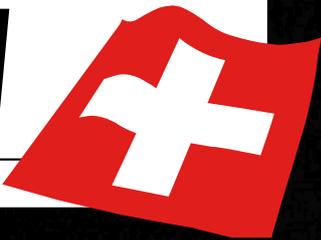


THE MAGAZINE FOR THE SWISS ABROAD

S W I S S

REVIEW

APRIL 2013 / NO. 2



**Claude Nobs is dead -
his festival lives on**

**Immigration causes
stress for Switzerland**

**Who elects the Federal Council?
Now the people will decide**



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Decisions on the country's future

THREE IMPORTANT PROPOSALS were the subject of referenda in Switzerland on 3 March. One of the three sent out a clear signal: the vast majority of Swiss people have had enough of the excessive demands and greed – often accompanied by arrogance – shown by an increasing number of CEOs and senior executives in recent years. Almost 68% of the electorate voted in favour of the initiative against fat-cat pay: the third-best result for any initiative in the history of the Swiss Confederation.

Judging by the reaction abroad, the Swiss are not alone in their outrage. Reputable newspapers throughout the world reported extensively and approvingly on the vote. Thomas Minder, the mastermind behind the initiative, is even said to have received a request for the text of his initiative from the UK's Department for Business.

Now it is up to the Federal Council and Parliament to implement the initiative. This will be done “with no ifs or buts”, promised Justice Minister Simonetta Sommaruga after the vote. Whether this will really happen remains to be seen.

Whatever the outcome of the tug-of-war to implement the fat-cat initiative, the question of who should have a share of Switzerland's prosperity and affluence, and just how much this share should be, will continue to occupy people and politicians here. Several



popular initiatives on this subject have already been submitted: an initiative for a minimum wage, a proposal to abolish the flat-rate tax for wealthy foreigners, the “1:12 – For fair pay” initiative, which would impose a maximum salary bandwidth of 1:12 for companies, and the initiative for an inheritance tax on endowments and legacies in excess of 2 million Swiss francs.

We have chosen to focus in this edition on migration, in particular immigration to our country and its consequences. A good eight million people now live in Switzerland, of whom more than 1.8 million are migrants. Immigration – in effect, the result of Switzerland's economic success – is linked to a wide range of problems, such as traffic congestion and rocketing rents. Switzerland is suffering from “density stress”, wavering between anxiety and hostility: a state which has given rise to a growing number of demands for tough measures that in the longer term may prove counterproductive. In the article on page 8 onwards, Jürg Müller describes the social and political challenges surrounding this topic. It is interesting to look back and perhaps draw some encouragement. Switzerland was suffering from “density stress” as long ago as the early 1960s, even if the phrase had not yet been coined. Back then, Professor Francesco Kneschaurek of the University of St. Gallen was predicting that the influx of foreign labour would trigger a population explosion, resulting in a population of 10 million in Switzerland by 2000. Today experts are forecasting the same figure for 2040.

BARBARA ENGEL

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Cover image:
Claude Nobs made an enormous contribution to Swiss culture as the founder of the Montreux Jazz Festival. He died on January 10, 2013 at age 77.
Photo: Lionel Flusin – FFJM

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An affront

As a Swiss citizen who lived and worked abroad for over seven years, I feel justified in taking a stance against the one-sided, left-leaning views of the Editor-in-Chief Barbara Engel. It should firstly be pointed out that she only speaks for a minority of the Swiss population. The views she represents are an absolute affront to many Swiss citizens and are almost exactly in line with those in the red-green end of the political spectrum in Switzerland. A generous calculation does not even give these left-wing parties a 30% share of the vote. The other 70% are staunchly conservative and demonstrably opposed to any kind of subjugation to EU legislation. These citizens certainly do not appreciate the disdain and contemptuous tone in Ms Engel's comments about the Swiss President. Her articles ooze underlying hostility towards the Swiss People's Party (SVP) and the Swiss President. This is a common thread through all articles written by her and like-minded persons.

ROBERT NIETH, WALCHWIL,
SWITZERLAND

Health insurance for the Swiss abroad

All Swiss citizens are equal before the law according to our constitution. This nevertheless fails to apply to rules on health insurance for the Swiss abroad. When we as Swiss citizens de-register in our home country and take up residence abroad we are excluded from the insurance schemes. This presents a major issue for many Swiss citizens abroad. We are downgraded to second-class citizens as a result of the exclusion. A nation's level of civ-

ilisation and greatness is measured by its capacity for assuming social responsibility towards minorities (Swiss citizens abroad).

WERNER WEGMÜLLER, THAILAND

Americans in Switzerland

As a dual citizen, I spent several years in the USA before returning to Switzerland to work for a US computer company. During my eight years working in Switzerland, I was told every day that I should go back to where I came from. After eight years of insults about those "Americans" I had had enough. I returned to the USA where most people leave each other alone and respect their views and practices. It would be nice if the Swiss would not generalise about Americans because we have very nice people here too. There are some rotten apples in Switzerland as well.

RUTH ZAHND, ORANGE, USA

A pleasure

I am enjoying reading the "Swiss Review" more and more. I read every article in the last two issues from start to finish. A wide range of topics is covered, the general tone is positive and it provides a critical look at current developments. I also find it extremely informative. The article on climate change opened my eyes to many issues and I was presented with completely new facts and observations. The short biography of Cilette Ofaire, the brief introduction to the life-work of Meret Oppenheim and the account of Luc Hoffmann's career in the latest issue were wonderful. Many thanks to everyone who has made this possible.

IRMGARD BAUER, CHARENSAT,
FRANCE

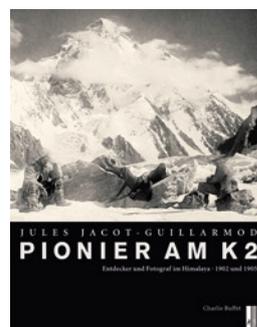
the real Mr K2

"SAW K2 FOR THE FIRST TIME," wrote Jules Jacot Guillarmod in his diary on 18 June 1902. "Imposing, daunting and yet a delight." The next day, the doctor and mountaineer from Neuchâtel took two photographs of Chogori, as local people call the mountain. These were the first images of the world's second-highest mountain. Nevertheless, they disappeared over the following decades, as did the diary and 12,000 other photographs taken by Guillarmod on his round-the-world travels using a verascope, an instrument used in relief photography, which was popular at the time.

Another mountaineer thrust himself forward to join the first K2 expedition – Aleister Crowley, the occultist and idol of the hippies. This Englishman influenced generations of K2 authors. They accepted the myth expounded in his "Confessions" in 1922 that Aleister Crowley was a genius surrounded by mediocrity on this expedition. Evidence confirms that Crowley was reckless, impulsive, rash, egotistical and often difficult. He is even supposed to have challenged a companion to a pistol duel during the expedition.

For a long time the contribution of Jules Jacot Guillarmod to the expedition was neglected. That has now changed. The grandchildren of the adventurer from Neuchâtel, who died in 1925, have now made their grandfather's legacy accessible to the public. His photographs are today housed in the Musée de l'Élysée in Lausanne, and the Parisian mountaineering journalist Charlie Buffet has written the story of "Jules Jacot Guillarmod, K2 pioneer". The book is breathtaking. Firstly, there are the photographs. Guillarmod did not just photograph mountains but also Sherpas and local people. They are insightful, sensitive images full of humanity. Buffet also puts the daring undertaking of a Himalayan expedition around 1900 in the context of the day. He describes Paris at the turn of the century where Guillarmod, a lover of technology with a thirst for knowledge, encountered the avant-garde in mountaineering.

The book meticulously covers what happened on K2. It looks



at the ascent over the Baltoro glacier and the nine camps that the group set up. We learn about the medical conditions that the expedition members suffered, including eczema, migraines and fevers – symptoms of altitude sickness. Guillarmod painstakingly noted everything with great objectivity. Buffet compares him to an entomologist examining life under a microscope.

It is hard to believe that such a dramatic event as a duel could have escaped Guillarmod's attention. Yet, his diary does not contain even the slightest hint of a confrontation between Crowley and another member of the expedition. Buffet therefore believes this story was invented and is untrue "like almost everything that was told about Crowley on K2".

SERAINA GROSS

CHARLIE BUFFET: "Jules Jacot Guillarmod, Pionier am K2" (in German), AS Verlag & Buchkonzept AG, Zurich 2012; 152 pages, around CHF 52 or "Jules Jacot Guillarmod. Pionnier du K2" (in French), Slatkine Helvetica, Geneva 2012; 160 pages; around CHF 58.

Point of view

Architecture in Grisons has always been shaped by nature and the landscape, but also by tourism. The very distinctive style of architecture has constantly proven a source of fascina-

tion for photographers. The Museum of Art in Chur is now holding an exhibition on architecture from the perspective of photographers. A book featuring images and commentary



The dining- and ball room of the Bergün casino which opened in 1906, photographed by Ralph Feiner in 2009



The Hôtel Kursaal de la Maloja photographed by



The newly built Vals thermal baths, designed by the architect Peter Zumthor, opened in 1996, photographed by H el ene Binet



Ponte Nanin and Ponte Cascella in Mesocco photographed by

concerning the 150-year history of architectural photography entitled "Ansichtssache" (Point of View) has been published to accompany the event. This is not a publication aimed at an

expert readership but instead a fascinating illustrated book containing informative but also amusing insights into various aspects of architecture in Grisons.

The exhibition: until 12 May 2013 at the Grisons Museum of Art in Chur.
www.buendner-kunstmuseum.ch
The book: "Ansichtssache", 150 Jahre Architektur-fotografie in Graubünden. Edited by Stephan Kunz and Köbi Gantenbein; Verlag Scheidegger & Spiess/ Bündner Kunstmuseum, 384 pages; CHF 58, EUR 48.



Rudolf Zinggeler at the start of the 20th century



A house built by the architect Peter Zumthor in Leis photographed by Ralph Feiner in 2012



phed by Ralph Feiner in 2009



House in Zuoz photographed by Rudolf Zinggeler

Warning signs over immigration policy

Switzerland is an attractive destination for foreigners, and the high level of immigration confirms this. What is today referred to as “density stress” is evident in many places. There are nonetheless significant differences between past and present immigration. These days, it is also a sign of economic prosperity. However, there is growing unease among large sections of the population, and radical solution proposals are gaining the upper hand.

By Jürg Müller

In German, “Sack” and “Tüte” both signify the same item, a bag. But in Switzerland customers are given a “Sack” to put their shopping in at the supermarket, rather than a “Tüte”. This is what Joachim Eibach has learned on his Swiss German course. Eibach is German; he has been a professor of history at the University of Berne since 2004 and is making every effort to ensure he integrates into Swiss society in the best way possible. Yongala Falanga Ndambo is out and about in Berne, working as a tram and bus driver. The Congolese citizen has been living in Switzerland for 20 years. He puts on his tie in the morning with great care. He loves the responsibility of driving a Bernese tram. His philosophy for life is “do your job well and show decency towards everyone”. He too is a model of integration.

1.825 million immigrants were living in Switzerland at the end of 2012. This means that one in four people in employment is of foreign origin. The Federal Office for Migration (FOM) presents two of them, Joachim Eibach and Yongala Falanga Ndambo, in a video clip on its homepage lasting just under two minutes. The immigrants “contribute to Switzerland’s prosperity through their work” is the message on the FOM’s website. The government body has sought to give immigration a human face through its short video portraits. However, it is not just noble intentions and exemplary attempts at integration that lie behind the nice short film; it is also a response to signs of growing anxiety.

Relaxed attitude is dissipating

A sense of alarm started to take hold in August last year when Switzerland’s population exceeded the eight-million mark. Concern was felt at various levels and among almost all sections of society. Most people experience “density stress” in their everyday lives, whether it is in the form of overcrowded trains or increasingly heavy congestion on the roads. Housing is becoming an ever scarcer commodity, with the cost of rents and

land rising. The impact is also being felt in schools, the healthcare system, social policy and, above all, the labour market. More than half of the professors working at Swiss universities come from abroad, for instance. There is no longer a relaxed attitude everywhere – tension is brewing in some places. And those factions who have always used the immigration issue to attract votes believe their time has now come.

Politicians are therefore upping the ante. Several referenda will be held in the very near future that not only call for a change in direction in immigration policy but could also have a major impact on Switzerland’s relationship with the European Union. These include the pending popular initiatives “against mass immigration”, submitted by the Swiss People’s Party (SVP), and “stop overpopulation – safeguard natural resources”, put forward by the Ecopop Association. With Croatia’s accession to the EU in the middle of 2013, the extension of the free movement of persons accord is also under discussion. A referendum against this is almost certain to take place.

All these proposals have a real chance of success at referendum. The Swiss people can no longer be depended upon to support the Federal Council’s policy on immigration as they did in the years 2000, 2005 and 2009 with regard to the introduction of the free movement of persons and its extension on two occasions. An acute fear of being overrun by immigrants instead of a matter-of-fact weighing-up of interests may prove decisive at the ballot box.

The proportion of foreigners is higher than ever

Let us focus on the figures for a moment. The proportion of foreigners in Switzerland today is

higher than ever and stands at over a fifth of the population (around 23%). In 2012, the resident foreign population rose by a total of three per cent or just under 53,000 people. This increase is primarily explained by the fact that immigration from EU countries has been made easier by the free movement of persons (up 4.1%, as in 2011). The largest immigrant groups arrived from Portugal and Germany. Immigration from countries outside the EU only climbed slightly (by 0.9%).

Switzerland has had a relatively high proportion of foreigners for some time. The share of permanent foreign residents stood at 15% as far back as 1910. After a decline during the two world wars, this level was reached again in 1980. The high proportion of foreigners is not least a result of Switzerland’s restrictive naturalisation procedure. In the event of high levels of immigration



A scenario presented by critics of immigration for the city of Zurich

from EU countries, the Federal Council can activate the safety-valve clause or, in other words, impose a limitation on the number of residence permits, provided certain conditions are met. It already took this step for the eastern EU states last year. The restriction of the free movement of persons is nevertheless a contentious issue as it is regarded as an affront by many EU countries. The Federal Council is set to decide in April whether the safety-valve clause will be applied to all EU states.

The numbers are rising not just in terms of the permanent foreign population but also among asylum seekers for whom the figures soared by 27 % in 2012 to reach 28,631. The federal authorities are responding with various measures. First and foremost, the asylum process is to be considerably speeded up. A referendum has been called against the set of proposals approved by the Federal Council and Parliament, which include urgent measures on asylum. The Swiss people will therefore decide on 9 June 2013 (see page 14).

Switzerland is dependent on immigrants

The authorities are undoubtedly taking notice of the fact that many people are anxious about the growing numbers of foreign

ers. The Social Democrat Federal Councillor Simonetta Sommaruga, head of the Federal Department of Justice and Police and therefore responsible for the immigration issue, is only too familiar with the dilemma facing the federal authorities. She has warned in various interviews against playing down the problems of immigration and has highlighted the dangers of overlooking the unsavoury aspects of this phenomenon. At the same time, the Federal Councillor has emphasised that Switzerland must live with immigration as it is vitally important to the country. Immigrants make an enormous contribution to ensuring Switzerland is one of the most competitive countries in the world, she says.

Sommaruga also points to an historical fact – Switzerland would not have become what it is today without immigrants over the course of its history. Protestants who fled to Switzerland for religious reasons in the 17th century and the liberal political refugees in the 19th century, who included the founders of many companies (e.g. Brown, Boveri and Nestlé), have given Switzerland enormous momentum. The industrial boom and expansion of the railway network in the latter decades of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century sparked one of the largest waves of immigration. The high level of immigration after the Second World War was also the result of strong economic growth. Switzerland experienced the largest wave of immigration in its history between 1950 and 1970. A total of 2.68 million foreigners arrived in Switzerland on one-year work permits or as residents during this period. At the same time, around three million permits were also issued to seasonal workers. Xenophobic political parties became increasingly influential in the 1960s. Their campaigns on excessive immigration primarily targeted foreign workers from Italy.

The Italians in the past and today the Germans

It is no longer the Italians whom the Swiss get worked up about, but rather the large numbers of

Germans working in Switzerland. The SVP National Councillor Natalie Rickli from Zurich sparked outrage a year ago with her remark: “Individual Germans don’t bother me but their arrival en masse does.” This was not a particularly friendly tone to adopt towards the highly qualified professionals urgently needed by the economy, such as doctors, engineers, IT specialists, professors and hotel managers, etc. This example clearly illustrates how scapegoats and sympathies can change. The once maligned Italians have now become paragons in terms of cuisine and lifestyle.

People seldom learn from history, but it is clear that Switzerland has dealt with numerous waves of immigration in the past, which have initially attracted criticism and seen emotions run high, in a manner that has produced great benefit. The problem is just that once fears of being overrun by immigrants take hold and politicians of every ilk only seek to focus on the challenging aspects of immigration, then rational argument becomes of little use. It would actually be entirely apt to exalt immigration because Switzerland is not just one of the most multicultural nations in Europe, it is also more prosperous than ever before. The correlation is obvious – when the economy booms, immigration rises. It is dictated by demand among companies. More people arrived during the economic upturn from 2006 to 2008. Net immigration declined sharply by a quarter in 2009, a year of recession, compared with the previous year. Immigration also stimulates domestic consumption. This is revealed by the retail industry study conducted by the major bank Credit Suisse. The study also provided evidence that growth in the retail industry is higher than population growth. This is explained by the fact that most immigrants are highly qualified, are accordingly well paid and, in turn, spend their income.

However, the problems mentioned cannot simply be dismissed. The SVP is far from the only party with immigration on its agenda. The Social Democrats are also taking notice of people’s anxieties. They presented a policy paper on immigration in 2012. However, unlike the SVP, they are not seeking the immediate revocation of the free movement of persons. Their solution is to bulk up the accompanying measures to counter wage pressure and high rental costs. They regard “misguided con-





"I want to become Swiss, I don't like foreigners."

servative regional economic and tax policies" as a grave mistake. Switzerland attracts "international companies with the lowest tax rates of all structurally strong countries despite not having enough well qualified personnel", complains the Swiss Social Democratic Party (SP). The upshot is that foreign workers flood into already

overheated economic hubs. It is only really the companies that benefit from this, whilst the Swiss public has to endure the negative consequences, such as rocketing property prices and high rents, etc.

Barroom debates rarely distinguish between the various categories of immigrant – asylum seekers, permanent residents,

multi-billionaires paying flat-rate taxation, management executives and CEOs, students, agricultural workers, senior physicians, professors, and service and trade specialists. They all use the Swiss infrastructure. But to blame every problem and inconvenience on immigration is unreasonable. The growing use of residential space is, for example, primarily due to the rising demands of Swiss society, which have been increasing for years. Urban sprawl is essentially the result of poor spatial planning, and the rise in mobility on the roads and railways is a consequence of this and the ever greater distance between home and work that urban sprawl brings. Immigration accentuates these home-made problems and makes the already existing need for reform even more acute.

Simple solutions to complex problems

The focus of attention has suddenly shifted from reforms to radical solutions in light of the density stress. However, there are always pitfalls with simple solutions to complex problems. This is equally true of the immigration initiatives launched by both the SVP and the Ecopop Association (see boxes). In its dispatch on the SVP's popular initiative,

"Concrete solutions to specific problems instead of abstract figures"

Migration is nothing new in historical terms, but the movement of migrants is particularly intensive today. Professor Walter Leimgruber, Chairman of the Federal Commission on Migration, believes that an acceptable level of immigration is not a matter of figures but a question of social consensus.

Interview: Jürg Müller

«SWISS REVIEW»: *Switzerland's population stands at over eight million, around 1.8 million of whom are immigrants. Is our population too high?*

WALTER LEIMGRUBER: There is no basis for calculating whether too many, too few or exactly the right number of people live in a country. How many immigrants a society can actually sustain is primarily a matter of social consensus.

What role has immigration played in Swiss history?

Switzerland is not a country of immigration, historically speaking. But migration is nothing new. There have always been social groups who have moved around and covered large distances. In the Middle Ages, these included craftsmen, merchants and scholars. Switzerland was also a nation of emigration for long periods, particularly in the 18th and 19th centuries when poverty forced people to leave.

So, there has always been migration. Why are a lot of people so concerned about the current situation?

This clearly has to do with the intensity of migration. But we also find migration difficult to accept because the notion of a static, stable society is ingrained in us. This idea first emerged in the 19th century with the establishment of nation states. It is the belief that everyone has a natural place where they live and have roots. This has hardly ever reflected reality. Above all, national borders were not perceived as such in the period up to the First World War and cross-border exchange of all kinds was taken for granted.

Nevertheless, the high levels of immigration are causing anxiety in large sections of the population. What would you say to these people as the Chairman of the Federal Commission on Migration

the Federal Council warns that the proposal is directly opposed to the agreement with the EU on the free movement of persons. The Federal Council points out that the termination of this agreement would have “grave consequences for the Swiss economy which earns one in two francs in the EU”. It would jeopardise the entire set of bilateral agreements.

The Ecopop initiative could trigger a completely unpredictable dynamic. The popular initiative put forward by this enigmatic association appeals to very different groups. Ecopop sees itself as an environmental movement that addresses population issues. Restricting immigration is traditionally a demand made by those on the right. However, the goal of curbing immigration to protect the environment is also popular among some left-wing and green voters.

Switzerland is therefore facing some stormy debates on immigration that, depending on the outcome of the referendum, might have more far-reaching consequences than simply doing further damage to its image. They have the potential to unravel Switzerland’s entire policy on Europe, which is already in a very fragile state.

JÜRIG MÜLLER is an editor with the “Swiss Review”



SVP “AGAINST MASS IMMIGRATION”

The SVP popular initiative “against mass immigration” was a major campaign issue at the federal elections in October 2011. It was submitted in February 2012 with 135,557 valid signatures. The Federal Council opposes the initiative, which is set to be addressed by Parliament this year before being put before the Swiss people. The initiative calls for Switzerland to set annual ceilings and quotas for residence permits. To avoid any loopholes, this would apply to all categories of immigrant, including cross-border commuters and asylum seekers. Immigration would then be possible provided it serves “Switzerland’s general economic interests, taking account of the precedence of Swiss citizens”. The text of the initiative states that the “key criteria for issuing

residence permits are, in particular, an application from an employer, the ability to integrate and adequate independent means of existence”.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION THROUGH POPULATION POLICY

The Ecopop popular initiative “stop overpopulation – safeguard natural resources” was submitted in November 2012 with 119,816 valid signatures. The Federal Council has yet to adopt a position. The Ecopop Association describes itself as the “only environmental protection organisation in Switzerland that seriously addresses the issue of population”. The initiative aims to establish Switzerland’s population at a level “where the natural resources are safeguarded over the long term”. It calls for immigration into Switzerland to be restricted to 0.2% of the population per year. Federal government should also be obliged to spend 10% of its development aid on voluntary family planning initiatives in Third World countries.

JM

These concerns are justified to an extent as migration and mobility present huge challenges, for society as a whole but also for individual groups in particular. The main issue is fears over employment, affordable housing and globalisation. Old certainties that the economy would always follow an upward trend and prosperity would constantly rise are being dispelled.

Is this why there is so much hostility towards the Germans today? They are immigrants who are actually similar to us in many respects.

This hostility is quite extraordinary. It is firstly explained by historical reasons. We have been involved in many political conflicts over the centuries, starting with the confederation breaking away from the German Empire through to the Second World War. The Swiss have always attached great importance to having their own separate identity and not being regarded as Germans. The main differences today are in terms of mentality. Germans think that they can live in (German-speaking) Swiss society without any problems because both speak the same language. But that is often exactly where the rub lies – Germans are much more direct in the way they express themselves. They often fail to understand, for example, that when Swiss people say “yes, but” they actually mean “no”. A lot of communication is required.

Two initiatives on immigration are pending – the SVP immigration initiative and that of the Ecopop Association. Do these offer potential solutions?

Both initiatives are based on assumptions that cannot be proven right or wrong in quantitative terms. There are parts of the world that are much more densely populated than Switzerland where the system works well and other sparsely populated areas that perform poorly. These initiatives are based on the wrong approach. We should not seek to implement quantitative targets but instead we should examine where the problems really lie and aim to find tailored solutions that have the support of the majority of the population.



WALTER LEIMGRUBER (53) is a tenured professor and head of the seminar on cultural studies and European ethnology at the University of Basel. He has undertaken research visits to the USA, France and Germany. A guest lecturer in Marburg and Vienna, he is Chairman of the Federal Commission on Migration since January 2012.

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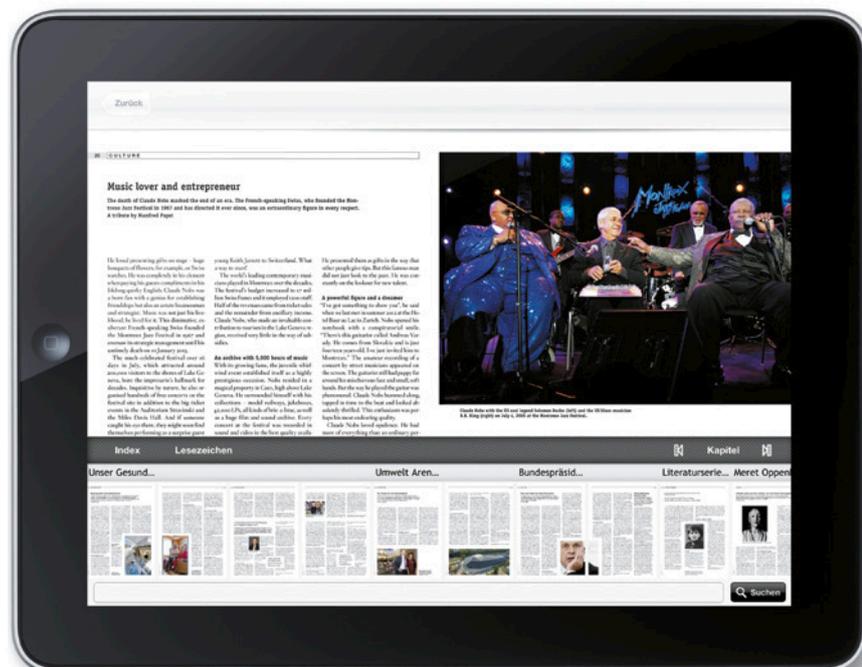


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Will the people soon be electing the Federal Council?

Should the seven-member national government be elected by the Swiss people in future instead of by Parliament as it is at present? The Swiss People's Party (SVP) believes that it should and has submitted an initiative. The Federal Council and Parliament are opposed to the proposal. The Swiss people will now decide on 9 June 2013. By Jürg Müller

There is certainly no shortage of controversial issues and nail-biting referendum campaigns in Swiss politics at the moment. After the referendum battle over the fat-cat initiative on 3 March (see also righthand page), the Swiss people will have another opportunity to vote on an issue that will trigger fierce debate on 9 June. This time the issue is the election of the Federal Council by the Swiss people.

This is no trivial matter as it concerns a key question to do with how the Swiss state is organised. Andreas Gross, Social Democrat and spokesperson for the National Council's Political Institutions Committee, remarked in the parliamentary debate: "This concerns an issue that would fundamentally change politics in our country." The SVP in fact raised this issue back in the 1990s but it did not take action until after the de-selection of Christoph Blocher from the Federal Council in 2007. The "election of the Federal Council by the Swiss people" initiative was submitted in mid-2011.

An end to "underhand machinations"

The Swiss people would elect the Federal Council rather than Parliament. The SVP believes this is in line with the "proven model of cantonal council elections". The initiative provides for the holding of Federal Council elections every four years at the same time as National Council elections. The French- and Italian-speaking parts of Switzerland would be guaranteed at least two seats between them, and the elections would be based on the majority system. In order to be elected, candidates would have to secure an absolute majority – in other words, over half of the votes cast.

The SVP is lauding the benefits of the election of the Federal Council by the Swiss people in the highest possible terms. It claims that the rights of the people would be extended, the system would be in line with the principle of the sovereignty of the people and the separation of powers would also be enhanced. Such an election process would be transparent, fair and would stop the "tactical manoeuvres and machinations of Par-

liament". The Swiss People's Party argues: "It is disgraceful that the Federal Council elections are constantly tarnished by underhand scheming and political calculations". Popular election would enable the nomination of high-profile figures whereas election by Parliament increases "the chances of moderate compromise candidates". A Federal Council elected by the people would be directly answerable to the people, which would result in a better control of power: "The Federal Council would no longer be able to disregard referendum decisions or neglect to implement initiatives."

Warning against Americanisation

Arguments were put forward at various levels by opponents of the initiative and by the Federal Council during the debates in the Federal Assembly. They contended that the existing electoral system was one of the reasons for peaceful co-existence, stability and, therefore, prosperity in Switzerland. Under a system of popular election, the members of the government would be pushed to the forefront of party politics and actual policymaking would be overshadowed. The credibility of the government would be weakened because the Federal Councillors would be re-

garded as party political figureheads and the driving forces behind party election campaigns. They would be heavily involved in election campaigns in the second half of the legislative period. In addition, the national parties would be strengthened at the expense of the cantonal parties, resulting in the centralisation of politics.

Above all, Parliament would lose a key mandate, the control of the legislative by the executive would be weakened and the government's position strengthened enormously. Federal Council members and their parties would also become financially dependent on wealthy individuals, companies or lobby organisations due to the expensive, national election campaigns. National Councillor Bea Heim, spokesperson for the Swiss Social Democratic Party (SP) faction, remarked in the National Council debate: "We do not want an Americanisation of the Federal Council elections or national Federal Council election campaigns costing millions if not billions funded by goodness knows who." The SP rejects "the election of the Federal Council by the Swiss people in principle".

The SP twice campaigned in favour

The debate over the popular election of the Federal Council is nothing new and the Social Democrats have not always been so averse to the idea. They were in fact previously ardent supporters of popular election and some individual politicians still are. Switzerland has already voted on the issue of the election of the Federal Council by the Swiss people, in 1900 and 1942 – the proposals were overwhelmingly



The incumbent Federal Councillors and the Federal Chancellor

rejected on both occasions. The proposal was submitted back then by the Social Democrats, and the reasoning was the same as that of the SVP today: the underrepresentation of the party on the Federal Council. With a 26 to 28 per cent share of the vote, the SP was the party that had the greatest support among the electorate between 1929 and 1939 at the National Council elections. Yet it was denied a seat on the Federal Council.

Despite the official party line, the issue is not off the agenda for all Social Democrats. SP Federal Councillor Micheline Calmy-Rey suggested in the "SonntagsBlick" newspaper in 2008 that the popular election of the Federal Council could provide a solution to certain problems. And the young SP National Councillor Cédric Wermuth declared during the National Council debate on the SVP popular initiative in December 2012 that the Swiss People's Party would have "found allies within the SP faction" if their initiative had been better thought-out. "Allowing the people to elect their government directly is a very democratic proposal," said Wermuth. He and two other SP representatives promptly submitted their own parliamentary initiative on the popular election of the Federal Council last December. However, this differs from the SVP's popular initiative on three key points: Wermuth calls for transparent campaign funding, a financial ceiling on the campaign budgets and an increase in the number of national government members to nine.

The receptiveness of some on the left to the basic principle of the popular election of the Federal Council might lend the SVP initiative additional momentum. It is difficult to assess what impact a change of system would have on everyday political life. However, the Institute of Political Science at the University of Berne has already produced a model calculation for the composition of the Federal Council. To sum up, the most likely outcome would be the reestablishment of the old magic formula (two seats each for the Social Democrats, the Free Democrats and the Christian Democrats, and one seat for the SVP). In terms of their share of the vote, the SVP would therefore be underrepresented. The study is heavily based on cantonal council elections, and the calculation therefore includes many unknown factors. Nevertheless, it highlights the fact that the proposal could also backfire on the SVP.

Overwhelming support for "fat-cat pay" initiative

The outcome of the referendum held on 3 March saw the approval of the "fat-cat pay" initiative and the bill on more rigorous protection of the countryside but rejection of the proposal for a better work-life balance.

Salaries and bonus payments running into millions of Swiss francs and golden handshakes for executives have been a cause of discontent for many years. With overwhelming approval (67.9%) of the popular initiative "against fat-cat pay" put forward by Thomas Minder, the businessman and independent Council of States member, the Swiss people sent out a message that has also received much attention internationally. The new constitutional article strengthens shareholders' rights in defining remuneration for Board of Directors and Executive Board members. Severance payments will be prohibited in future.

Vasella creates impetus

The initiative was only supported by the Social Democrats and the Greens. The conservative parties rejected it, favouring the indirect counterproposal. The Swiss People's Party (SVP) was split: the national SVP opposed the initia-

tive while numerous cantonal parties supported it. The business associations, in particular Economiesuisse, also campaigned against the popular initiative. Daniel Vasella, the departing chairman of the Board of Directors at the pharmaceutical group Novartis, created impetus in the closing stages of the fiercely contested referendum campaign. He was supposed to receive 72 million Swiss francs as compensation under a non-compete agreement. Even Vasella's decision to forego this farewell gift was unable to repair the damage caused.

Protection of the countryside

The approval of the amendment to spatial planning legislation comes as less of a surprise. The adoption of the second home initiative last March indicated that the Swiss people regard protection of the countryside as a top priority. The bill approved by 62.9% of voters aims to reduce excessive development zones and thus combat urban sprawl.

The "family article", which sought to promote a work-life balance, was rejected. 54.3% of the Swiss people actually supported the bill, but it was rejected by 13 cantons and only approved by 10. It therefore failed to secure the cantonal majority required for constitutional bills. The referendum campaign had turned into an ideological battle between different concepts of family, gender roles and the power of the state to shape policy in the delicate area of the family. JM

OPPOSED TO TOUGHER ASYLUM LAW

In addition to a vote on the election of the Federal Council by the people a referendum will be held on urgent amendments to the Asylum Act on 9 June 2013. This was called by green and left-wing factions.

The asylum system and procedures are sensitive issues in Switzerland. In the autumn 2012 session, Parliament passed a resolution to revise the Asylum Act, which was declared a matter of urgency by the National Council and Council of States. The legislative changes are primarily intended to speed up the process. Left-wing and green factions have successfully called a referendum against revising asylum law. A committee made up of various organisations, trade unions and political parties is behind the move. In addition to church and development policy organisations,

they also include the Young Socialists, individual Swiss Social Democratic Party (SP) cantonal parties and the Green Party.

The referendum committee hopes that a "clear signal against further tightening of asylum legislation" is sent out at the ballot box. The fact that refusal to perform military service will no longer be a valid reason for granting asylum has come under the spotlight. However, the committee is also opposed to new legislation under which Swiss embassies abroad can no longer accept asylum applications.

The amendments to the Asylum Act have already entered into force because they were declared urgent by Parliament. They will apply until September 2015 unless they are incorporated into standard law beforehand by Parliament. If the law is rejected by the Swiss people at referendum, the urgent amendments will cease to apply as early as September 2013. JM

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

By Charles Linsmayer

She evoked an imaginary La Chaux-de-Fonds in her writings from her sickbed in Paris – Monique Saint-Héliér

In 1934, the Neuchâtel “Express” reported on the sensational success of a local writer – “une des nôtres” (one of our own) – who was hiding herself away “in Paris under the pseudonym of Monique Saint-Héliér and had captivated the literary world with her novel “Bois-Mort”. “Bois-Mort” was the first work in the “Les Alérac” series of novels written by Berthe Briod-Eimann between 1934 and 1955. It is an immense narrative work focusing entirely on an imaginary La Chaux-de-Fonds and is distinguished by the fact that, while the actual plot is restricted to a few hours, the destiny of entire generations appears before the mind’s eye of the protagonists.

At loggerheads with family and the Church

Berthe Eimann, a pharmacist’s daughter, was born in La Chaux-de-Fonds on 2 September 1895 and lost her mother at the age of three. So profound was her grief that when she began her literary career in 1927 she assumed the name of Saint Héliér, who is celebrated on 16 July, her mother’s birthday. She underwent her first of several operations, which resulted in complications, at the age of 11, acquired her Swiss school-leaving diploma in Lausanne at 21 and at 22, against her parents’ wishes, married Protestant theologian Blaise Briod, with whom she converted to Catholicism on her wedding day. Both were studying literature in Berne when she fell ill again. An unresolved lifelong conflict with the Catholic Church began during a two-year stay at the Viktoria-Klinik hospital in Berne because the hospital priest, with support from a bishop, would only allow her to continue receiving the sacraments if she burned books she owned written by Montaigne and Calvin. She refused, refraining henceforth from taking part in confession and communion. She also complied with the severest of the clerics’ orders about never discussing reli-

gion with Blaise again. After being discharged from hospital, in 1923 she became acquainted with Rainer Maria Rilke, who insightfully encouraged her to write. When he died in 1926, the 24 French poems of the “Les Roses” series were lying on his desk with the inscription “Joy forever – Joie pour toujours. Nous les destinons à Monique.”

Wrested from illness line by line

At the time, Monique Saint-Héliér and Blaise, who was working for the League of Nations, had been living for several months in Paris, a city that frightened her with its noise. Rilke’s death was another blow and she fell so seriously ill in 1927 that she was never able to walk again until the day she died on 9 March 1955, and wrote her entire body of work in bed. The Alérac series was preceded by two works dedicated to Rilke’s memory: “A Rilke pour Noël” (1927) and “La Cage aux rêves” (1932) – an astonishingly modern account in novel form of how a dying young woman deals with the beginning and end of her conscious existence. With its collage style, it is a work that penetrates deeper into areas of the soul than a linear text ever could. In contrast to what it suggested, the novel was not Monique Saint-Héliér’s last book, but her remaining 23 years defy description in their gravity. During the German capture of Paris, Blaise carried the sick-woman to safety away from the bullets, and when she continued the Alérac series after the war, Grasset, her publishing house, demanded that she abridge the work so drastically that the compositional principle was completely destroyed. “Ah, les éditeurs, les voilà nos ennemis”, she wrote in one of her last letters.



Quotation

“I am not the type who can fully integrate into modern Parisian life. I suffer terrible anxieties and am terrified of people. I feel like a blind person who has to be led by the hand and stumbles over every step or like an unsophisticated provincial person with all the awkwardness of a convent schoolgirl. How I wish you could be here, my friend. I was never anxious when I was in your company.” (15 June 1926 to Rilke)

BIBLIOGRAPHY: “Les Oiseaux du matin et autres nouvelles” and “L’Arrosoir rouge” (part 4 of the Alérac series) are available in French from Editions de l’Aire. From Editions Zoé: “J’ai tant à vous dire. Correspondance avec Rilke 1923-1926”. The following are available in German: “Morsches Holz” from Suhrkamp and “Traumkäfig” (La Cage aux rêves) as volume 7 of Reprinted by Huber with a biography of Monique Saint-Héliér by Charles Linsmayer.

CHARLES LINSMAYER is a literary scholar and journalist in Zurich

Men and women of iron

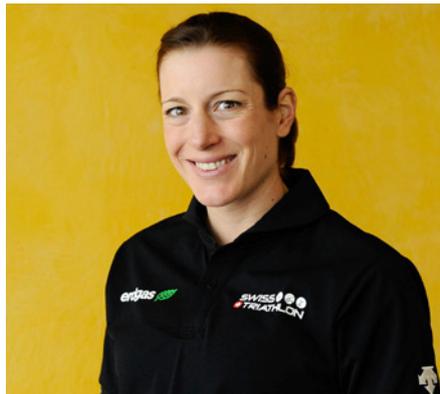
It's a non-stop event combining swimming, cycling and running. Swiss triathlon celebrated its second Olympic medal in 2012 with Nicola Spirig's victory in London. Switzerland's elite athletes take part in competitions all over the world and have enjoyed tremendous success. This feature by Alain Wey looks at this tri-discipline sport, its origins and its popularity in Switzerland.

By Alain Wey

The triathlon is in a league of its own - a crazy sport, some might say. It's a non-stop event combining swimming, cycling and running. Ever since it was invented, it has been regarded as an extreme sport ahead of its time. The maiden event was christened "ironman" because it takes a super-human effort to cover over 200 kilometres on land and water. If the athletes were able to fly, "superman" might even be a fitting name. The triathlon has only been an Olympic event since 2000 and will celebrate its 40th anniversary in 2014. It has since conquered the entire world and takes place over various distances. Swiss triathletes are amongst the best in the world and Switzerland is one of the most successful nations at the Olympic Games with two gold and two bronze medals. Some of these victories have even had a touch of Hollywood about them with Zurich's Nicola Spirig winning in London in 2012 by just a few centimetres ahead of her Swedish opponent. We get the inside track on triathlon past and present in Switzerland and worldwide with Reto Hug, the Head of Swiss Triathlon and former European champion.

A recent sport in a young country

While the origins of the sport go back to France at the start of the 20th century, the first modern triathlon event only took place in 1974 in San Diego, California. The sport established its legendary status on the archipelago of Hawaii in 1978 with the launch of the ironman competition in which 15 athletes swam 3.9 km, cycled 180 km and ran a marathon. Dave Scott and Mark Allen from the US have each won six times in Hawaii. "They have left their mark on the sport and have taken it to a new level as has the Zimbabwean triathlete, Paula Newby-Fraser, who has won the event eight times. These are true legends of the sport," explains Reto Hug. The iconic ironman event crossed the At-



Nicola Spirig

lantic and captivated northern Europe, where the first competitions took place in 1981, before conquering France in 1982. The number of events has increased sharply ever since. There are also shorter courses, known as half and quarter ironman events. National federations were established in most European countries from 1984 with Switzerland's being founded in 1985. The level of popularity soon saw the creation of the International Triathlon Union (ITU) in Avignon, France, where the first World Championships were held in 1989 over the Olympic distance (1.5 km, 40 km, 10 km). Lausanne has since hosted the event twice, in 1998 and 2006. The long-distance World Ironman Championship is of course held annually in Hawaii in October.

Switzerland - breeding ground for triathletes

The triathlon began to establish itself in Switzerland in the early 1980s. The first competitions took place in Zurich, Morat, Soleure and Geneva. Carl Kupferschmid from Zurich performed exceptionally well. He won the Swiss triathlon in Zurich three times (1983-1985) and finished third in the ironman event in Hawaii in 1985 to become the first European to secure a place on the podium. The national federation exceeded the 2,000-member mark at the end of the

1980s and today has over 4,200 members belonging to 76 clubs. Switzerland's greatest triathlon event is undoubtedly the "Ironman Zurich Switzerland" which is part of the world ironman circuit. Reto Hug adds that the Zug, Lausanne and Geneva triathlons are also raced over the Olympic distance. "What's more, Geneva will host the European championships in 2015," Hug explains. Other competitions are concentrated around regions where lakes are found. One triathlon in canton Berne stands out on account of its steep terrain with a total ascent of 5,500 metres - the "Inferno". The race starts out in Thun before reaching Schilthorn at 2,970 metres, passing through Grindelwald.

Reaching for the stars

Several Swiss triathletes have won some of the world's most prestigious titles. In the long-distance competition, Natascha Badmann from Aargau has won the Hawaiian ironman event six times (1996-2005) and still continues to take part today at the age of 46. 34-year-old Caroline Steffen from Berne is following in her footsteps with a second-place finish in 2010 and 2012. In the men's event, Lucerne's Christoph Mauch made it onto the podium twice in Hawaii in 1998 and 1999 as did Zurich's Ronnie Schildknecht in 2008. Schildknecht is currently the leading Swiss athlete in the sport with six victories in Zurich (2007-2012). Over the Olympic distance, big names include Olympic medal winners Sven Riederer from Zurich (bronze in Athens in 2004), Zug's Brigitte McMahon and Neuchatel's Magali Di Marco-Messmer, who won gold and bronze respectively in Sydney in 2000 and, of course, Nicola Spirig (see interview). In this category, the World Championship Series is even more selective than alpine skiing and only includes eight races spread around the world. In 2013, these will take place in Auckland, San Diego, Yokohama, Kitz-

bühel, Hamburg, Stockholm, Madrid and London. “These are the most important races over the Olympic distance,” explains Reto Hug. The number of competitors is limited to 75. They firstly have to get through the European Championships and then the World Championships to obtain enough points. Only three Swiss women (Nicola Spirig, Daniela Ryf and Melanie Hauss) and three or four Swiss

men (Sven Riederer, Ruedi Wild and the brothers Andrea and Florin Salvisberg) will be able to take part.

An increasingly professional sport

The effort and discipline required of the athletes is hard to conceive for most people. “Triathletes generally train three times a day,” reveals Reto Hug. “That equates to around 25 hours a week but can rise to 40 hours during

intensive weeks,” he adds. The fact that the triathlon is such a recently established sport explains why it has not yet reached the level of professionalism found in other sports. “In the past, the athletes often trained with the specific sports clubs for each discipline of the triathlon – swimming, cycling and running. But this made overall coordination of training difficult. Today, former athletes often go on to become trainers and the elite compet-



“A dream comes true”

2012 proved to be a remarkable year for Olympic triathlon champion Nicola Spirig. The Olympic long-distance specialist notched up a number of successes in terms of both sporting achievement and in her private life. The 31-year-old from Zurich won the World Championship Series in Madrid and Kitzbühel, the Ironman 70.3 in Rapperswil and Antwerp and became European champion in Eilat, Israel. She also married her long-term partner, the triathlete Reto Hug, and is expecting a baby in May. To top everything off, the triple European champion was crowned Swiss Sportsperson of the Year, ahead of Roger Federer.

«SUISSE REVIEW»: *What does it take to become a triathlon champion?*

NICOLA SPIRIG: Lots of pieces make up the jigsaw. You need a certain degree of ability. You have to put in lots of hard work and training both physically and mentally, while a good team and support are also vital. My team consists of myself, my family, my husband, my trainer and his international coaching staff as well as my sponsors. You also need a little bit of good fortune during competitions to avoid illness and injury. Lots of small details have to come together to ultimately be the best.

What attributes are needed to become an elite sportsperson?

The triathlon requires endurance, versatility and good technique in each discipline. You have to find the right balance between the various sports. It helps if you are tall and muscular for the swimming whereas a slighter build is better suited to the running. Psychologically, you have to be ambitious and possess the desire to see things through to the end, to work hard to achieve your objectives and to carry on despite setbacks, such as injuries and doubts.

Have you ever been injured?

I suffered a fatigue fracture of the tibia in 2011, a year before the Olympic Games, and was unable to run for four months. I consequently adopted a slightly different approach to training in 2012. I worked on the other disciplines during my recovery period, learned to have patience and continued to believe I could achieve my goal despite the injury.

You wouldn't be the sportswoman you are today without your parents. They have always been very supportive. What sort of sporting background do you come from?

Family plays a major role for all young sportspeople. My grandfather and my parents were PE teachers. They passed enjoyment

itors are developing thanks to better coaching,” Hug says. The Head of Swiss Triathlon believes that the challenge has only just begun. He remarks: “We still have highly individual solutions but we intend to change that. The system is evolving.”

Even greater distances?

If competitors take over eight hours to complete an ironman event, you may wonder

whether even longer triathlons exist? “There is no limit in terms of going further. There are double, triple and even quintuple ironman events. Doctor Beat Knechtle from canton St Gallen has won several of these competitions. But my personal vision for the sport is not about running for over 20 hours,” Hug observes. Whatever its format, the triathlon still has plenty of surprises in store for us. “It is an incredible experience. I still find the combination of these three sporting disciplines fascinating. After all, that’s why I participated in the sport for over 20 years,” he explains.

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www.swisstriathlon.ch
www.ironman.ch (Ironman Switzerland)



Triathletes in action: swimming, cycling, running



of sport onto me and I was given the opportunity to try out lots of types of sport. My father was my coach for fifteen years. Choosing to pursue a career in sport was nevertheless my own decision.

Who do you admire?

I’ve never had one idol in particular but lots of athletes have impressed me with one or more qualities and they have been my inspiration in creating my own sporting personality.

Olympic gold and victory on the line by just a few centimetres ahead of your Swedish competitor – what does that mean to you?

It’s a dream come true. That was a massive achievement. The medal has had a tremendous impact on my life and lots of people in Switzerland now recognise me because of that race. It is also special because only three Swiss women have ever won gold in the history of the Olympic Games in all disciplines.

What is your next challenge?

The European Athletics Championships in Zurich in 2014. That will just be running but I can’t tell you which distance that will be at this stage. It may be 5,000 metres, 10,000 metres or even a marathon. I will definitely continue to take part in triathlon competitions at the same time.

Can you really make a living from triathlon?

There are very few athletes able to make a living from triathlon in Switzerland. I won’t make a fortune from it – I earn a living thanks to my personal sponsors – and after my sporting career, I’ll focus on another profession as I’m a qualified lawyer. Finding sponsors is therefore a key part of my job.

What is your philosophy?

I find it very exciting to set myself a target and to see how far I can get, to put my abilities to the test and to find out where my limits lie. I like to set myself extremely ambitious objectives, such as the Olympic Games, and I draw inspiration from pursuing these goals.

Now that you have started a family, you are entering a new chapter in your life as a sportswoman and will have to draw on your resourcefulness. When do you expect to resume competition?

I’m keeping my options open and will wait to see how our new life as a family settles down. Our child and the family come first. Many athletes have proven that family life can be reconciled with elite sport. I’m not going to set a date for my return now. I firstly intend to regain my fitness and train hard before returning to competition. I’m going to give it a go and if it doesn’t work out, there will always be other avenues open.

www.nicolaspirig.ch

Music lover and entrepreneur

The death of Claude Nobs marked the end of an era. The French-speaking Swiss, who founded the Montreux Jazz Festival in 1967 and had directed it ever since, was an extraordinary figure in every respect.

A tribute by Manfred Papst

He loved presenting gifts on stage – huge bouquets of flowers, for example, or Swiss watches. He was completely in his element when paying his guests compliments in his lifelong quirky English. Claude Nobs was a born fan with a genius for establishing friendships but also an astute businessman and strategist. Music was not just his livelihood, he lived for it. This diminutive, exuberant French-speaking Swiss founded the Montreux Jazz Festival in 1967 and oversaw its strategic management until his untimely death on 10 January 2013.

The much-celebrated festival over 16 days in July, which attracted around 200,000 visitors to the shores of Lake Geneva, bore the impresario's hallmark for decades. Inquisitive by nature, he also organised hundreds of free concerts on the festival site in addition to the big-ticket events in the Auditorium Stravinski and the Miles Davis Hall. And if someone caught his eye there, they might soon find themselves performing as a surprise guest on one of the main stages.

Claude Nobs certainly had a colourful career. The son of a baker and nurse born in Territet near Montreux in 1936, he completed an apprenticeship as a chef and continued his training in Lausanne to become a "Maître d'Hôtel". He then took a job in the Montreux tourist information office as an accountant of all things. But he was not suited to working in an office. Almost immediately he began organising concerts. His passion for jazz, blues and rock took him to France and then to the US. He visited the clubs, forged contacts and established a network with a combination of charm and audacity. He brought the Rolling Stones to perform their first concert in Switzerland in 1964. Three years later, he founded the Montreux Jazz Festival with two friends. The first event was held on a budget of 10,000 Swiss francs and without paid employees. But they managed to bring the Charles Lloyd quartet with the very

young Keith Jarrett to Switzerland. What a way to start!

The world's leading contemporary musicians played in Montreux over the decades. The festival's budget increased to 17 million Swiss francs and it employed 1200 staff. Half of the revenues came from ticket sales and the remainder from ancillary income. Claude Nobs, who made an invaluable contribution to tourism in the Lake Geneva region, received very little in the way of subsidies.

An archive with 5,000 hours of music

As his fame grew, the juvenile whirlwind turned into a grand seigneur. Nobs resided in a magical property in Caux, high above Lake Geneva. He surrounded himself with his collections – model railways, jukeboxes, 42,000 LPs, all kinds of bric-a-brac, as well as a huge film and sound archive. Every concert at the festival was recorded in sound and video in the best quality available because Claude Nobs was also a lover of technology. Well over 5,000 hours of music from Montreux are stored in his catacombs. A lot of it is already on LP, CD and DVD, though there is much more still waiting to be processed.

Claude Nobs may be regarded as a lucky man in many respects. He was much loved, built up an incredible network and felt equally at home in New York and Tokyo. Yet, despite this, he was strangely remote. His creative restlessness never left him and gave him an aura of slight melancholy. He was always thinking ahead to the next festival. He often failed to notice what was going on around him at the time. Only later would he watch everything – on DVD in his home cinema fitted out with first-class seats from the defunct airline Swissair or on his boat.

When Claude Nobs was on his travels, he always had a suitcase full of video and sound recordings of concerts at his festival. He presented them as gifts in the way that

other people give tips. But this famous man did not just look to the past. He was constantly on the lookout for new talent.

A powerful figure and a dreamer

"I've got something to show you," he said when we last met in summer 2012 at the Hotel Baur au Lac in Zurich. Nobs opened his notebook with a conspiratorial smile. "There's this guitarist called Andreas Varydy. He comes from Slovakia and is just fourteen years old. I've just invited him to Montreux." The amateur recording of a concert by street musicians appeared on the screen. The guitarist still had puppy fat around his mischievous face and small, soft hands. But the way he played the guitar was phenomenal. Claude Nobs hummed along, tapped in time to the beat and looked absolutely thrilled. This enthusiasm was perhaps his most endearing quality.

Claude Nobs loved opulence. He had more of everything than an ordinary person could manage. But he was no ordinary person. He was a powerful figure, yet also a dreamer. Surrounded by a small band of devotees who assisted him and looked after his wellbeing – mostly young men who greatly admired him – he directed one of the world's leading and most successful music festivals from Caux. The hotchpotch of the sublime and mundane, of the delightful and whimsical, revealed the master's great sense of humour and irony. And when he played with his treasures, his charisma shone through. He would carefully take old LPs down off the shelves, rekindling memories in him. Every little gem would reawaken some recollection. He looked like a happy child in these moments.

As a lover of music, Nobs would listen to anything and everything. Some critics found his taste just too arbitrary. But it was not quite that simple. He was in fact very discerning. But he sought to mediate, build bridges and bring different worlds together. Someone with a more critical perspective



Claude Nobs with the US soul legend Solomon Burke (left) and the US blues musician B.B. King (right) on July 4, 2005 at the Montreux Jazz Festival

would not have been able to accomplish that. Nobs, however, succeeded in incorporating all facets of jazz, pop, folk and blues into one unique festival. At the same time, he opened it up to world music performers from India to South Africa and from the Balkans to Argentina. This was not purely down to a calculated strategy but because he loved any authentic music and sought contact with creative people. In his early years, he did that, as many anecdotes testify, with the impertinence of youth, whereas later he acted from a position of fame and strength.

A stage full of stars

The Montreux Jazz Festival underwent fundamental changes in the four and a half decades of the Nobs era. The concerts in the Casino always took place in relatively intimate surroundings. A club-type atmosphere remained, with plenty of opportunity for relaxed jam sessions. The scene is

completely different in the Auditorium Stravinski with its 3,500 seats and the 2,000-capacity Miles Davis Hall in the new convention centre: most performers soon brought multimedia shows to Montreux.

Claude Nobs received some criticism, with the accusation made that the Montreux Jazz Festival had become a purely commercial event where sponsors, media partners and luxury goods companies were even more important than the music itself. There is some truth in that. But, in fairness, it has to be said that Nobs always focused on blending the mainstream with the experimental. His love of extravagance was nevertheless often reflected in his line-ups. His friends would refer to the "Salade Nobs" in affectionate mockery. His *carte blanche* and all-star evenings for legends like Carlos Santana and Quincy Jones seemed to be the ultimate for him. He was in heaven when as many stars as possible

appeared on stage, and when he began blowing into his mouth organ there was no stopping him.

Claude Nobs, who died after a cross-country skiing accident and 17 days in a coma, will remain in our memory as a brilliant festival director and someone who frequently received visitors like Miles Davis and B. B. King. He brought stars like Sting and David Bowie to Montreux. He was a man of great warmth and tremendous intelligence. He did all he could to make sure he would leave a lasting legacy, but he will be deeply missed.

A memorial concert with a top-class line-up was held for Claude Nobs in Montreux on 8 February 2013. Further tribute events are planned in New York and London.

MANFRED PAPST is editor of the "NZZ am Sonntag" culture section

“Crossing borders is part of culture”

For six months now, Andrew Holland has been the director of Pro Helvetia, the Swiss Arts Council, which plays a vital role in promoting the arts with an annual budget of over 34 million Swiss francs. Pro Helvetia spends over half of its funding abroad. An interview looking at the arts, provocation, a sense of home and Pro Helvetia's plans.

Interview by Barbara Engel

“SWISS REVIEW”: *“Swiss Review”, the magazine for the Swiss abroad, has to ask the question – what is your perception of the Swiss abroad?*

ANDREW HOLLAND: I have no doubt that the Swiss abroad are just as diverse as Swiss citizens living at home. After all, there are very many different reasons why Swiss people decide to live abroad. What I have always noticed on visits abroad is that the Swiss abroad have a strong attachment to their old homeland that often spans generations.

Pro Helvetia is known as the “Swiss Arts Council”. As the director of this cultural council, how would you define typically Swiss culture?

There is no such thing as typically Swiss culture. How could it possibly exist in a country with four language regions, 26 cantons and around 3,000 communes all involved in cultural activities? What characterises Swiss culture is its richness and diversity.

In which areas of the arts is Switzerland strongest?

There are wave-like movements in the arts. Art often develops around individuals who carry others along with them, such as Maurice Béjart in dance or Christoph Marthaler in theatre, to give two examples of Swiss artists who had and continue to have great influence on cultural development. In terms of the visual arts, design and architecture, countless Swiss artists are currently among the best in the world, such as Pipilotti Rist, Roman Signer, Fischli/Weiss, Valentin Carron, Urs Fischer, Herzog & Demeuron and Peter Zumthor. Swiss exponents of the arts generally produce very high quality work and demonstrate great innovation.

“Confrontation must serve a purpose”

Pro Helvetia spends over half of its funding on promoting the Swiss arts abroad. Which regions are you focusing on, besides the, traditional offices abroad?

Pro Helvetia supports Swiss cultural projects in almost 100 countries. To do this, we establish geographical priorities. We launched an exchange programme in Russia last November that will run for two years. The aim is to build bridges and establish links between institutions in Russia and those in Switzerland during this period. We are investing additional funding and human resources there. We have employed a small programme team on-site to coordinate relations. But we are also planning further ahead. We aim to focus on South America from 2016 since we do not yet have a representation on this continent though there is great interest in and demand for Swiss artists there.

Migration is an issue that is currently causing heated debate in politics. What impact does it have on the arts?

Artists have always sought to establish international contacts. Crossing borders is part of culture. And the arts scene is obviously international today. The current situation in literature is very interesting as in Switzerland, but also elsewhere, we have lots of people with immigrant backgrounds who are currently among the most popular authors. I'm thinking, for instance, of the Swiss Book Prize winner, Melinda Nadj Abonji, who also received the German Book Prize in 2010. At the same time, many Swiss writers, such as Matthias Zschokke and Paul Nizon, also work in major European cities.

You arrived in Switzerland from England at the age of six. Do you still regard England as home?

I quickly became increasingly Swiss because of school, my friends and my mother. But I'm used to switching back and forth between two worlds. I have relatives in England. We often spend holidays there and I have wonderful memories of it. Regarding whether Switzerland or England is closer to me, that is shown by my football allegiance. I shout “Hopp Schwiiz” (come on Switzerland) and cheer on the Swiss. Even my father does the same now.

Do you have a favourite holiday destination abroad or perhaps even a dream destination?

I have a three-year-old son, so our travelling is a bit restricted at the moment. This means that most of my holidays are within Switzerland and neighbouring countries. As far as my favourite destinations are concerned, I love the mountains, the sea and the unexpected. I most like travelling from place to place. Australia is somewhere I want to visit in the medium term.

You have had close links with the dance scene in your professional career. Are you a dancer yourself?

No, I'm not. I worked as a dramatic adviser on the dance and theatre scene.

After your appointment as director of Pro Helvetia, you were presented as a unifying figure. That sounds good but also rather dull. In contrast to your predecessor, do you intend to avoid provocation and confrontation?

I am firmly in favour of conflicting views and debate over matters of substance. But confrontation must serve a purpose.

Pro Helvetia attracted criticism in the past over Thomas Hirschhorn's exhibition in Paris, which it supported. Do you believe that art should provoke politicians?



Andrew Holland has been the director of Pro Helvetia since 1 November. He was born in Dorchester in the UK in 1965 and moved to Switzerland at the age of six, where he grew up in Herisau. He studied law in St. Gallen and at Berkeley, and obtained his doctorate with a comparative study of cultural promotion in the USA and Switzerland. He worked at the Federal Office of Culture from 1996 to 2004. He then joined Pro Helvetia, becoming the vice-director in 2009. Holland lives in Zurich.

PRO HELVETIA

Pro Helvetia was founded in 1939 as a means of defending Switzerland's independent cultural identity. The Council today promotes the arts in Switzerland and raises their profile abroad with a budget of 34.4 million Swiss francs. Around 3,500 funding applications are received each year. Pro Helvetia has liaison offices abroad in Cairo, Warsaw, Cape Town, New Delhi and Shanghai. It manages the Centre Culturel Suisse in Paris and funds the cultural programme of the Swiss institutes in Rome and New York.

Around 24 million Swiss francs is spent on promoting projects – 37% on activities in Switzerland and 63% on activities abroad (58% in Europe). Pro Helvetia's range of activities was expanded significantly under Andrew Holland's predecessor, Pius Knüsel. Popular culture and video games, for example, were also included in the promotion of the arts. The book "Der Kulturinfarkt", which Knüsel wrote in 2012 with three German executives in the arts, was extremely provocative towards both artists and politicians. The authors put forward the view that half of all subsidised theatre, museums, libraries and similar cultural institutions did not deserve financial support and could be closed. Shortly after the publication of this controversial book, Knüsel resigned from his position as director of Pro Helvetia and became head of the "Volkshochschule" (adult education centre) of the canton of Zurich. <http://www.prohelvetia.ch>

Article 21 of our federal constitution states: "Freedom of artistic expression is guaranteed." Art may therefore certainly contain critical statements and make a contribution to the political debate. There are nevertheless clear boundaries – art, too, must not be defamatory or contravene the law in any other way. However, whether every piece of provocative work deserves support in this context is another question.

In terms of Pro Helvetia's promotion of the arts abroad, is the emphasis on providing culture for Swiss citizens living in the country concerned or is it more a question of raising the profile of the Swiss arts in a foreign country?

Our task is to raise the profile of Swiss artists abroad. We support participation at foreign events while at the same time proactively focusing on promotional activities to raise awareness of Swiss artists and their work among the organisers of cultural events abroad. We often work closely with the Swiss embassies and are delighted when the Swiss abroad attend the events.

I was told that Pro Helvetia employees celebrated when you were appointed director. What makes you such a popular boss?

That's a difficult question to answer. What certainly helps to create trust is that both my cultural and my professional backgrounds embody two worlds. I grew up in Switzerland but I'm an immigrant. It is exactly the same in my career; I studied at the University of St. Gallen but at the same time organised and managed cultural events myself – I played records and moved chairs around. This base helps me in my management of the Swiss Arts Council.

What would you do if you suddenly had a million Swiss francs given to you personally to spend as you wished?

Off the top of my head, I would donate some to a charitable organisation working on behalf of young people because they are our future. On a personal level, I would keep an eye out for a house with a garden and would put something aside for my son's education.

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



OSA advice

As a Swiss citizen abroad, can I make voluntary contributions to old-age and survivors' insurance and disability insurance?

Voluntary membership of the old-age and survivors' insurance and disability insurance scheme is only possible subject to certain conditions. The following three criteria must be met: you must hold Swiss nationality or that of an EU or EFTA state, not be domiciled in an EU or EFTA state, and have been insured under the old-age and survivors' insurance for five years without a break in the period immediately beforehand. It is not necessary to have paid contributions for five years but you must have been insured. For minors and married persons without gainful employment who are exempted from paying contributions, the years of domicile in Switzerland count as years of insurance. Voluntary membership of the old-age and survivors' insurance/disability insurance scheme is therefore only possible as a continuation of compulsory old-age and survivors' insurance. Each family member wishing to join the voluntary old-age and survivors' insurance has to make an individual membership application. The declaration of membership of the voluntary insurance scheme has to be submitted in writing to the Swiss Central Compensation Office or alternatively to the Swiss representation responsible within a year of leaving the compulsory insurance scheme. Membership of the voluntary insurance scheme is no longer possible beyond this deadline. When deciding whether to join the voluntary old-age and survivors' insurance, it should be noted that in many countries the laws on old-age and disability insurance provide for reductions in benefits if those insured have other sources of income in addition to their pensions, in particular foreign pensions such as old-age and survivors' insurance. The providers of social insurance in the country concerned are the only ones who can confirm whether this is the case and provide information on the extent to which old-age and survivors' insurance is taken into account as a source of income in the calculation of the foreign pension.

Useful links: Swiss Central Compensation Office: www.zas.admin.ch > Topics > Voluntary insurance

Swiss representations abroad: www.eda.admin.ch > Representations

SARAH MASTANTUONI, Head of the Legal Service-
The Organisation of the Swiss Abroad's Legal Depart-

ment 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.

CORRECTION AND ADDENDUM

An error was made in January's "OSA advice" concerning the recognition of foreign qualifications. The Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology (OPET) – which the article stated was responsible for the recognition of qualifications with regard to professional training and universities of applied sciences – no longer exists. It was incorporated into the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) at the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research in December 2012. www.sbf.admin.ch

The Association promoting Education for Young Swiss Abroad (AJAS), which is closely linked with the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad, provides information on the recognition of foreign qualifications.

If you have any questions, please contact:
AJAS, Alpenstrasse 26, 3006 Berne, SWITZERLAND
Phone +41 (0) 31 356 61 04, fax +41 (0) 31 356 61 01
e-mail: ajas@aso.ch, www.ajas.ch

Summertime in Switzerland

Outdoor activities, exercise, entertainment, adventure and fun – this is what you can expect at the summer camps for young people organised by the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA). A range of attractive, knowledge-building educational holidays can be booked all year round. OSA's programmes for young people enable youngsters to establish a relationship with Switzerland, make contacts here and get to know other Swiss people who live abroad.

120 young people from over 30 countries are expected to attend the large summer camps in Prêles in the Bernese Jura. Group sport, outdoor activities and trips to the region's tourist attractions are on the itinerary. Creative, musical and journalistic workshops will also be on offer.

A camp of a special kind will take place in Saastal in the canton of Valais. This will give

young people the opportunity to take part in a charitable project and help improve living conditions in the Swiss mountain village of Saas Balen. Besides the project work, there will, of course, also be time for leisure pursuits and relaxation.

Finally, OSA is organising an adventure trip in August aimed at young people who enjoy taking on physical and mental challenges. The participants in this outdoor camp will be involved in planning the journey, which will cross forests, lakes and mountains. The young people will set up their own sleeping and eating quarters during the trip.

Take advantage of the OSA network

The number of young people wishing to enjoy an educational stay in Switzerland has been increasing for years. OSA's Youth Service is therefore offering two-week language courses in Zurich (German), Fribourg and Neuchâtel (French) this summer. These courses are aimed at young people with no or very little knowledge of the respective national language. All classes will take place in the mornings, with OSA organising excursions or leisure activities on three or four afternoons, plus a day trip.

The Youth Service also puts together programmes in Switzerland that are tailored to the individual Swiss abroad. To enable us to plan their stay, young people can let us know which subject areas, professions, educational establishments or training institutes they are particularly interested in. We will provide the participants with personal advice, arrange contact with schools, universities and students, and organise visits to the potential institutions.

We are able to provide these educational programmes at affordable prices thanks to the relationship we enjoy with the many hosts who are willing to provide meals and accommodation to young people free of charge during their stay. Contact with host families often proves an extremely enriching experience for the Swiss abroad.

We are also delighted to be able to offer young people a seminar in August focusing on communication. This will also include participation in the Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Davos. This is a unique opportunity not just to discover this famous holiday and conference resort but also to meet interesting participants from the fields of politics and culture.

Information on the offers for young people can be found at www.aso.ch

Spring meeting of the Council of the Swiss Abroad

The last meeting of the Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA) in its current composition took place on 16 March 2013 at the Rathaus in Berne. The newly elected delegates will take up office in August.

The conduct of the Swiss banks towards the Swiss abroad and the various tax agreements that the Swiss government is currently negotiating with different countries (FATCA with the USA, inheritance tax agreement with France) once again gave rise to heated debate. Nicolas Descoeurdes, head of the financial affairs section at the FDFA, explained the FATCA agreement to the delegates and subsequently took questions. His answers clearly indicated that the pressure on Switzerland in these negotiations was immense and that adopting a position of non-cooperation, as proposed by some delegates, was not an option.

Delegates showed great interest in the presentation by ambassador Ralf Heckner, head of the federal government's crisis management centre. Heckner said that there was growing insecurity in the world, highlighting 11 September 2001, the Arab Spring and the economic crisis. Crisis management centre personnel are primarily deployed to deal with natural disasters, serious accidents, hostage situations and terror attacks. The taking of hostages, in particular, has increased in recent times. The crisis management centre focuses on preventive measures, including the training of diplomatic and consular personnel. Crisis situation measures, jointly drawn up by the FDFA and the Federal Department of Defence (DDPS), today exist for every Swiss representation abroad. Heckner pointed out that the FDFA's travel advice (in German at www.eda.admin.ch/reisehinweise) was particularly important in terms of prevention. When asked whether and to what extent victims of kidnap would have to contribute to the cost of their repatriation, Heckner replied that this matter would be regulated within the framework of the planned law on the Swiss Abroad. BE

PETER MÜLLER SAYS FAREWELL AFTER 35 YEARS



Peter Müller from South Africa first sat on the Council of the Swiss Abroad in Einsiedeln in 1978. He has since constantly raised important issues concerning the Swiss

abroad on the Council and has made a major contribution to many debates.

"It's now time to go," he declared at the meeting in Berne. His successor on the CSA has already been decided. South Africa will be represented by Marcie Bischof and Hans-Georg Bosch over the next four years. Peter Müller will nevertheless maintain contact with the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad and the worldwide community of the Swiss abroad. He has already confirmed that he will be attending the Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Davos. He said that his departure from the CSA was more of a "see you later" than a goodbye. BE

91st Congress of the Swiss Abroad: 16 to 18 August 2013, Davos Congress Centre

Switzerland vs. globalisation will be the main topic of debate at the 91st Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Davos. Among the speakers will be Federal Councillor Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf.

More on this topic and the latest information on the 2013 Congress can be found in German at: www.aso.ch/de/angebote/auslandschweizer-kongress.

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

Please send me the registration documents in spring 2013 for the 91st Congress of the Swiss Abroad (16 to 18 August 2013 in Davos).

My address is:

Surname: _____ first name: _____
 Address: _____
 Country: _____ postcode/city: _____
 Email: _____

Please write clearly using block capitals.

The registration documents are available in two languages: German French (Please check the box of the language required.)
 Send the completed form to: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad Communications & Marketing, Alpenstrasse 26, 3006 Berne, SWITZERLAND, Fax: +41 (0)31 356 61 01 or email us at communication@aso.ch





Young Swiss abroad in an igloo

A few brave participants able to endure the cold at the winter camp organised by the Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad in Lantsch (Grisons) over the New Year period tested out an igloo they had built themselves. The verdict was that nothing beats a night in an igloo!

Step 1: Prepare the site

Look for a site where there is little wind, enough compacted snow, evening sunshine and, if possible, a nice view. Place a stick in the centre and attach a piece of string to it to mark out the radius (half the diameter) of the igloo.

Step 2: Carve out the blocks of snow

Around 50 blocks of snow are required, measuring 60 x 45 x 15 cm. The blocks should be around the same size. TIP: never hold

blocks of snow at the edges when lifting them.

Step 3: Position the first layer of the igloo

Stamp down hard on the ground to create a firm foundation and prevent the blocks from sinking as the weight of the structure increases. Put the first layer of blocks into position, using the string attached to the stick in the centre to check that a perfect circle has been formed.

Step 4: Prepare the first layer for building on top

Trim the height of the blocks in the first layer so you can continue building in a spiral shape (see photo 1). The best approach is to kneel in the centre and trim from the ground upwards.

Step 5: Build upwards

Now build the spiral structure upwards, block by block. Check the inside radius regularly when positioning the blocks. If the igloo is not round, it will soon collapse.

Step 6: Dig an entrance

Now dig out an entrance under the wall of the igloo. Note that the top of the entrance on the outside should be lower than the sleeping area. This will keep heat inside the igloo and prevent it from escaping through the entrance. The best method is to dig a deep hole from both inside and outside the igloo, meeting in the middle.

Step 7: Plug any holes and jump into your sleeping bag

There will be large or small gaps between the blocks, depending on how the igloo has been built. To keep heat inside the igloo, these holes must be plugged with wedges and compacted snow.

You are now all set for a cool night in the snow house.

Text: Simone Riner, Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad www.sjas.ch;
Source for igloo construction: www.iglubauer.ch



Education in Switzerland requires careful planning

More and more young Swiss people abroad are seeking to take educational courses in Switzerland. The number rose particularly sharply last year with the economic problems in many countries clearly having an impact. The Association promoting Education for Young Swiss Abroad (AJAS) received over 800 enquiries in 2012.

Fiona Scheidegger, the head of AJAS, nev-

ertheless noted that young people are often inadequately prepared for this new chapter in their lives. She urgently advises young people and their parents to contact AJAS at the earliest possible opportunity because various matters have to be dealt with before commencing a course of study or period of training in Switzerland. These include, for example, admission conditions for the Swiss abroad, university requirements together with the recognition of foreign qualifications, accommodation, language skills and grant opportunities. AJAS can assist in clarifying all these matters and can provide

contact addresses if necessary. Comprehensive information is provided on insurance and military service issues on the website of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad. OSA's Legal Department also offers support. www.aso.ch

Contact: AJAS,
Alpenstrasse 26,
3006 Berne,
SWITZERLAND
Tel. + 41 (0)31 356 61 04
Fax + 41 (0)31 356 61 01

Switzerland's good image abroad

Switzerland continues to be perceived positively abroad, generally speaking. Various surveys and rankings in 2012 confirmed the excellent reputation that Switzerland enjoys abroad. However, this is in contrast to the critical reports by foreign media on the Swiss financial centre.

Switzerland ranks in eighth place, one place higher compared to the previous year, in the Nation Brands Index 2012, which analyses the image of 50 countries. Thus, as a small nation, Switzerland finished ahead of Sweden, the Netherlands, Austria and New Zealand. Only the USA, Germany, the UK, France, Canada, Japan and Italy came above it.

Switzerland's positive image is primarily thanks to its good governance, system of direct democracy, high quality of life and competitiveness. This is consistent with data from various rankings on economic, political and social performance. Switzerland is credited with having great innovative capabilities and competitiveness. This is attributed to effective governance, an efficient regulatory environment, a good education system and an excellent infrastructure. Switzerland is also still rated highly as a travel destination, although the high prices do detract from its image somewhat.



Extensive media coverage of Switzerland

Critical and often negative reports in foreign media contrast with Switzerland's good image and high performance capability. These primarily address the Swiss financial centre, the activities of the major



Postcards
from top to bottom:
Tania Fricker
François Montandon
Eveline Sperry

banks and the national bank's monetary policy. This is why media coverage of Switzerland abroad in 2012 was high compared with Austria or Sweden.

There was considerably less media coverage of Swiss tourism, high-quality and luxury Swiss goods, and the system of direct democracy although it was more positive. Topics such as sports, research, innovation and culture in relation to Switzerland receive less attention in foreign media. When they do, it is famous people like Roger Federer, spectacular research projects at the Federal Institutes of Technology in Zurich and Lausanne, and prestigious festivals and exhibitions, such as Art Basel, that make the headlines.

This is where Presence Switzerland comes in. As part of its communication abroad campaign, it is adopting a more targeted approach to ensuring that topics that are perceived positively but have attracted little attention to date receive better coverage in the future. It is also counting on the support of the Swiss abroad to help achieve its goals. It is seeking to intensify contact with them as they are important ambassadors for Switzerland and know about Switzerland's image abroad from their own experience.

Winning images chosen in photo competition among the Swiss abroad

As part of this intensified dialogue, Presence Switzerland launched a photo competition in December to discover more about the lives of the Swiss community abroad. Under the slogan "How is your Swiss identity perceived abroad?" the Swiss abroad were urged to send in photos depicting their life in their host country and their Swiss identity. The jury, made up of employees of Presence Switzerland and the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA), had a wide range of personal impressions

and insights into life abroad from which to make their choice. They selected ten photos, which were posted on SwissCommunity.org, OSA's online platform and social network. The members of SwissCommunity.org chose their favourite photo at the end of January 2013. The three winning impressions come from Bulgaria, Canada and Chile and can be seen on Presence Switzerland's official website. All ten images that made the final can be sent as electronic postcards via the portal swiss-world.org

The ten images from the final and the analysis of Switzerland's image abroad in 2012:

www.eda.admin.ch/praesenzschweiz

Electronic postcards:

www.swissworld.org/postkarten

Statistics on the Swiss abroad in 2012

The rise in the number of Swiss abroad, which has been observed for decades, continued in 2012. On 31 December 2012, there were 715,710 Swiss citizens living abroad – around 12,000 more than at the end of 2011 and twice as many as in 1980.

Year-on-year, the number of Swiss abroad rose by 1.72% from 703,640 (2011) to 715,710 (2012). The largest Swiss communities abroad numerically are found in Europe (442,620 people, 96.54% of whom live in EU states), the Americas (175,954) and Asia (45,793). Over the last five years, the number of Swiss citizens registered with a Swiss embassy or consulate general climbed by 6.59% in Europe, by 3.91% in the Americas and by 28.11% in Asia.

Around 47% (335,810) of all Swiss abroad live in the five countries bordering Switzerland, which equates to a 5.84% growth rate compared to 2007. Today, there are 186,615 Swiss citizens in France, 80,715 in Germany, 50,091 in Italy, 14,795 in Austria and 3,594 in the Principality of Liechtenstein (around 10% of the principality's total population).

The largest communities of Swiss abroad outside Europe are found in the USA (76,330, + 3.2% since 2007), Canada (38,959, + 3.4%), Australia (23,633, + 7%) and Israel (15,970, + 21.44%). On the African continent, just under half of all Swiss citizens live in South Africa (9,284 out of 20,696). São Tomé and Príncipe, Micronesia and Kiribati appear at the bottom of the list with one registered Swiss citizen each.

The proportion of Swiss abroad registered on a Swiss electoral roll has levelled off at around a quarter of those eligible to vote. The proportion in Europe (31.25%) is significantly higher than the global average. You can register to exercise your political right through the representation where you are registered as a Swiss abroad. A telephone call is sufficient – the representation will be happy to provide you with the necessary information.

The statistics on the Swiss abroad have been produced centrally by the Consular Directorate of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs since 2011. They include all Swiss citizens registered with a Swiss representation. As Switzerland does not have an embassy in Vaduz, the figures for the Principality of Liechtenstein are provided by the local statistical office and reflect the status of the respective previous year.

The statistics on the Swiss abroad on the FDFA's website:

<http://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/doc/publi/ptrali/statis.html>

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 E-Mail: helpline@eda.admin.ch
 Skype: helpline-eda



Travel advice

www.eda.admin.ch/reisehinweise
 Helpline DFAE: +41 (0)800 24-7-365
www.twitter.com/travel_edadfae

itineris

Online registration for Swiss citizens
 travelling abroad

www.fdfa.admin.ch/itineris

Federal Council 2013

The 2013 photograph of the Federal Council has been published (from left to right): Johann N. Schneider-Ammann (Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research; formerly the Federal Department of Economic Affairs), Simonetta Sommaruga (Federal Department of Justice and Police), Didier Burkhalter (Federal Department of Foreign Affairs), Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf (Federal Department of Finance), Ueli Maurer, President of the Swiss

Confederation (Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport), Alain Berset (Federal Department of Home Affairs), Doris Leuthard (Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications) and Federal Chancellor Corina Casanova.

The former Federal Department of Economic Affairs was renamed the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research (EAER) on 1 January 2013. This now includes the ETH Domain (Federal Institutes of Technol-

ogy of Zurich and Lausanne) and the State Secretariat for Education and Research, which, together with the Federal Office for Professional Education, now makes up the State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation.

Important notice

Please notify your embassy or consulate general of your email address and mobile telephone number and/or any changes.

Register at www.swissabroad.ch to ensure you do not miss any communications ("Swiss Review", newsletters, etc.). The latest "Swiss Review" and previous issues can be read and/or printed out at any time at www.revue.ch. "Swiss Review" (called "Gazzetta Svizzera" in Italy) is sent to all Swiss citizens abroad registered with an embassy or consulate general either in printed format or electronically (via email and as an iPad and Android app) free of charge.



ELECTIONS AND REFERENDA

The following proposals will be put to the vote on 9 June 2013:

- Popular initiative of 7 July 2011: "Election of the Federal Council by the people" (BBl 2012 9643);
- Amendment of 28 September 2012 to the Swiss Asylum Act (AsylG) (urgent amendments to the asylum law, AS 2012 5359, BBl 2012 8261)

See also page 14

Information on the proposals (voter pamphlet, committees, party statements, etc.) can also be found at www.ch.ch/abstimmungen.

Further referendum dates in 2013: 22 September and 24 November

POPULAR INITIATIVES

At the time of going to press for this edition, no new federal popular initiatives had been launched. The list of pending popular initiatives can be found on the Federal Chancellery's website at

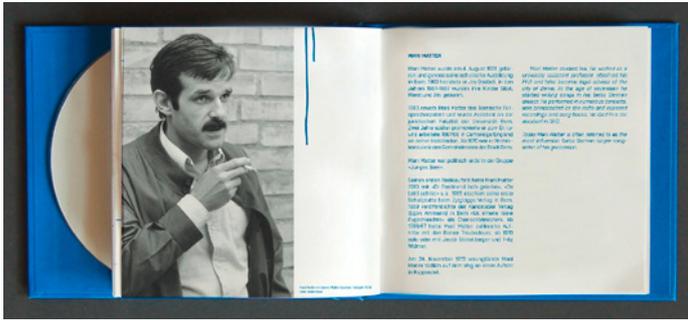
www.bk.admin.ch under "Aktuell > Wahlen und Abstimmungen > Hängige Volksinitiativen".

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Little gems



“Kunscht isch geng es Risiko”

Mani Matter is inimitable as a singer-songwriter because nobody can create images with words like he can. Yet his work has been covered constantly over the decades by everyone ranging from schoolchildren to rock stars. Now, Mani Matter’s songs are also available in a four-part a cappella version. The Kammerton Quartet from Winterthur has worked on the CD “Kunscht isch geng es Risiko” for almost ten years. Their achievement is a resounding success. The melodies remain close to the original, while the arrangements are imaginative, full of charm and humour and the vocals are of top quality. The four singers of the Kammerton Quartet have skilfully blended classical a cappella singing with the original. It does not sound at all highbrow or contrived: “dr Glünggi” curses crudely, “s Heidi” is yearned for

longingly, the polar bear growls in “Eskimo” and the polyphonic purring with “Sidi Abdel Assar vo El Hamma” is an absolute pleasure.

“Kunscht isch geng es Risiko – Mani Matter a cappella” CD; Zytlogge Verlag, Berne; CHF 29, EUR 26. Available also from www.kammerton.ch



From Berne to Lisbon

“A chance encounter can sometimes change someone’s life entirely,” wrote Pascal Mercier, a philosopher and author with roots in Berne, in his novel “Night Train to Lisbon”. That was in 2004. The novel became an instant bestseller and was translated into 32 languages. Nobody could fail to be touched by the story of the solitary and eccentric Bernese grammar

school teacher whose life is changed by a brief encounter with a Portuguese woman. The book has now been turned into a film with a star-studded cast. It is directed by the Dane Bille August, while Jeremy Irons plays the part of the teacher, Raimund Gregorius. He is joined on screen by Charlotte Rampling, Christopher Lee, Mélanie Laurent and Bruno Ganz. It is remarkable how the director succeeds in transferring

the novel’s complex narrative structure to a movie. Jeremy Irons produces a spellbinding performance. As he searches for information about the life of a Portuguese author and doctor in Lisbon, the audience is completely captivated by his story and also by the city. The film premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival in February and is now set for release at cinemas worldwide. This is definitely a movie not to be missed.



Writers in the kitchen

Authors write about their favourite recipes here rather than their favourite books. Literary critic Angelika Overath and her husband Manfred Koch invited authors to reveal their favourite recipes and to tell a story about them. “It doesn’t matter whether it’s an autobiographical account, an essay based purely on the list of ingredients or a completely fictional tale, just please share your culinary treats with the world,” was their plea. Thirty-seven authors seized upon the opportunity to make their contribution to the book entitled “Tafelrunde”. They indulge in childhood memories and bring flavours and aromas to life. Berlin author Michael Kumpfmüller makes a garlic chicken dish and writes about the god of garlic; Franz Hohler expertly prepares a nettle soup; Lea Singer gives an account of the perfect birthday menu for a 40-year-old child and, with his cold larder, Hans Magnus Enzensberger does not so much reveal his talent as a great cook, rather the ability to astonish friends with simple food. “Tafelrunde” is an unusual and, in places, adventurous cookbook best read and enjoyed while experimenting with a group of friends.

“Tafelrunde. Schriftsteller kochen für ihre Freunde”; Angelika Overath; Luchterhand-Literaturverlag; 382 pages; CHF 29.90; EUR 19.99. Only in German. Also available as an e-book.



Bulletins

Tax agreement with the USA

An agreement on the US tax law FATCA was signed between Switzerland and the USA in mid-February on behalf of the Federal Council. The Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) enables the USA to force foreign banks to disclose the accounts of US customers to the US fiscal authorities. Independently of the agreement now signed, Swiss banks must implement the FATCA law from 2014 or face being excluded from the US capital market. The agreement between Switzerland and the USA allows Swiss banks to benefit from simplified procedures.

Healthcare strategy

The Federal Council set out its strategy for the future of Swiss healthcare at the end of January in a paper entitled "Gesundheit2020". A total of 36 measures are provided. The Federal Council stated that the current healthcare structures are too heavily focused on acute and inpatient care. Patients will have to be provided with more differentiated care services in future. The priorities will be the prevention of illness as well as long-term care for the elderly and chronically ill. The Federal Council believes an amendment to the Health Insurance Act (KVG) is required.

How long do we work for just to cover tax contributions?

The Federal Tax Administration has calculated for the first time how many days the Swiss work on average just to cover their tax contributions. This clearly differs depending on income, marital status, canton

and commune. Based on a family with two children and a gross income of 80,000 Swiss francs a year, Geneva with 20 working days for taxes and Schwyz with 21 are the most favourable locations, whereas the most days are worked in Delémont (40) and in Neuchâtel and Lausanne (43). A single person with an income of 50,000 Swiss francs works for 13 days just to cover taxes in Zug, 20 in Schwyz, 43 in Solothurn and 45 in Neuchâtel. The results can be viewed in full in German at "Tax Freedom Days" www.estv.admin.ch -> Steuerstatistiken -> Steuerbelastung -> «Tax Freedom Days»

Who keeps their promises?

The online voting aid Smartvote has examined the discrepancy between promises made during election campaigns and the actual political behaviour of Swiss parliamentarians. It comes to the conclusion that new members of parliament fail to keep their electoral promises more often than experienced parliamentarians. The same is true of members of the centre parties – the Green Liberals (GLP) and the Christian Democratic People's Party (CVP). The most inconsistent politicians are Margrit Kessler (GLP) followed by Fabio Regazzi and Yannick Buttet (both CVP). Among the party leaders, Martin Landolt of the Conservative Democratic Party (BDP) most frequently breaks his promises. Andy Tschümperlin from Schwyz, the Swiss Social Democratic Party (SP) National Councillor, followed by Social Democrat Roger Nordmann, Walter Wobmann (SVP) and Daniel Vischer of the Greens are truest to their word.

Quotes

"To create is to resist. To resist is to create."

Stéphane Hessel, French diplomat and writer, died on 27 February 2013 aged 96

"Faint-heartedness and delusions of grandeur have repeatedly been the driving forces behind moves to forsake our Switzerland and its values and to adapt."

Swiss President Ueli Maurer at the Albisgüteli Conference

"Switzerland is undergoing enormous change and, at the same time, endeavouring to project the illusion of stability."

Mario Erdheim, psychoanalyst and ethnologist from Zurich

"In order to defend Switzerland's interests, I would travel to the ends of the earth if necessary."

Swiss President Ueli Maurer in an interview

"This is a huge blow to social cohesion in our country."

Federal Councillor Simonetta Sommaruga on the CHF 72 million that Daniel Vasella was to have been paid in return for doing nothing

"If the human brain was simple enough for us to understand, we would still be so stupid that we couldn't understand it."

Jostein Gaarder, Norwegian writer (born 1952)

"An original thought is as rare as a gold coin in the gutter."

Christian Morgenstern (1871 – 1914)

"I'm a Grey, not a Green: grass is for cows."

Luigi Snozzi, Swiss architect (born 1932)



Jörg Steiner rarely raised his voice but often spoke powerfully. He observed the world, often with concern, and described what he saw. One example is the 1996 novella "Der Kollege", the story of an unemployed person who disappears from society. Other works written in the 1970s in collaboration with the graphic artist Jörg Müller include children's books like "Alle Jahre wieder saust der Presslufthammer nieder" and "Der Bär, der ein Bär bleiben wollte". In "Wer tanzt schon zu Musik von Schostakowitsch", published in 2000, we read: "That the truth is a story which changes from day to day is only natural." This sentence reveals much about Jörg Steiner, his misgivings, his sense of humour and his ability with language. In his last work "Ein Kirschbaum am Pazifischen Ozean", published in 2008 as a recollection of a trip to California twelve years earlier, Steiner wrote: "We don't understand what happens to us." Jörg Steiner passed away on 20 January 2013 at the age of 82.



Swiss Alpine Wrestling, Kemmeribodenbad, Bern Region

A musical and sporting journey.

Discover styles of music and sports that are typically Swiss in all the regions.

2013: The Festival of Musical and Sporting Traditions

Traditional Swiss instruments and songs are currently enjoying a renaissance, thanks notably to a large number of events that are held throughout the country. Nendaz, in the Valais region, is the capital of the alphorn. Its annual international festival mixes traditional concerts with interpretations that are resolutely modern. For those with enough breath, Nendaz is offering courses for beginners and more experienced players, starting this spring.

The national sports: test your strength and skill

Swiss wrestling, hornussen and stone throwing are the

three Swiss national sports practiced during the National Festival of Wrestling and Alpine Games, which takes place every three years. Wrestling is the predominant discipline celebrated in the festival. The wrestlers (both men and women) have to unbalance their opponents by grasping them by their breeches (shorts worn on top of their clothes) and making their shoulders or back touch the ground. The "hornuss" (a puck placed on a ramp, which has to be propelled into the air using a flexible rod) is a distant relative of baseball, whilst stone throwing calls for physical strength, as competitors have to throw a stone weighing 20, 40 or even 83.5 kilos as far as possible!

Alphorn

Each summer, Nendaz forms the enchanting backdrop to the International Alphorn Festival, which welcomes more than 100 players of different nationalities. Taster courses and visits to the production workshop are organized regularly.



Tip 1

MySwitzerland.com
Webcode: **A36501**

100% Swiss Olympic Games

The National Festival of Wrestling and Alpine Games takes place this year in Burgdorf in the Emmental region. Regional music and delicacies will be on the menu alongside the typically Swiss "Olympic Games", which we expect to welcome some 250,000 visitors.



Tip 2

MySwitzerland.com
Webcode: **AP90182**

The sound of Appenzell

In traditional Appenzell music, stringed instruments play a major role, alongside the hurdy-gurdy or the "hackbrett" (hammered dulcimer). The "Alpstobede" festivals held on the high mountain pastures in summer offer the perfect opportunity to appreciate this type of music.



Tip 3

MySwitzerland.com
Webcode: **A160786**

Network Switzerland:

Register at www.MySwitzerland.com/aso by 31.5.2013 and win a 2-night stay for 2 people at the Swiss Historic Hotel Landgasthof Bären in Dürrenroth (Emmental), where you can discover the living traditions of the region.
www.baeren-duerrenroth.ch



MySwitzerland.com/historic
Webcode: **E54452**

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