concept which provided for semesters abroad and a change of university between bachelor's and master's degrees. But only 15.7% of the Swiss go abroad for their education despite the 20% target. Worse still, the rectors report reveals: “The way study is structured prevents rather than encourages mobility.” However, the number of foreigners coming to Switzerland has risen dramatically. Whereas there were 19 000 in 2000, there are now 30 000, making up a quarter of the student population. This influx is exacerbating the problems of a lack of accommodation and packed lecture theatres where some students have to take notes sitting on the floor.

In response, the universities are looking to increase tuition fees for foreigners, which are currently set at a similar level to those for Swiss students (600 Swiss francs per semester). This would involve adopting the Anglo-Saxon model where non-citizens pay tens of thousands of francs to enter universities. However, the Swiss student associations are opposing the proposals as they fear an increase in fees will affect all students, both foreign and Swiss. These concerns were recently borne out at the University of St. Gallen and at the Federal Institutes of Technology.

The threats perceived by students have led to tension since 2009. The Bologna system has become a bogeyman at their demonstrations, a catch-all target for criticism relating to the European reform and Swiss issues. However, the protesters are overlooking the problems they would face in the global labour market if Switzerland were to issue degrees that were not recognised internationally. In spite of the collateral damage it has caused, Bologna is more a necessity than an option.

There have also been clashes between the different levels in the education system, with each accusing the previous one of preparing pupils inadequately. It was the prestigious Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich that opened fire by publishing rankings of grammar schools in German-speaking Switzerland in 2009. It classified the efficiency of grammar schools by analysing the results of its first-year intake. Despite the indignation of the educational world, the universities are increasingly putting pressure on basic education, and with a certain degree of success. Efficiency is now the order of the day with an end to pleasurable, artistic and exotic subjects. One by one, the cantons are gearing their curricula towards the sectors of industry. The canton of Jura is under pressure from all sides to withdraw its theatre option at grammar school. The canton of Vaud has introduced



Student protests in Zurich

extra hours of mathematics. The canton of Zurich is working on a project to increase the time dedicated to German by withdrawing subjects deemed to be of secondary importance, such as French, for some pupils.

### Cohesion sacrificed for the economy

It is paradoxical that, as Swiss education becomes more unified, it is moving further away from its goal of national cohesion in favour of knowledge that is economically beneficial. This trend emerged in 1999 when the canton of Zurich reversed the order in which French and English were learned. Thirteen German-speaking cantons followed suit. As a result, most Swiss German-speaking children today start to learn English at the age of eight and French at the age of ten, while the French-speaking Swiss continue to give priority to German.

The dust is slowly settling after the battle over education. At international level, the latest PISA study has shown an improvement in the reading ability of Swiss teenagers, who are now significantly above average. At national level, HarmoS has left the political arena for gradual implementation in the schools. In German-speaking Switzerland, the drawing-up of the curriculum has entered its final stage under the name of Lehrplan 21. In French-speaking Switzerland, its

counterpart, the PER (Plan d'étude romand) has already been completed. In Ticino, only an uncontroversial partial amendment to the curriculum is required. Finally, following the defeat of the "school voucher" proposal in Zurich, peace has broken out on education's final battlefield. Education will

once again focus on those who matter most, the pupils who are more preoccupied with their algebra than with the reforms going on above their heads.

TASHA RUMLEY is an editor at the news magazine "L'Hebdo" in Lausanne

## *Apprenticeships – Swiss magic formula shows fragility*

**Switzerland takes great pride in its workplace training system which prepares young professionals for employment cost-effectively. A victim of its own success, it is becoming too competitive for weaker pupils.**

Switzerland – a nation of intellectuals laden with degrees? The reality is in fact the opposite of this perception that is widely held abroad. Switzerland has one of the lowest rates of young people with university-entry qualifications. Only 30% of Swiss people hold the university-entry diploma (grammar or vocational school) compared with 60% on average in the OECD countries. So, what is the secret behind the far lower youth unemployment rates that Switzerland enjoys compared to its neighbours? The answer lies in the apprenticeship system.

### 18 applications to find a position

After leaving school, 70% of Swiss opt for workplace training, which combines employment in a company with educational courses. Dozens of professions can be learned in three or four years. And while every economic crisis raises fears that SMEs will stop training young people, this has failed to materialise in recent times. For one thing, the company stands to benefit. In the final year, an apprentice provides three quarters of the productivity of a regular employee for a minimal salary (a few hundred Swiss francs depending on the sector). There is also the fact that, the authorities value the workplace training system highly. Several cantons have introduced grants of up to 5,000 Swiss francs for companies creating places. A solidarity fund to which all companies are obliged to contribute is also redistributed as compensation for the investment involved in turning an employee into an apprenticeship manager.

While 70% of apprentices say they are satisfied with their training and they are better integrated into the world of work than university graduates, the situation is not rosy everywhere. A chronic shortage of places has made the apprenticeship market extremely competitive. On average, young people have to submit 18 applications to find a place. Being in a position of strength, employers are raising the requirements. They are looking closely at the type of school candidates attended. More inferior schools are a stigma for young people who, after an already difficult education, are struggling to enter the world of work.

### Increasingly older

The world of apprenticeships has been transformed within a generation. In the 1980s, companies took on young people aged 16 straight from school without any prerequisites. It was the employer's responsibility to provide full training. Today, the average age of entry is 18. Companies are looking for more mature young people with professional or linguistic experience. In 2011, competition for places reached a new level. Large companies, such as Novartis, Roche and Syngenta, began handing apprenticeship places to German and French youngsters. These candidates were older and had already obtained their school-leaving qualifications, making them more profitable. At the same time, hundreds of young Swiss people were left on the sidelines.

This development raises questions about the nature of the workplace training system. Is it an educational system that aims to offer all young citizens basic professional training, as suggested by the cantonal contribution? Or do free-market rules apply, allowing companies to take advantage of apprenticeships to employ already-skilled young people at low cost? It is time for federal government to provide a response.



Apprentice and master in a joinery

## Passionate, not shy of conflict and very successful

Patrick Aebischer took over the management of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL) in 2000 as a change of career. He comes from a modest Fribourg family with an artistic background and has enhanced the stature of the Federal Institute in Lausanne through his tremendous ability and passion.

By Matthias Meili

Federal Council press releases on the reappointment of officials usually make very dry reading. The statement issued on 4 May 2011 was an exception. The first paragraph was extraordinary. Where normally tedious biographical details are listed, Patrick Aebischer was lauded as a charismatic and experienced leader. The second paragraph was no less euphoric: the Federal Council announced that the President of EPFL, the sister institute of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH), had helped the institution to establish an outstanding profile. The reappointment of the long-serving President for a fourth term from 2012 to 2016 was clearly an extremely pleasant formality.

Malicious rumours suggested that the reappointed official had written the press release himself as his appointment happened on the recommendation of the Federal Institute of Technology Board, the supervisory body of the federally owned university with its two branches in Lausanne and Zurich as well as affiliated research organisations. Aebischer sits on this board in an official capacity and is said to be a powerful figure within it. He is extremely familiar with political mechanisms and aware of how important communication is to his strategic objectives, which he always pursues with great determination and using every possible means.

His time as President of EPFL got off to a tumultuous start. Practically Aebischer's first official act after being appointed EPFL President was to refuse to take up his position. The established Lausanne professors had opposed the reorientation of the university because Aebischer wanted to change the entire senior management structure at once. As a trained physician and bioscientist, he wanted to appoint a second expert in medicine to the institute's management board. This was an act of sacrilege but one which encapsulated his vision back then of turning the institute into a centre of

biosciences. Letters of protest went back and forth, and complaints were made to Ruth Dreifuss, the Federal Councillor responsible at the time. But Aebischer's threat paid off. He forced through his conditions and then brought about upheaval in Switzerland's research landscape, firstly in the Lake Geneva region and then throughout the whole of French-speaking Switzerland. The Machiavellian coup earned him the nickname "Bismarck", which his opponents still hiss with anger today when they reflect on his successes.

### Vision and assertiveness

Since becoming President of the Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne, Aebischer has turned the previously rather conservative little sister of ETH Zurich into a serious competitor of its historic Zurich-based counterpart. The tools he deployed were internal reform and expansion of the sphere of influence. He streamlined the institute's structures in spite of all the internal opposition he faced. In 2002, he reorganised the 12 departments into five large faculties known as schools. Two new "colleges" were then added. In these large units, researchers work relentlessly on a cross-disciplinary basis in future-oriented research fields, such as life sciences, computer technology, micro-technology, finance and management. He appointed people of his choosing to top management positions but grants them a large degree of autonomy in the management of the faculties.

A source with inside knowledge of the politics of higher education describes Aebischer's strategy as follows: "Retain good people, get rid of poor people and gobble up good institutions." Aebischer has frequently adopted a very adept strategy in the competition to attract the best professors. The high-profile Israeli brain researcher Henry Markram chose Lausanne as the location for his Brain Mind Institute despite receiving offers from leading universities all over the

world. "The director's vision won me over", Markram explains, partly in appreciation and partly in awe. As a former neuroscientist, Aebischer declared the project was one close to his heart. Markram and his colleagues are currently working on the outlandish idea of creating an artificial brain with the help of computer power. Millions of Swiss francs have already been invested. The Federal Institute of Technology Board has declared the project an infrastructural priority, the Federal Council and federal administration have now also been persuaded of its merits, and even the EU might be the next to be won over. Under the title of "Human Brain", Markram and Aebischer have put the concept forward for a billion-euro EU programme, the so-called FET Flagship Initiatives. The decision will be made at the end of the year and, even though insiders do not see "Human Brain" as one of the main favourites, funding approval would not come as a surprise.

### Start-up fever

"I would obviously like to see EPFL become one of the best universities in the world", Aebischer remarked at the opening of the Rolex Learning Center two years ago. This is his mantra, which he repeats incessantly. Aebischer loves projects that have public appeal. A good example is the collaboration with Alinghi – the sailing yacht's successes have projected the Lausanne institute's name worldwide. Another example are the space research projects where he always likes to get Claude Nicollier, the only Swiss astronaut, on board. He not only permits but indeed vigorously promotes sponsorship of buildings and infrastructure from the private sector. Patrick Aebischer sees only benefits in this approach: "If companies make a financial contribution, we can spend more of our public funding on research and teaching." Aebischer has brought the business world back into the institute: he personally sits on several



Patrick Aebischer

Boards of Directors and an innovation campus is being built directly adjacent to his institute for companies wishing to benefit from its successful profile. Start-up fever has taken hold in Lausanne.

This get-up-and-go mentality is in Aebischer's blood. "Irish blood", he explains. He is named after Saint Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. His mother was Irish. She came from a family of teachers who had emigrated from the Irish provinces to impoverished post-war Liverpool. There she met his father, a native of Fribourg, in 1952. He had been an errand boy for a baker in Berne before turning his passion into a career by becoming an artist and glass painter. Aebischer talks about his roots very candidly, full of respect for his origins and full of love for his parents. He does not come from the aristocratic or political elite or the academic bourgeoisie. Aebischer's arrival at the Federal Institute of Technology and in university politics – areas dominated by the elite – was a change of

career for him. He was a successful neuroscientist and one of the first research entrepreneurs but he did not have any pedigree.

#### **A leaning towards philosophers**

Someone once wrote that Patrick Aebischer detests ties. The fact is that he grew up as an only child in lower Fribourg, the poor Basse-Ville district. And he takes great pride in that. He loves telling people about the small two-bedroom apartment that his parents lived in. He recalls: "One of those was my father's studio." When asked to, Aebischer can still speak the German-French dialect of the Basse-Ville known as "Bolze". He was one of the first people from

the district to attend university. But getting there was not easy. He initially took poor grades home at grammar school as he was something of a rascal. His mother later sent him to a private school in Geneva. He discovered the philosophers there and with them a thirst for knowledge and passion for education. He went on to graduate from Collège St. Michel without any problems. He later studied medicine in Geneva and continued his career in the USA. This is where he found an environment in which he could really flourish. Performance was all that mattered there, not family background. Aebischer rose to academic prominence, becoming the Director of the Institute for Biomaterials and Artificial Organs at Brown University in Providence.

He returned to Switzerland in 1992 and founded his own company in 1996, a start-up based on the American model. It was one of the first Swiss biotech companies to be financed by venture capital. "Patrick Aebischer is the precursor of the knowledge entrepreneur", said his colleague and

supporter Charles Kleiber. This former Secretary of State for Education and Research recruited him as President of EPFL.

But Aebischer was never just an entrepreneur. He is not motivated by money in itself. His family home offered an atmosphere of ambitious self-education blended with culture and hospitality. "Our house was always full of artists and philosophers. My father was a multitalented artist and my mother enjoyed providing hospitality", he once told the Geneva daily newspaper "Le Temps". He recalled: "She loved people and had an ability to listen." This humanistic legacy continues to shape him today. He reveres painters, artists, thinkers and writers. He has a special interest in "Vienna at the turn of the century", he says, though he has very little time to devote to this.

#### **Criticism despite great success**

By the end of his fourth term as President of EPFL in 2016, Patrick Aebischer will have reached the age of 62. He sometimes already allows himself to look back on his life. "I am proud when I see what we have achieved – the vast amount of funding we have attracted, the top publications, thousands of students who want to come here and the awards we have received", he remarks. However, all of this has failed to silence the critics of his directorship in French-speaking Switzerland and even more in German-speaking Switzerland where he is like a red rag to a bull for many representatives of ETH Zurich. He receives particular criticism for his close ties with industry which it is feared could jeopardise the independence of the research. His financial policy is denounced behind closed doors as unsustainable, and detractors claim professorships are being created without securing long-term funding and students enrolled just to boost the statistics. Yet, Aebischer has achieved many of his objectives, though not all of them. His desire to unite ETH Zurich and EPFL under the new title of Swiss Institute of Technology failed in 2009 despite the support of former Federal Councillor Pascal Couchepin. In this respect, ETH Zurich remains Switzerland's flagship.

## “Cool, just like modern art!”

11-year-olds are learning to write computer programs in Davos. The Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETH) wants to introduce IT lessons as part of general education at all primary schools.

By Reto Wissmann

The guests from Zurich are not here on holiday. IT specialists and education experts from ETH Zurich have travelled to Landwassertal to teach computer programming to primary school teacher Adriano Schaniel's fifth grade class. This morning, the children have to make the turtle on the screen walk in a square. They already know from last time that `fd` stands for forward and `rt` for right. They type the programming instructions “`fd 100 rt 90`” into their laptops. The turtle marches 100 steps forwards and then does a 90-degree right turn. The programming language Logo is very straightforward. The software can be downloaded free of charge. The experts from the Education and Consulting Centre for IT Training at ETH Zurich know from experience that even eight-year-olds can use it.

The little boys and girls concentrate hard on the tasks set, discuss them with classmates sitting next to them and obtain advice from the IT experts. Naima just cannot get it to work. The error is quickly identified. She has typed “`sqare`” instead of “`square`”. “The computer does not tolerate any inaccuracies”, explains IT education expert Giovanni Serafini. Programming forces the children to work accurately. The system reacts immediately to errors. They can then be identified and corrected by the pupils. In an ideal scenario, the teacher only plays the positive role of helper rather than corrector.

By the end of the five-day course, the children will be able to draw complex shapes and patterns using computers. Without being aware of it, they are learning the modular procedure used in the design of complex systems. Complicated problems are broken down into individual elements and resolved step by step. This approach is adopted by experts in all technical disciplines. Nicolas is already bored with just simple squares. He has developed his own program that enables his turtle to draw a



Inquisitive look: a pupil during the programming class

sun with 2,000 rays at lightning speed. “Cool, just like modern art! I’m going to print it out at home and ask for 2,000 francs for it”, he tells his classmates.

### Ensuring the competitiveness

ETH's IT specialists believe what they are teaching the children in Davos should be part of general education in a high-tech society. They do not want to play programming off against other subjects but are convinced that everyone today ought to understand the fundamental rules according to which computers operate. Serafini believes it is also about ensuring the competitiveness of the Swiss economy. However, this notion has yet to be embraced by the Swiss education system despite the Institute of Technology's efforts in this regard for over 10 years now. Admittedly, computers are now found in almost every classroom and more and more teachers are trying to ensure their pupils adopt a responsible approach to using electronic media, but programming is taught hardly anywhere and not at all in primary school. IT education expert Serafini cannot understand this: “Just teaching children to use computers is like sitting a driving test at school instead of learning physics.”

Professor Juraj Hromkovič's team at ETH has a clear objective: it has already helped to re-establish IT as an optional

supplementary subject within grammar schools. The aim now is for it to be introduced at primary school, too, as an independent subject. But there is still a long way to go even though the IT specialists have already taught their Logo courses at many schools with the support of the Hasler Foundation and are lobbying determinedly at teaching universities. Computer programming is not part of the Lehrplan 21 curriculum that is soon to be mandatory for the whole of German-speaking Switzerland.

Some success has nevertheless been achieved. Universities in Zurich have joined forces with business leaders and politicians to create Switzerland's equivalent of Silicon Valley. “eZürich” is a priority for the city's legislative agenda and the “Informatik ist spannend” (IT is Exciting) educational project is part of this. The first classes teaching programming will begin in the autumn, and the project will be expanded as widely as possible from next year.

### Many requirements

Zurich will be able to benefit from the experiences of Davos. Primary school teacher Adriano Schaniel is adamant: “The introduction of IT as a subject is long overdue.” He is, however, also aware that schools have to meet many different requirements. For example, in Grisons, basic English will be introduced in the next school year, while less time will be dedicated to handicrafts. Schaniel's enthusiasm for IT would not be met with unanimous approval in the staffroom of his school in Davos. However, his pupils love the artwork produced by the Logo turtle. Long after the lunchtime bell has sounded, four boys are still glued to the screen. One of them has written a program for a filigree mandala. His classmate exclaims: “I'm going to do that at home as well!”

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## Love stories behind the Iron Curtain

From the mid-1950s Swiss businessman Marcel Cellier negotiated with Communist regimes in Eastern Europe on shipments of ore for the Swiss metal industry. At the same time, in the middle of the Cold War, he showed to the Western world how melodies from the East could melt hearts. He introduced the West to Hungarian gypsy music, the plaintive tones of the Romanian pan flute and the archaic-sounding harmonies of Bulgarian female choirs.

By Marc Lettau

You could picture this scene in any cosy Swiss living room: there is a “listeners’ choice” concert on the radio, a pan flute can be heard through the speakers, and the lady of the house says: “Ah! Zamfir!” And her husband responds: “Exactly! Zamfir, with James Last.” Pan-flute player Gheorghe Zamfir, who grew up in isolated, Communist Romania, has been a firm favourite in Swiss households for decades. The ethereal tones of his pan flute are frequently heard in hotel foyers and shopping centres and are a popular listeners’ choice for music programmes. The average Swiss record collection is also highly likely to include some pieces from “Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares”. After all, even George Harrison of the Beatles enthused about the other-worldly, archaic sounds produced by the Bulgarian female choir. “Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares” has long been regarded as perhaps the most successful example of the World Music genre. It actually won a Grammy Award in 1990. Even the youth of today in Switzerland are fond of Eastern European music. In clubs, remixes of music from the Roma people of Eastern Europe and Balkan pop stars are regarded as “hip”. And whenever a concert featuring brass band music from the Balkans is announced, young people swarm to it as well. In short, Switzerland is now all ears for music from Eastern Europe.

### From the Black Sea to the Baltic

This is mainly thanks to Marcel Cellier. Now 86 years old, this Swiss gentleman is regarded as a pioneer for his discovery and promotion of Eastern European music. For almost half a century Cellier and his wife Catherine made recordings in Eastern Europe. For thirty years the Radio Suisse Romande programme “De la Mer Noire à la Baltique” (From the Black Sea to the Baltic) provided an insight into Cellier’s musical journeys of discovery. And



Catherine and Marcel Cellier in their youth and today at their home in Chexbres

for twelve years Bayrische Rundfunk broadcast Cellier’s radio series “Völker, Lieder, Tänze” (People, Songs, Dances). These statistics reveal just how obsessed the music-lover was: starting in 1950, the Celliers travelled three million kilometres throughout post-war Eastern Europe, recording more than 5,000 examples of the region’s music in the process.

These days, Marcel Cellier says, “I have no interest in travelling anymore. I don’t need to travel anymore.” Today he finds enough pleasure in “looking out of the window and admiring the beautiful Lavaux countryside”. The couple live in a fairytale country home surrounded by the vineyards of Chexbres, in the canton of Vaud, and let their minds do the travelling now – taking in their view of Lake Geneva, the Savoy Alps, the vines and their own flower garden. Cellier enjoys a cigarette without any hint of a bad conscience, and later in the day a glass or two of St. Saphorin. After all, this wine is grown and bottled virtually on his doorstep.

Now he has settled down, the obligatory questions are put to him: Why, Marcel Cellier, were you on the road for half a century gathering musical treasures in the process? What motivated you? How do you see yourself? As a music ethnologist? He appears to find the questions only vaguely interesting. People do what they do, he says: “I certainly was not on a mission, and I didn’t have to convert anyone.” Perhaps, he says, the an-

swer is simple: he is a doer, not a thinker: a player with a drive and enthusiasm for discovery. “And I also like sharing with others all the fantastic things that I am passionate about.” Catherine Cellier offers a more succinct way of summing up the man with whom she has shared “the happiness of more than 60 years together”: “He speaks through music. He participates through music. He lives music.”

### Love No. 1: The recorder

Cellier lived and still lives the music that was originally forbidden to him. He grew up in the strict, ultra-conservative milieu of the Free Church of the Brethren movement (Darbyites), where music was a source of conflict. Although he was given a recorder at the age of four, when he performed a dance by Leopold Mozart on it he was firmly told that there was no place for dance music. Cellier says: “A sarabande was enough to turn you into a prodigal son.” So, the dutiful son did what was expected of him: he studied assiduously, completed an apprenticeship with a bank, established himself in his profession by becoming an authorised signatory and, from 1950, pursued what is commonly called a career. He became the right hand of an ore trader and quickly worked his way up from clerk to Vice President. He purchased metal ore behind the Iron Curtain that was then processed into quality products by Swiss companies such as Von Roll, Fischer, Von Moos,

Monteforno and Metallwerke Dornach. He dealt with the state-run corporations of the Soviet Union that traded in raw materials, negotiated with Polish and Romanian combines, and pressed palms with chrome ore producers in Maoist Albania. While he was trading in silicon, copper and manganese, Cellier says he stumbled on a gold mine – “the region’s still-vibrant folk music”.

### Love No. 2: Catherine

So, did this raw materials trader also adopt a business-minded approach and plunder the cultural treasures of Eastern Europe alongside its ore reserves? No, not really, because first and foremost Cellier, despite his thwarted ambitions with the recorder, was more a musician than a dealer in raw materials – a trombonist in the army, a trumpeter with the “New Hot Players” of Neuchâtel, a cellist in a string trio, and an organist. Secondly, Cellier initially travelled throughout Eastern Europe for pleasure rather than business – simply out of love, wanderlust and high spirits, and because of Catherine. Catherine Cellier: “We didn’t know each other, but one lunch-time he spoke to me and asked me to accompany him on a trip.” His directness made her sceptical.

But just a few months later the couple set off in a Fiat Topolino, heading for Istanbul. The trip turned into a disaster half-way through – they had to navigate the post-war hell of visas and form-filling and

their car was confiscated and sealed by the Bulgarian customs authorities, forcing the couple to continue their journey by rail. Catherine slipped into the role of journalist and described for the “Bund” of Berne her youthful impressions of the sadness behind the Iron Curtain. Two years later, in 1952, they made their second attempt – and underwent a life-changing experience. On the radio they carried with them they heard something they had never heard before, thanks to Radio Skopje, Radio Belgrade, Radio Sofia and Radio Bucharest: plaintive voices, seemingly discordant, diaphonic intervals, asymmetric rhythms and unfamiliar instruments. There was no going back: from then on, the Celliers always carried a 35-kilogramme tape recorder with them to record their encounters with musicians.

### Love No. 3: 45/16 time

On the road, heading East in a Fiat Topolino: this is also the subject of the seminal work by French-speaking Swiss Nicolas Bouvier entitled “L’Usage du monde” (The Way of the World). Travel as a journey of self-discovery, an escape from the narrow confines of home. “Exactly”, says Catherine Cellier, “a fantastic, touching book. Almost a bible for me”. A bible because, although the Celliers set off a year before Bouvier, Nicolas Bouvier managed to put into words the essence of such a trip.

What followed can be summed up quite simply: the Celliers penetrated ever deeper into the music of Eastern Europe at that time, discovered Bulgarian dances in 45/16 time and were immediately hooked: “The Bulgarians can dance to this because they don’t count, they just dance.” Cellier’s hunger for these worlds of sound drove the couple ever further east – but in a sturdy Mercedes Benz rather than the original little Fiat. This car had one major advantage: the political elite in the Communist countries of Eastern Europe also liked quality, so spare parts were easy to obtain.

### “Lady Madonna” tops the charts

1968: The Beatles topped the Swiss charts for thirteen weeks with “Lady Madonna”, and Cellier met the young pan-flute player Gheorghe Zamfir in Bucharest. He was captivated by Zamfir’s powers of expression. On seeing that the musician was about to “waste his talent in a café”, Cellier leapt into action and invited him to French-speaking Switzerland. With far-reaching consequences: within less than an hour the two had recorded an LP, “Flûte de Pan et Orgue”, in a church at Cully, with Zamfir on the pan flute and Cellier on the organ. The 2,000 records pressed were nowhere near enough to meet the demand. 1.5 million copies were sold of this recording with this hitherto unknown pairing of instruments, regarded by record companies as “uncommercial”. Cellier and Zamfir had captured the mood of the times.



Marcel Cellier with Romanian musicians in 1961



Marcel Cellier with young musicians at the music school



Marcel Cellier presenting his radio show in 1973

Even “Picnic at Hanging Rock” (Peter Weir, 1975), a milestone in Australian film history – the film that highlighted the yawning gap between European settlers and the mysteries of aboriginal Australia – drew on their music. Australians went wild. The concert halls “down under” were full. And Zamfir, who liked to act the lonely shepherd, rocketed to stardom. Zamfir and Cellier. Zamfir and James Last. Zamfir and Ennio Moricone (“Once upon a time in America”).

#### A Grammy for archaic sounds

At the same time, Cellier enthused in his radio broadcasts about the magic of Bulgarian choirs, published an album called “Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares” (1975) and, in so doing, fed the hunger of those who yearned for archaic, unadulterated music. While Cellier showed the avant-garde, artistic way in which the choirs from Tollbuchin, Sofia and Plovdiv brought archaic songs up to date and demonstrated the magical symbiosis between old and new, listeners preferred to im-

agine themselves transported back to an innocent world of mediaeval tonality. “Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares – volume II” ended up exceeding Cellier’s wildest imaginations, winning him a Grammy Award in Los Angeles in 1990. So successful had the amateur become that Warner Brothers and Polygram took over the marketing of this musical export from Bulgaria. This was followed by a “Le Mystère” world tour, at a time when the socialist order was being toppled – not mysteriously but rapidly – in the choirs’ home country.

#### Discord

So has he led a charmed life of love and harmony? No, says Marcel Cellier. Like everyone else he has also had his disappointments. He has not come to terms with the extent to which Gheorghe Zamfir has distanced himself. Nowadays, the musician treads a fine line between genius and delusions of grandeur, and is on a mission with his pan flute to free the world of “Satanic sounds”. His material fortune has been squandered, and now he tends to view himself as a prototype of the “exploited gold mine”.

Astonishing things are also happening in the world of song: in the mid-1980s, the female choir of Bulgarian state radio and television decided to change its name to “Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares”. The objective was to profit from the wave of popularity that Cellier had unleashed with his collection, which notably included several choirs.

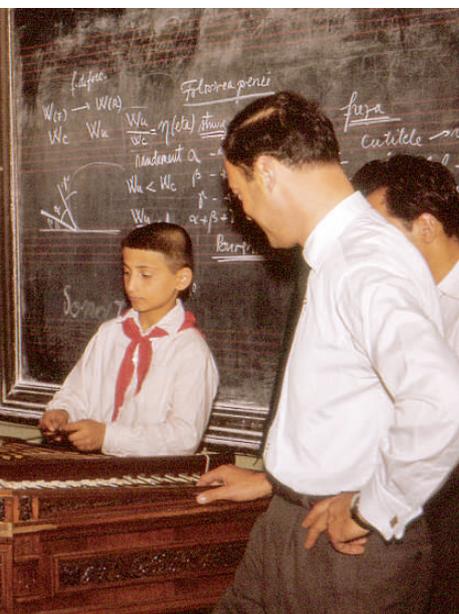
#### TRACING THE FOOTSTEPS OF MARCEL AND CATHERINE CELLIER

In the new Swiss documentary film “Balkan Melodie” (2012), director Stefan Schwietert documents the life and love story of Marcel and Catherine Cellier and follows in the footsteps of the Eastern European World Music stars of that era. Thanks to encounters with pan-flute player Gheorghe Zamfir and the singers of “Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares”, the film itself has become a piece of contemporary history and illustrates how “folk music” has been played, appreciated, assimilated, marketed, changed and rejected over the years.

[www.cineman.ch/movie/2012/BalkanMelodie/](http://www.cineman.ch/movie/2012/BalkanMelodie/)

Cellier is unruffled. The discoverer knows that discoveries sometimes change and develop a life of their own. And the singers know that their interpretations have changed the perception of music in their home country as well: for Bulgarians, folklore is only genuine when it sounds like the folklore Cellier loved to hear. Choir director Dora Hristova explains it like this: “Without Cellier our choir would not be what it is today. And without the choir Cellier would probably not have become what he became.”

MARC LETTAU is an editor at “Swiss Review”



Cellier in Bucharest



Gheorghe Zamfir and Marcel Cellier on the organ

## E-voting at the 2011 elections

Following the 2011 elections, the Selects election research project included the Swiss abroad in its survey for the first time. In the following article, Georg Lutz, Head of the Selects project and Professor at the University of Lausanne, explains the main findings on e-voting.

Pilot trials for online voting have been taking place for several years now in Switzerland, but 2011 saw the first e-voting trials held for National Council elections. This is important for the Swiss abroad because the time required to complete and return ballot slips by post is often very short and, in many cases, makes it impossible for them to cast their vote. The OSCE Election Assessment Mission, which observed the 2011 elections in Switzerland, also criticised the short time frames (details can be found at <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/Switzerland/81974>).

Implementing an e-voting system is a complex undertaking. The process must guarantee voting secrecy and provide the best possible safeguards against errors, misuse and manipulation. Added to this, it must make it easy for voters to cast their votes. It is difficult to meet all these requirements optimally at the same time: the more comprehensive the security measures, the more complicated the voting procedure.

### Higher turnout with e-voting

Whether e-voting has a positive impact on turnout and how high acceptance is among voters can be determined from the survey on the 2011 elections. Sixteen percent of respondents said they were able to vote online, 71 % said they were unable, and 13 % said they did not know. Those who had the opportunity to vote electronically said they also used this option frequently. Almost three quarters said they had cast their vote electronically. Moreover, the vast majority of those who were unable to vote online said they would use e-voting if they had the opportunity. Among the non-voters, almost all said they would have cast their vote had they had the opportunity to vote online. This may be an exaggeration



on their part, but it shows a definite interest in electronic voting among our compatriots abroad.

The key question, however, is whether the possibility of voting electronically did actually increase the turnout. At around 30 %, the turnout for Swiss abroad

entered on the electoral roll is well below the turnout of around 50 % for the electorate as a whole. The survey revealed that, at 41 %, the turnout among those who were able to cast their vote electronically is significantly higher than among those who said they were unable to vote electronically (31 %). For those who did not know whether they were able to vote electronically, the turnout was only 16 %.

### Acceptance of e-voting

For all voting systems, what matters is not just how secure they are but also the extent to which they are accepted. There is no such thing as a faultless method, and most voters (in Switzerland and abroad) have virtually no knowledge of how a voting system actually works. For example, very few know how secrecy is guaranteed for postal voting and how postal votes are counted. But since more than 80 % of voters now send their votes by post, we can only assume that most do not view this as a problem.

The survey also revealed how important various aspects of e-voting are and which aspects gave the respondents cause for concern. They all appreciated the fact that an electronic vote would be received in good time and that the votes would be counted correctly. Many of the respondents also said it was much easier to cast their vote electronically at home. On the other hand, the novelty value – in other words, curiosity about the new method – played virtually no role. Some 40 % of respondents were worried about possible

errors in transmitting and counting the votes, and one third questioned the security of the new technology. A lack of Internet skills and the complexity of the voting procedure were not really regarded as a problem.

### Conclusions

E-voting is expected to have a positive impact on the turnout of Swiss voters abroad. The percentage of Swiss abroad who exercise their right to vote tends to be lower than that of voters in Switzerland: campaigns are less high-profile abroad than in Switzerland. However, the gap between the turnout rates is expected to become narrower.

It is hardly surprising that the community of the Swiss abroad enthusiastically welcomes the universal introduction of e-voting. The stumbling block remains the security of the system. This is where respondents voiced their greatest concerns. Yet these concerns should not be exaggerated and give rise to excessively complex systems. More than a decade ago, concerns were also being voiced about the simplified postal voting system. Today, this rarely attracts criticism, even though postal voting in some isolated cases falls foul of errors and manipulation. E-voting is therefore likely to become more widely accepted as soon as this option has been introduced across the board.

GEORG LUTZ

### SWISS ABROAD SURVEYED

For the first time and with support from the FDFA, the Selects project also surveyed the Swiss abroad after the elections. Some 7,000 voters were contacted and 1,629 (23 %) took part in the survey. The survey was conducted online using a questionnaire designed especially for the community of the Swiss abroad. Further information is provided in the following publication in German: Georg Lutz, Eidgenössische Wahlen 2011. Wahlteilnahme und Wahlentscheid. Selects-FORS: Lausanne (2012); available online at [www.selects.ch](http://www.selects.ch).

## Smoking ban, imputed rental value and music lessons

**On 23 September, Swiss voters will be asked to vote on three popular initiatives: a universal smoking ban, home ownership tax and music lessons in schools.**

By René Lenzin

Like many other countries, Switzerland has had a ban on smoking in restaurants and public buildings since 1 May 2010. However, the cantons have shown a little leniency when it comes to granting exemptions from this rule. In seven cantons (AR, BE, GR, SO, UR, TI, ZH), smoking rooms are permitted in restaurants, while eleven cantons (AG, AI, GL, JU, LU, NW, OW, SH, SZ, TG, ZG) also allow restaurants with a surface area of up to 80 square metres to be run as “smoking establishments”.

A popular initiative launched by the Lungenliga (Lung League) calls for a ban on these exemptions throughout Switzerland and for comprehensive protection against passive smoking. While the number of non-smokers who regularly inhale harmful smoke has dropped, thousands of workers, particularly those who are employed in restaurants and hotels, are still exposed to passive smoking at their place of work with no real way of avoiding it, says the Lungenliga. This may lead to respiratory infections, asthma, cancer and cardiovascular diseases. The only cost-effective and simple way to prevent these health risks, say the initiators, is to impose a universal ban on smoking in enclosed

spaces – a solution that has proved successful in many other countries.

The Federal Council and a parliamentary majority, however, want to retain the current solution and oppose the initiative. The National Council rejected it by 138 votes to 52, and the Council of States by 28 to 7.

### “Secure housing in old age”

Owners of a house or apartment have to pay tax on an amount defined by the authorities as income. This is referred to as the imputed rental value. In return, debt interest can be deducted from the taxable income. Where the level of debt is high, this system leads to tax savings, but the tax bill is higher if any debts tied to the property have been largely or fully paid. This imputed rental value can lead to financial difficulties, especially for retired people on a low pension who have no further debt interest to pay on their property. The popular initiative “Secure housing in old age” is therefore calling for households made up of pensioners who own their own home to be offered a choice between remaining with the current imputed rental value system and opting out of it and thereby waiving their right to a tax deduction for debt interest.

The Federal Council and parliament reject the initiative on the grounds that unequal treatment of the different generations cannot be justified objectively. The right to choose is also problematic, they say, arguing that, if it were granted, the imputed rental value and deductibility of debt interest would have to be abolished for all homeowners. However, a corresponding counterproposal has foundered in parliament on the question of how much homeowners could deduct from tax in terms of maintenance costs. The initiative is therefore being put to a vote without a counterproposal. The National Council rejected it by 119 votes to 77, and the Council of States by 36 to 6.

### “Youth and music”

A successful counterproposal has, however, been drawn up by the Federal Council and parliament to the popular initiative “Youth+Music”, which calls for more musical instruction in schools and outside school hours. This would oblige federal government and the cantons to promote music lessons for children and young people. According to the Federal Council and parliament, however, the initiative challenges the cantons’ sovereignty over education and clashes with their efforts to harmonise the education system. Given that a majority shares the initiators’ basic concerns, these were incorporated into a counterproposal and the original initiative withdrawn. The National Council recommended the counterproposal by 139 votes to 37, and the Council of States by 30 votes to 6.

## HEALTHCARE POLICY IN TATTERS

**On 17 June, the electorate and the cantons delivered three Nos and a clear defeat for parliament and the Federal Council with their healthcare policy.**

Seldom have proposals from the Federal Council and parliament proved so unpopular among voters as the proposal to promote managed care networks. It had absolutely no chance at the ballot box. Defeat for the managed care proposal had been predicted, but the fact that 76 percent of voters voted No came as a surprise. There is only one way to interpret this outcome: the majority of Swiss have absolutely no desire to have their freedom to choose a doctor restricted or to have a higher contribution to costs enforced on those who want to be treated directly by a specialist without first consulting their family doctor. This marks yet another failure by the beleaguered healthcare policy to halt rising costs.

With a turnout of 38 percent, not a single canton voted in favour of the proposal. Opposition was most pronounced in French- and Italian-speaking Switzerland, where few managed care networks exist to date.

### Final rejection of home ownership savings schemes

The two popular initiatives that went to referendum on 17 June were also given a clear thumbs-down. All the cantons and three out of four voters rejected the initiative by the Campaign for an Independent and Neutral Switzerland (AUNS) for a greater say in foreign policy. AUNS had called for a nationwide ballot to become mandatory for virtually all treaties.

The issue of home ownership savings schemes has been dismissed once and for all. All the cantons and 69 percent of voters rejected the Swiss Association of Homeowners’ initiative to introduce tax concessions for home ownership savings. A similar proposal was thrown out back in February (see also “Swiss Review” No. 2/2012).

## Concerns over the land and countryside

**The political will to curb urban development of the countryside is growing in Switzerland. Even fervent environmentalists are astonished at the federal parliament's most recent decisions on the protection of the countryside.**

By Marc Lettau

The soil is disappearing as development zones expand. The pressure on Switzerland's countryside has become so great that the voting public is willing to drastically curb development. On 17 June, voters in the canton of Zurich voted in favour of better protection for agricultural land and a reduction of ten square kilometres in the planned development zone. Quite a number of development projects planned for green-field sites have effectively been halted by this referendum. The outcome is surprising as the government and parliament of the canton of Zurich had clearly opposed the proposal. Though, the approval of the second homes initiative had already illustrated how much protecting the countryside is in keeping with the spirit of the times. Esther Guyer, the spokesperson for the Greens in Zurich's cantonal parliament, also shares this view. The Swiss people are tired of seeing "the countryside concreted over", she says. They

have become aware that alternative methods can be deployed based on principles aimed at greater density, greater height and increased sustainability.

The rural canton of Thurgau also plotted a new course on the same day. The people of Thurgau approved a construction law that enables the development zones to be reduced in size. This is based on an intervention in the mechanism that supports the creation of land for development. In future, landowners will profit much less from sudden increases in the value of their land when it is converted from farmland into building land. They will have to pay 20 % of the additional value generated overnight to the Thurgau treasury. The canton will use this revenue to reduce the size of existing development zones. This will require significant financial resources as landowners will have to be compensated when their land loses value after being turned from building land back into farmland.

### Call for rezoning

Protection of the countryside is also suddenly in vogue in the federal parliament. During the summer session, it decided to tighten up the Spatial Planning Act (RPG) very much in line with the proposal adopted in Thurgau. 20 % of the additional value generated as a result of development zoning is to be paid to the public coffers nationwide in future. The cantons are to use the accrued revenues to reduce the size of existing development zones in a targeted manner. However, the National Council and Council of States are going a significant step further. They have decided that excessively large development zones abso-

lutely must be reduced. Anything exceeding the demand for the next 15 years must lose development zone status. This is the only way in which urban sprawl can be curbed, they say. The tightening-up of the law will hit "miscreant" cantons with large and sprawling development zones particularly hard. It is as yet unclear whether the tightening-up of the Spatial Planning Act will have to go to a referendum. The Swiss Chamber of Commerce and the canton of Valais, which has an abundance of building land, are talking about forcing a referendum.

The path taken by parliament has even left environmental and countryside protection organisations astonished. These organisations, which are calling for all existing development zones to be frozen for 20 years through their pending "countryside initiative", are talking about a breakthrough. They are even willing to withdraw their widely supported initiative if the tightening-up of the Spatial Planning Act becomes law.

The fact that parliament is showing an interest in a popular initiative and setting a compromise-driven counterproposal against it is nothing new in Swiss politics. It is just that in this case the counterproposal – the tightening-up of the Spatial Planning Act – goes further than the environmentalists' initiative. The obligation to reduce the size of excessively large development zones extends beyond the demands of the "countryside initiative". It would therefore be an easy decision for those behind the initiative to generously consider withdrawing it.

### Seen and felt by almost everyone

Are the developments of recent weeks evidence of a change in trend? Hans Weiss has observed a "change in mentality" and greater "political will" to protect the countryside. His view matters because the 72-year-old was one of the pioneers of Swiss spatial planning and it was he who, together with a group of fellow stalwarts, forced the canton of Fribourg to back down in 2004 when it proposed using top-quality farmland near Galmiz for the location of a pharmaceutical plant. The success of that campaign gave environmentalists impetus nationwide. Political scientist Lukas Golder of the GFS research institute in Berne says that the issue of urban sprawl has since then unquestionably been taken on board by people in Switzerland. Everyone can see in their own area that previous efforts to protect the countryside fell short of the mark.



Urban development is increasingly replacing the countryside – photograph from Wollerau, the commune with the lowest tax rate

MARC LETTAU is an editor at "Swiss Review"

## Excessive salaries – the people will now decide

The Swiss people are set to vote on Thomas Minder's "fat cat" initiative in March 2013. The parliamentary debate on this popular issue has been a three-year fiasco.

By René Lenzin

Yes or no to the bonus tax? Yes or no to the indirect counterproposal? Yes or no to withdrawal of the initiative? It has taken almost four and a half years to determine how to proceed with the "fat cat" popular initiative (called "Gegen die Abzocker" in German), which Schaffhausen businessman Thomas Minder launched in October 2006 and submitted in February 2008. It took parliament alone three years of debates until the proposal was finally ready to be put to a decisive vote at the end of this year's summer session. Minder's initiative arose out of widespread frustration over excessive salaries and bonuses, particularly in the financial sector. The issue gained increasing support in the wake of the banking and financial crises that broke out during the signature collection period. Minder wants to put an end to such salaries and bonuses by granting more rights to shareholders. As the owners of listed companies, they should decide on reasonable remuneration for the management.

### Politicians procrastinate and manoeuvre

Although many people are not aware of or perhaps do not even understand the details of how he aims to achieve this objective, they clearly trust Minder, the traditional and successful mouthwash manufacturer, to clamp down on the fat-cat culture. Just how popular Minder has become thanks to his initiative is underlined by his election to the Council of States as an independent last autumn.

Politicians have nevertheless struggled to come to terms with Minder's initiative. There is a general consensus that shareholders' rights need to be bolstered. However, just how far this should go remains contentious. Whereas the Federal Council, business associations and conservative parties consider the initiative's provisions to be too rigid, those on the left of politics want to augment them with a bonus tax to enable the general public to benefit from high bonuses. This state of affairs has resulted in a three-year-long struggle between the parties and councils.

The only thing clear from the outset is that a parliamentary majority wished to respond to the initiative with a counterproposal as also put forward by the Federal Council. The Swiss Social Democratic Party (SP) and the Swiss People's Party (SVP) wanted to keep as close as possible to the text of the initiative whereas the Free Democrat-Liberals (FDP) and the Christian Democratic People's Party (CVP) favoured granting individual companies greater room for manoeuvre.

into force as quickly as possible. But he finally decided to continue with the referendum. He explained that this was partly because he had received lots of letters encouraging him to continue his fight against the fat cats. But the main reason was that he regarded the counterproposal as too concessionary. He remarked that it only covered 40 % of his concerns. The initiative's opponents say that 80 % of Minder's concerns are addressed. Here are the main differences:

- Under the initiative and counterproposal, shareholders have to vote on the total remuneration for the Board of Directors and Executive Board on a yearly basis. Under the counterproposal, they can declare the vote on the Executive Board remuneration to be consultative.
- The initiative prohibits severance payments and advance remuneration. The coun-



Thomas Minder on the rostrum in the National Council chamber

The main point of contention was the bonus tax that Minder himself has always rejected. When the National Council and Council of States finally agreed on a bonus tax as a direct counterproposal to the initiative, this was still defeated in the final vote as the Green Liberals switched from the "yes" to the "no" camp. What remains is an "indirect counterproposal" in the form of a stock corporation law reform, which will enter into force if Minder's initiative is rejected by the people.

### Minder believes the people are behind him

After the rejection of the bonus tax in parliament, Minder contemplated withdrawing his initiative so that the counterproposal (stock corporation law reform) could enter

terproposal permits such extraordinary payments provided they are approved by two thirds of the shareholders.

- The initiative aims to restrict the holding of additional mandates by members of the Board of Directors and management, while the counterproposal only stipulates mandatory disclosure.
- Both the initiative and the counterproposal abolish proxy voting by custodians or company representatives. The initiative stipulates the introduction of remote electronic voting, whereas the counterproposal permits this on a voluntary basis.

## A solar-powered voyage around the world

A floating Swiss pavilion, the PlanetSolar catamaran has completed its first solar-powered voyage around the world. After a 585-day journey covering 60 000 km, the crew berthed in Monaco in May. We put the initiative under the spotlight with Neuchâtel-born project leader Raphaël Domjan and French captain Erwan Le Rouzic.

By Alain Wey



The PlanetSolar team in Abu Dhabi: Raphaël Domjan, Jens Langwasser, Erwan Le Rouzic and Christian Ochsenbein

Thousands of journeys have been made around the world, but never with a solar-powered vessel similar in size to the boats of the shipping companies operating on Swiss lakes. Measuring 35 by 23 metres, the MS *Tûranor PlanetSolar* has entered the history books and joined the prestigious Explorers Club\* of New York, just like Bertrand Piccard's air balloon before it. This was a Jules Verne-type adventure dreamed up by Raphaël Domjan from Neuchâtel. Having set sail from Monaco on 27 September 2010, PlanetSolar sailed west on a course close to the equator and returned to its point of departure on 4 May 2012. It became the first solar-powered vehicle of any kind to achieve this feat.

### The very beginning

As with icebergs, people are only aware of the visible parts of man's achievements. In this case, the PlanetSolar project, a round-the-world voyage, took up almost eight years of the life of the man behind it, 40-year-old Raphaël Domjan. The idea was conceived in the mind of this engineer by profession, who is also a paramedic, pilot, speleologist and mountaineer, in 2004. "I didn't have any money of my own and had to find twenty million Swiss francs. I therefore started by putting a team together", he recalls. In 2006, he presented his project to the media and began his long search for financial partners. It was not until February 2008 that the dream really took shape thanks to his meeting with Immo Ströher, the owner of Immosolar, a

German firm specialising in energy management. Other financial partners also then began to get on board. The boat was finally constructed between January 2009 and August 2010. The French company Adrena also became involved in the project, creating routing software adapted to the solar-powered vessel and enabling the most energy-efficient route to be found. "It is not just the rich and famous who can implement large-scale projects like this one. Anyone can succeed if you have an idea, are determined, persuasive and perhaps a little naïve", explains Raphaël Domjan enthusiastically. The voyage across the oceans could then begin.

### From the Atlantic to Oceania

In the autumn, PlanetSolar sailed out of Monaco and passed through the Straits of Gibraltar to enter the Atlantic Ocean. On board were Raphaël Domjan, Patrick Marchesseau (the French captain), Jens Langwasser (the German head of the boat's construction team) and Christian Ochsenbein (the energy manager from Berne). The vessel reached Saint-Martin in the French Antilles in November 2010 and then called at Miami. In December, PlanetSolar arrived in Cancún, Mexico, where it took part in the UN's climate conference. The crew took advantage of the opportunity to allow several heads of state to visit the boat. "The inter-continental crossing of the Panama Canal remains a vivid memory because we found ourselves in the middle of a tropical rainforest", Raphaël Domjan reveals. Having entered the Pacific Ocean, the boat was 18,000 km from Australia. PlanetSolar passed the Galapagos Islands in silence thanks to its solar propulsion. Raphaël Domjan says: "The passage right up to the Marquesas Islands was incredible. We encountered no sign of life for 6,000 km, no aeroplanes, no boats, absolutely nothing at all."

When the eco-adventurers reached the Marquesas Islands in French Polynesia in March, they were welcomed by dozens of canoes and sixty people climbed aboard to of-

fer them fruit. There was no pomp and ceremony here, just the warm welcome of the local people. They then stopped off at Papeete on the island of Tahiti and in Tonga in Polynesia. French captain Erwan Le Rouzic took over from captain Marchesseau in New Caledonia in May. He took the helm in Nouméa.

"When I had the opportunity to take part in this global voyage, I thought of Jules Verne, who came from Nantes where I was born", says Erwan Le Rouzic. "I re-read 'Around the World in Eighty Days' during our voyage", he adds. They headed for Australia but encountered some difficult conditions. PlanetSolar hit a storm less than 300 km from Brisbane. "We sailed into a strong wind from the southwest with waves reaching five metres", the captain recalls. He explains: "We slowed to the minimum energy consumption level and waited for the weather to change. I was extremely impressed because the vessel proved very resistant and held up well in the rough sea." After visiting Brisbane, PlanetSolar sailed alongside the 2,300-kilometre Great Barrier Reef.

### From Asia to the Mediterranean

PlanetSolar arrived in south-east Asia during the summer monsoon and had to endure several lengthy storms in the Philippines in July and in Vietnam in September. "We experienced days of non-stop rain with absolutely no sunshine and winds of 50 kmph", the captain recounts. He remarks: "We were unable to produce any power. We therefore had to take shelter and wait until there was some sunshine in order to set off again." After stopping in Manila, the solar team crossed the China Sea and reached Hong Kong in August 2011 where it received an extraordinary welcome. A presentation on the project was given to the university.

PlanetSolar arrived in Singapore in September where the final weeks of the monsoon season passed. It then crossed the Strait of Malacca, making a short stop in Thailand in October before two visits to



PlanetSolar outside Hong Kong in August 2011

Sri Lanka in November. Sailing along the coast of India, it arrived in Mumbai in December. The crew celebrated Christmas in the Arab-Persian Gulf at Doha in Qatar. They then took part in the Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi in January 2012, where they met the Chinese Prime Minister and his North Korean counterpart.

In February, PlanetSolar welcomed aboard an armed six-man security team to cross the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden, which are pirate-infested waters. "I contacted the former head of the Swiss army, Christophe

Keckeis, who was my gliding instructor when I was younger. He arranged our security", Raphaël Domjan explains. After travelling 3,500 km without any incidents, their guardian angels disembarked from PlanetSolar onto a boat in the first part of the Red Sea in March. "A few days later, we were able to dive at the Precontinent II submarine site where Captain Cousteau's team spent a month some 50 years ago", Erwan Le Rouzic remarks. "It was a way of paying homage to Cousteau and all his explorations that we admired during our childhood." The eco-adventurers finally

crossed the Suez Canal and re-entered the Mediterranean on 1 April. After visiting Egypt, Greece and Italy, they received a triumphant welcome in Monaco on 4 May. Captain Le Rouzic says: "What I remember most about Jules Verne and his book is his conviction that human technology can have a positive impact on helping mankind and society to progress."

[www.planetsolar.org](http://www.planetsolar.org)

ALAIN WEY is an editor at "Swiss Review"

## *"Solar-powered boats are available to the general public."*

"SWISS REVIEW": *Do you think you have succeeded in promoting solar power even though the World Solar Challenge solar-powered car race has not?*

RAPHAËL DOMJAN: You have to remember that the first solar-powered car race took place in Switzerland in 1983 between Romanshorn and Geneva. An Australian student who watched the race here later decided to organise the World Solar Challenge in Australia. All such initiatives are positive. We have to change people's mentality. Why is it that, even today, we won't change despite having the technol-

ogy to do so? It is hard enough on a personal level to keep resolutions you have made. So, just imagine how difficult it is to change the world's outlook. The problem is that solar-powered cars or SolarImpulse are based on state-of-the-art technology, a bit like Formula 1, and are not therefore available to the general public. Only technologies available on the market were used for PlanetSolar. It is already possible to buy solar-powered boats today. They are available from companies in Switzerland and Australia, for example.

*What will happen to PlanetSolar now?*

The PlanetSolar company has been handed over to Immo Ströher, who will continue to manage the boat and promote it commercially. He intends to find a new role for PlanetSolar. It will make a few stops in the Mediterranean this summer. It will then



Raphaël Domjan (right) and Erwan Le Rouzic with the Adrena routing system



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Magnificent backdrop – PlanetSolar in Abu Dhabi harbour in January 2012

be found a home where optimal use can be made of it. This may be in the Galapagos Islands to transport tourists, in the Red Sea for divers or it may become a scientific research vessel. He is currently in the process of analysing its potential.

We could have built a solar-powered vessel that travels at twice the speed – an average of 10-12 knots – which would have been able to complete the voyage around the world in eight months. But this would have been a two-man speedboat which would not have been able to welcome anyone aboard. What would there be to show? Our boat was able to welcome 50 to 60 people including heads of state. It was comfortable and spacious. It's something completely different. Our boat can transport passengers and divers and can be chartered. It conveys our message. We also went around the world in a solar-powered boat that has a commercial future!

*So, you're handing over the baton with the boat to focus on the SolarPlanet Foundation, the aim of which is to promote renewable energies?*

Yes, we will continue to promote the vision and concept of this world tour by communicating them through a book, a documentary film and a platform where the content is checked. We intend to select a certain number of projects and to support research and development in the fields of renewable energies and energy storage and efficiency. Our message is a sincere one. It is apolitical and without any commercial interest.

*What does the future hold for the navigation router developed by Adrena?*

It can also be deployed for routing on traditional vessels, such as freight vessels, which could, for example, save between 100,000 and a million dollars when crossing the Pacific Ocean. This system does not take the fastest route geographically but the most rapid in terms of energy efficiency in relation to the wind, currents and sun.

*And what about solar technology?*

We have made innovations in terms of solar panels with the MPPT (maximum power point tracker) system. This optimises energy generated by a vessel's solar panels, as it is in perpetual motion, based on the temperature and angle of sunlight. PlanetSolar's message is an optimistic one. Our aim is to provide impetus and to raise awareness among politicians and industry leaders by showing that amazing things can be achieved with solar power.

#### **A CLOSER LOOK AT THE MS TÛRANOR PLANETSOLAR**

**Characteristics:** Carbon-resin catamaran, 35 metres in length, 23 metres in width and 6.1 metres in height. Weight: 95 tons. Solar cells: 38,000 on a 537 m<sup>2</sup> surface area.

**Name:** The name Tûranor comes from Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" trilogy and means "victory" and "power of the sun".

**Construction:** The MS Tûranor PlanetSolar was built within 18 months in Kiel, Germany, and was financed by German company Immosolar, Swiss watch manufacturer Candino and state institutions such as Presence Switzerland.

**Speed:** It travels at the speed of a sailing boat, around five knots on average with a maximum speed of ten knots. Energy production provides enough power to last for three days.

**Records with a solar-powered boat:** Longest voyage at 60,000 kilometres. First voyage around the world. Largest solar-powered boat. Fastest crossing of the South China Sea in around five days and the Atlantic Ocean in around 27 days.

**SolarVillage:** Supplied with power from solar panels, it was set up during several PlanetSolar stops to give presentations on the project and solar power with games like remote-controlled solar-powered boat races, educational programmes and interactive exhibitions. The SolarVillage was exhibited alongside the vessel at the European Solar Days event in Marseille from 9 to 12 May 2012.

**In autumn:** Release of the documentary film and book.



## Fifty years spent helping young people

**For fifty years, the Association promoting Education for Young Swiss Abroad (AJAS) has been providing young Swiss abroad with support and advice on matters concerning education in Switzerland. Thanks to this experience, AJAS is able to look in depth at their particular circumstances.**

Every year, many young Swiss abroad opt to receive education in their country of origin. However, these young people often have no knowledge of what is involved when embarking on education in Switzerland. They often face problems to do with language, recognition of their qualifications, funding, the climate and integration, for example, which prove too much for them. To avoid this situation, young people should contact AJAS as early as possible.

AJAS dealt with around 850 enquiries from all over the world last year. The association handled around 80 grant applications made by young Swiss abroad to their cantons of origin and, in many cases, also discussed educational funding options in addition to cantonal grants.

Information on the association's activities and reports by young Swiss abroad on their experiences in Switzerland can be found in our latest annual report. This can be ordered from our office or read online at [www.ajas.ch](http://www.ajas.ch)

All AJAS' services are provided free of charge. Despite significant contributions from federal government, they can only be made available thanks to financial support from third parties, such as companies, foundations and private individuals. AJAS is also reliant on your support in order to maintain its current level of service. AJAS and, of course, the young Swiss abroad receiving education in Switzerland are grateful to you for your help.

We would like to take the opportunity of our 50th anniversary to thank all our current sponsors, donors and benefactors most sincerely for their support. If you too wish to assist the association or would like to use its services, please contact us at the following address:

*AJAS, Association promoting Education for Young Swiss Abroad,  
Alpenstrasse 26, 3006 Berne, SWITZERLAND, Phone: +41 31 356 61 04, [ajas@aso.ch](mailto:ajas@aso.ch)*

## OSA advice

**As a Swiss citizen abroad, am I entitled to a grant to study in Switzerland?**

Under Swiss law, it is primarily parents who are responsible for providing for their children's education. If they do not have sufficient means, the question of a grant is raised. The cantons are generally responsible for education in Switzerland. This means that there are 26 different ed-

ucation systems. In the case of the Swiss abroad, it is the canton of origin that is responsible. Grant applications have to be addressed to the grant department of the canton concerned. In the event of language problems arising, for example, where young students do not speak the language of their canton of origin, the Association promoting Education for Young Swiss Abroad (AJAS) can assist them with their application. However, it should be noted that the entitlement to study grants differs depending on the canton of

origin. Some cantons have a more restrictive policy than others in awarding grants, particularly if the student's parents live in an EU country, where theoretically the student is entitled to a grant from the country of residence (but not necessarily for study in Switzerland).

The grant amounts also differ from one canton to the next. It is important to find out first whether the country of residence provides grants and then obtain information on other funding options (cantonal grant, private grants, etc). It should be noted that, in principle, only initial post-compulsory educational courses that are undertaken at a public establishment or one recognised by the Swiss confederation provide the entitlement to a grant, although there are exceptions. In order to apply for a grant, students have to be in possession of an apprenticeship contract or confirmation of definitive enrolment at a recognised educational institution. The application forms can be obtained from the grant department of the canton of origin or from AJAS.

If the cantonal grant is not sufficient to fund the course of study or if the canton refuses to award a grant, there are private organisations that can help to finance study either through grants or loans. For further information on funding options and any questions concerning education in Switzerland, the Swiss abroad can contact AJAS.

For more details on AJAS, please read the article on the left.

SARAH MASTANTUONI,  
Head of the Legal Department

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

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## Pupils and ambassadors

Swiss schools abroad make a major contribution to the image of our country. As part of a new education law, these schools are now set to have the opportunity to adapt more successfully to local conditions.

There are currently 18 Swiss schools abroad recognised by federal government. With some 7,500 pupils, they not only act as a major flagship for Switzerland but also constitute an instrument and network for Swiss foreign relations. They are highly regarded worldwide on account of their high educational standards.

In recent years, the notion that the Swiss schools are not just important for educating the children of Swiss parents but that it is also an attractive and beneficial proposition for our country to provide school education for children from foreign countries to Swiss standards has gradually taken hold. Pupils at Swiss schools abroad learn about Switzerland



from nursery age upwards. By the time these children leave school with Swiss university-entry qualifications or the International Baccalaureate (IB), they have formed a relationship with our country. They are familiar with our mentality and speak our language. This makes them ideal discussion and trading partners and, in a manner of speaking, ambassadors for Switzerland.

These aspects will also be taken into consideration by the new Education of the Swiss Abroad Act (AAS), which is currently at the consultation stage.



Changes to admission criteria have been slated, among other things, and the previous requirement for a minimum quota of Swiss pupils is set to be discarded. This would primarily provide the schools with more room to manoeuvre commercially thanks to the potential for growth and would enable better integration into the country concerned.

Over 25 % of pupils are currently the children of Swiss citizens. German is the second teaching language at all schools alongside the national language or English. The school in Bogotá is the only Swiss school to have a stream with French in addition to the national language.

The Swiss schools abroad and other independently run establishments are to be allowed to offer dual basic vocational education in cooperation with Swiss professional associations and Swiss companies in the host country. The act will also provide for the opportunity to secure financial support for the foundation and establishment of new schools in locations of importance to Swiss foreign policy.

### SWISS SCHOOLS ABROAD

Founded	School	Country	Comments
1839	Naples	Italy	Closed in 1984
1851	Genoa	Italy	Closed in 1983
1883	Luino	Italy	Closed in 1990
1921	Alexandria	Egypt	Closed in 1970
1946	Florence	Italy	Closed in 1983
1860	Milan	Italy	Founded as the "International School of Protestant Families in Milan", "Swiss School" since 1919
1893	Bergamo	Italy	
1904	Catania	Italy	
1919	Barcelona	Spain	
1939	Santiago de Chile	Chile	
1943	Lima	Peru	
1946	Rome	Italy	
1948	Bogotá	Columbia	
1963	Bangkok	Thailand	
1963	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	Withdrawal of recognition in 2004
1966	Mexico City	Mexico	
1966	Accra	Ghana	
1966	São Paulo	Brazil	
1967	Singapore	Singapore	
1968	Madrid	Spain	
1981	Curitiba	Brazil	
1992	Cuernavaca	Mexico	Subsidiary of the school in Mexico City
2007	Querétaro	Mexico	Subsidiary of the school in Mexico City
2011	Como	Italy	Subsidiary of the school in Milan



## “You have to overcome your anxiety!”

OSA's Youth Service does not just arrange sports camps; it also organises stays for young Swiss abroad with host families in Switzerland. 19-year-old Kathy from Chile is currently living with two families alternately. Her two Swiss “mothers”, Pascale and Barbara, tell us about their experiences.

*What made you decide to take in Swiss from abroad?*

PASCALE: We were both once Swiss abroad ourselves and wanted to maintain contact with like-minded people who have shared the same experience.

BARBARA: The idea that our own children will be welcomed with open arms by families abroad is also part of the reason for getting involved.

*Kathy has been living with your families on an*



*alternate basis since mid-March. How has the visit gone so far?*

PASCALE: Kathy has lived with us since mid-March. She has undertaken several work experience days as set out in her programme. During our spring holiday, she went to stay with Barbara, along with our dog. It would be great for Kathy if she had some more work experience opportunities or, better still, if she could find a job so that she could earn some pocket money.

BARBARA: Kathy has spent two weeks with us so far. She was very taken with Pascale's dog, whom she “adopted”. She will mainly live with us from July onwards, which will

hopefully provide a nice change and a fresh challenge for everyone.

*Kathy, what has staying with a host family been like for you?*

KATHY: It is not easy to join a family you have never met. But it is an opportunity to be enjoyed. It is an experience that not everyone gets and you can learn a great deal. You must always remember that you are a guest but also a new member of the family. I was quite nervous when I arrived. It was a new thing for me being alone without my father to give me advice. At the very beginning, I would rather have flown straight back to Chile. But then I saw a sign saying: “BIENVENIDO KATHY! WELCOME!” It was Pascale, Barbara and Martin, my host families. They welcomed me by taking me to Starbucks for a coffee – my favourite! What a great welcome. I started a new life that day. It's okay to be anxious but you have to get over it.

PRISCA BLINDENBACHER / OSA YOUTH SERVICE

Information: [blindenbacher@aso.ch](mailto:blindenbacher@aso.ch)  
[www.aso.ch](http://www.aso.ch) > Offers > select “Host families” under “Quick access”

## Winter camp for 8 to 14-year-olds

Whether they are skiers or snowboarders, beginners or at an advanced level, Swiss children living abroad aged 8 to 14 will have a great time at our winter camp.

### Winter camp in Lantsch (Grisons)

Date: Thursday, 27 December 2012 to Saturday, 5 January 2013

No. of participants: 48

Cost: CHF 900 (contribution to the camp)

Ski or snowboard hire: Approx. CHF 150

Registration deadline: 30 October 2012

### Registration

Precise details on the winter camps and the registration form will be available from 15 September 2012 at [www.sjas.ch](http://www.sjas.ch) (“Our forthcoming activities”). Reduced contribution rates are available in justified cases.

The form required can be requested on the registration form. We are also happy to post you our information brochure on request.

### Draw to attend JUSKILA

600 Swiss children, including twenty Swiss children living abroad, born in 1998 and 1999,

will have the opportunity to attend Swiss Ski's big ski camp in Lenk free of charge. This will take place between 2 and 9 January 2013. To take part in the Jusmila trip, Swiss children abroad must be able to communicate in at least one of the three Swiss national languages (German, French or Italian). The draw only covers the camp itself (winter sports coaching, food and accommodation).

Parents will be responsible for organising and financing travel to and from the camp. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of the draw at the end of October.

*For more information:*

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*Alpenstrasse 26, 3006 Berne, SWITZERLAND*

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*E-mail: [sjas@aso.ch](mailto:sjas@aso.ch). [www.sjas.ch](http://www.sjas.ch)*

### REGISTRATION FORM FOR THE DRAW FOR JUSKILA (2 TO 9 JAN. 2013)

Please complete in clear print.

First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

No., street: \_\_\_\_\_ Town/city, postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of parent(s)/guardian(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Female /  Male Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Commune of origin in Switzerland (see Passport/ID): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address of parent(s)/guardian(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Type of sport\*  Alpine skiing /  Cross-country skiing /  Snowboarding

Language of child  German /  French /  Italian

(\*Please only tick one box. The type of sport cannot be changed after the draw.)

Signature of parent(s)/guardian(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send the form, together with a copy of the Swiss passport of a parent or of the child, by 15 October 2012 (date of receipt) to: Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad, Alpenstrasse 26, 3006 Berne, SWITZERLAND

## Announcements

**Equal status for spouses under naming and citizenship laws – the Federal Council has implemented the corresponding amendment to the Civil Code, which will take effect on 1 January 2013.**

The amendment to the Civil Code adopted by Parliament on 30 September 2011 grants spouses equal status in surname and citizenship. Marriage will essentially no longer have an impact on the name and citizenship of future spouses. Husband and wife will each keep their surname and citizenship but can declare when they get married that they want to use the bride's or the groom's unmarried surname as a common family surname. Same-sex couples who register their partnership will also have the same opportunity in future.

The children of married couples will be given either the common family surname or – if the couple uses different surnames – the surname that the couple decides on for their children upon marriage. If the parents are not married, the children will be given their mother's unmarried name. In cases of joint parental custody, the parents can declare that their children will have their father's unmarried surname.

The transitional law provides that spouses who change their surname upon marriage before these amendments enter into force will be able to declare at any time to the registry office that they wish to use their unmarried surname again. If such a declaration is made, the parents will have until 31 December 2013 to declare that their children will have the unmarried surname of the parent who has made this declaration. Unmarried parents with joint parental custody will have one year in which to declare that their children will have their father's unmarried surname. Children who have reached their twelfth birthday must consent to any change of name. Same-sex couples who register their partnership before these provisions enter into force will have one year in which to declare that they wish to use the surname of one of the partners as a common surname.

## Publications

### Foreign Policy Strategy 2012–2015

As reported in the June issue of "Swiss Review" (interview with Laurent Goetschel), the Federal Council has set out its priorities and key focus areas in foreign policy for the current legislative period. The 26-page brochure can be ordered or downloaded and printed out as a PDF file in German, French, Italian or English via the FDFA website ([www.eda.admin.ch](http://www.eda.admin.ch) > Documentation > Publications)



## Important note

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

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

Helpline number from Switzerland: 0800 24-7-365  
Helpline number from abroad: +41 800 24-7-365



## ELECTIONS AND REFERENDA

The following proposals will be put to a vote on 23 September 2012:

- Federal resolution of 15 March 2012 on promoting music among young people (counterproposal to the "jugend+musik" (Youth+Music) popular initiative);
- Popular initiative of 23 January 2009 "Sicheres Wohnen im Alter" (Secure housing in old age);
- Popular initiative of 18 May 2010 "Schutz vor Passivrauchen" (Protection against passive smoking).

## POPULAR INITIATIVES

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

- "Für ein bedingungsloses Grundeinkommen" (For an unconditional basic income) (11.10.2013)
- "Schutz vor Sexualisierung in Kindergarten und Primarschule" (Protection against sexualisation at nursery and primary school) (17.10.2013)

The complete list can be found on the Federal Chancellery's website at [www.bk.admin.ch](http://www.bk.admin.ch) under "Aktuell / Wahlen und Abstimmungen / Hängige Volksinitiativen" (in German; also available in French and Italian).

FDFA OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER: JEAN-FRANÇOIS LICHTENSTERN, RELATIONS WITH THE SWISS ABROAD, BUNDESGASSE 32, CH-3003 BERNE, TELEPHONE: +41 800 24 7 365  
[WWW.EDA.ADMIN.CH](http://WWW.EDA.ADMIN.CH), MAIL: [HELPLINE@EDA.ADMIN.CH](mailto:HELPLINE@EDA.ADMIN.CH)

  
**swissworld.org**  
Your Gateway to Switzerland

## Little gems

### A low-altitude flight over Switzerland

At the end of the 1990s, Switzerland's landscapes were shown for hours on Swiss television during the intermissions. Swissview is what this was and still is called. It is just the media that have changed. The films are now on sale in high resolution on Blu-ray disc and have been available in a very attractive format for several months now as an iPad and iPhone app.

The app is extremely straightforward. Users select the desired region on a map or from a list and purchase indi-



vidual three-minute films from over 1,600 available. These are then stored on the device and are available at any time under "My Films" without an Internet connection. The newer films are available in HD resolution and appear in extremely high quality on an iPad.

The films are produced by Marco Fumasoli. The filmmaker from Zurich has flown over Switzerland thousands of times by helicopter since 1995. Films purchased can also be sent to friends and family throughout the world free of charge with the app.

[www.swissview.com](http://www.swissview.com)

### A blank sheet

The Bianca Story, a quintet from Basel, are in the process of conquering Europe. Their unpredictable pop-rock with dance appeal, their stirring English lyrics, the gravely, enchanting voice of male vocalist Elia Rediger and the uplifting vocals of Anna Waibel have everything to appeal to a wide audience. These jack-of-all-trades performers (musical, multimedia, video and even opera) have quickly gone international by signing with a German record label (MotorMusic) and recording their new album at the prestigious Abbey Road studios in London. The full creative dimension to the group's name is made clear on the album "Coming Home". "Bianca" is an Italian reference to a blank sheet of paper on which stories, melodies and adventures are created from scratch. They are producing hit tracks like a string of pearls – "Lazy Boy", "Coming Home", "Afraid Of The World" and "Dancing People Are Never Wrong" are sensational.

[www.thebiancastory.com](http://www.thebiancastory.com)



### À-la-carte culture

Studiosus, the tourist operator that specialises in cultural travel, allows Switzerland to be seen through the eyes of a tourist and focuses on attractions that local people – and certainly many Swiss abroad – pay no attention to because they are so familiar with them. Studiosus' travel portfolio includes Switzerland along with Alaska, New Zealand, Bukhara and other exotic destinations. Trips available between August and December 2012 include, for example, "Bernina and the Glacier Express", "Hermann Hesse in Claw and Montagnola" and "Actively Experience Engadine and Valais". Swiss abroad who spend their holidays at home can also book Studiosus trips, excluding travel to Switzerland. Prices are adjusted accordingly. This, of course, applies not just to trips in Switzerland but to all destinations. This provides Swiss abroad in Spain, the USA or elsewhere with the opportunity to discover their second homeland better.

[www.studiosus.com](http://www.studiosus.com)



### The Thankless Stranger

Irena Brežná opens her novel "Die undankbare Fremde" (The Thankless Stranger) with the sentence "We left our country behind in familiar darkness and approached the shining distance." Brežná, who was born in Czechoslovakia in 1950, fled to Switzerland with her parents in 1968. Today, she lives in Basel and is a highly acclaimed translator and journalist. Her autobiographical novel is a sad and touching yet, at the same time, amusing book. The young first-person narrator experiences the move to Switzerland as anything but salvation as an 18-year-old. She finds the country, paralysed by the Cold War, an unsettling and very strange place. She observes her own attempts to integrate and vividly portrays the peculiarities of Switzerland and the idiosyncrasies of the Swiss.

Brežná intersperses the episodes from her everyday life

with "minutes" from her job as a translator. This juxtaposition represents the book's strength. It gives a real background to the accounts of the young first-person narrator who lives in a state of constant confrontation and quarrels with almost everyone. Brežná's book is not just an enjoyable read but also an extremely interesting contribution to the debate on integration currently taking place in Switzerland.

Irena Brežná, "Die undankbare Fremde" (in German); Verlag Galiani Berlin; ISBN978-3-86971-052-5; CHF 24



## Bulletins

### Further population growth

Switzerland's population stood at 7,952,600 at the end of 2011. This is 82,400 people more than in the previous year, according to the latest federal government statistics. The 2011 increase of around 1% is almost exactly in line with the rise in the resident population recorded in the previous year. Other European countries, including France, Italy and Austria, also recorded population growth, while the size of Germany's population is decreasing. Switzerland's population is made up of 4 million women and 3.9 million men. 1,400 people are over 100 years of age.

### More people with no religious affiliation

The Federal Statistical Office's most recent population census revealed more and more Swiss people have no religious affiliation and do not belong to a church. 20.1% of the population belong to this group, which is almost 9% more than ten years ago. 38.8% of Switzerland's resident population indicated that they are Roman Catholic, 30.9% Reformed/Evangelical, 4.5% Muslim and 0.2% Jewish.

### Much fewer hours worked

Working hours have fallen by a third in Switzerland since 1950. In 1950, the figure stood at 2,400 hours per year on average, whereas today it is just 1,600 hours according to a study by the Swiss National Science Foundation and the KOF Swiss Economic Institute. In addition to fewer working hours and more holidays – five weeks on average today compared with two weeks in 1950 – the reduction

in average working hours is also explained by high numbers of part-time employees. Around 31% of those in employment work less than 90%.

### Opposition to tax agreements

AUNS (Campaign for an Independent and Neutral Switzerland), a group closely associated with the Swiss People's Party (SVP), and the Young Swiss Social Democratic Party (Juso) are calling for a referendum on the tax agreements with Germany, Austria and the UK. AUNS President and SVP National Councillor Primin Schwander justify this on the grounds that it is not acceptable for Switzerland to collect taxes for other countries and that the agreements may result in job losses at the banks. David Roth, President of the Young Social Democrats said: "This agreement is another desperate attempt to save parts of the Swiss banks' parasitic business models and to provide another reprieve for banking confidentiality."

### Fitness for parliamentarians

49 parliamentarians took part in the "Paralmotion" parliamentary run on 14 June. The 11 women and 38 men covered over 160 kilometres in 20 minutes on a course around the Federal Palace. They ran or walked depending on their mood and fitness level. A league table revealing the athletic prowess of the various factions was also produced based on the number of parliamentarians taking part. The BDP came first with 30%, the Greens second with 29.4%, CVP third with 27.27%, SP fourth with 24.56%, SVP fifth with 19.35%, FDP sixth with 9.7% and GLP seventh with 7.69%.

## Quotations

*"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire."*

Heraclitus, Greek philosopher, around 500 B.C.

*"As politicians, we are expected to provide an answer to everything. As quickly as possible. As definitively as possible. But we sometimes forget that probably the worst politicians are those who already know the answer before they have understood the question."*

Federal Councillor Alain Berset at the "Swiss Youth in Science" Award Ceremony

*"As tourism developed, it became economically lucrative to present a nation to the Europeans who lived under glaciers, did not disturb anyone, did not want to be disturbed and yodelled softly when milking their cows."*

Peter von Matt, Emeritus Professor of Literature, Zurich

*"Democracy is the art of disciplining oneself so that one need not be disciplined by others."*

Georges Clemenceau (1841–1929), French politician

*"Democracy is like sex. When it's good, it's very good. When it's bad, it's still good."*

John Kenneth Galbraith (1908–2006), US economist

*"Our heads are round so that our thoughts can change direction."*

Francis Picabia (1897–1953), French author and artist

*"Man – a creature made at the end of the week's work when God was tired."*

Mark Twain (1835–1910), US author



Aung San Suu Kyi, the Burmese opposition leader and Nobel Peace Prize winner, chose Switzerland as her first destination on a trip to Europe. The 66-year-old politician met with Foreign Minister Didier Burkhalter on 14 June. She could not leave her country for almost 24 years, spending over 15 years in prison or under house arrest. During their meeting, Federal Councillor Burkhalter told her that Switzerland would support Burma on the road to democracy. This would not just be moral support, but would also take the form of projects. Development programmes worth 25 million Swiss francs a year are planned. Switzerland will also open an embassy in Burma in November. The dinner with Swiss President Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf, Justice Minister Simonetta Sommaruga and Federal Councillor Burkhalter was cancelled because Suu Kyi suffered a bout of faintness.



Wilhelm Tell Express on Lake Lucerne, Central Switzerland

# In the footsteps of Wilhelm Tell.

Wilhelm Tell forms the inspiration behind a unique itinerary that combines boat and train to travel through Central Switzerland to Ticino.

## From the very birthplace of Switzerland...

Setting off from Lucerne, the Wilhelm Tell Express will take you aboard a paddle steambot, one of the jewels of the fleet on Lake Lucerne, for a cruise on its sparkling waters. You will pass small typical villages, places that have witnessed the birth of Switzerland – such as the Rütli meadow – and majestic mountains whilst you partake of lunch on board.

## ...to the south of the Alps

From Flüelen, the journey then continues by train, in a carriage offering panoramic views, taking in the admirable views of the Reuss Valley, before crossing the Alps through the Gotthard tunnel. To the south of the Alps, the canton of Ticino will unveil its Mediterranean charms. After passing through the Leventina Valley, you will rejoin Lake Lugano or Lake Maggiore, the choice is yours, so you can decide how best to end your itinerary in Bellinzona. From one lake to the next, the Wilhelm Tell Express offers you a journey to both sides of the Alps.

## Take to the waters!

In summer, Flüelen takes on a flavor of the Côte d'Azur. A group of artificial islands known as "Lorelei", made up of some three million tons of rubble resulting from the construction of the Gotthard Base Tunnel, invite you to take a swim in the Reuss delta.



Tip 1

MySwitzerland.com  
Webcode: **A128200**

## Back to the source

A new hiking itinerary will take you to the sources of four major European rivers: the Rhine, the Rhone, the Reuss (tributary of the Rhine) and the Ticino (which flows into the Po). Five stages in the mountains over four days of walking (one per river).



Tip 2

MySwitzerland.com  
Webcode: **A127946**

## From land to water

The "Bolle di Magadino" form a splendid nature reserve. These wetlands extend across the region of Verbano, at the mouth of two rivers: the Ticino and the Verzasca. The area is a paradise for nature and is home to more than 240 species of bird.



Tip 3

MySwitzerland.com  
Webcode: **A40979**

## Network Switzerland:

### Hotel Casa Santo Stefano, Miglioglio, Ticino

Register until 30.9.2012 at MySwitzerland.com/aso and win a two-night stay for two people at the Casa Santo Stefano Hotel, Miglioglio (Typically Swiss Hotel) in Ticino.



MySwitzerland.com  
Webcode: **A108916**

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



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