



SWISS REVIEW

The magazine for the Swiss Abroad
July 2017

**World-class contour lines –
Swiss cartography under the microscope**

**The figures on security –
what the crime statistics really reveal**

**What next for “La Quotidiana”? –
the Romansh paper faces closure**



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It is an impossible situation and an incredibly frustrating issue for the diaspora – the Swiss Abroad today have to overcome ever more hurdles in order to open a bank account on reasonable terms in their former homeland. In some cases, they have to pay incredibly inflated charges, which are justified as being due to “regulatory measures”. For example, PostFinance, which is wholly owned by federal government, recently almost doubled its account fees and also cancelled the credit cards of all Swiss Abroad. In other cases, Swiss Abroad approach banks which flatly deny them the opportunity to open an account.

The Swiss Abroad claim they are being discriminated against and feel as though they are being treated as second-class Swiss citizens. They do not intend to carry on putting up with this situation. In the spring, the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) called upon Federal Councillor Doris Leuthard to stipulate in the Postal Services Ordinance that PostFinance cannot discriminate against the Swiss Abroad. In vain.

Further proposals have nevertheless since been put forward at parliamentary level. Roland Büchel, an SVP National Councillor and a member of the OSA Executive Board, submitted a motion calling for systemically important Swiss banks to allow all Swiss citizens to open a bank account, including those abroad. It was narrowly defeated but has been followed by two further proposals in the same vein. At the end of June, Filippo Lombardi, a CVP Council of States member and Vice-President of the OSA, presented a motion once again requesting that all Swiss citizens be allowed to hold an account with systemically important banks. An initiative by the Foreign Affairs Committee at the beginning of July again targeted discrimination against the Swiss Abroad at PostFinance.

Both motions are still pending but illustrate that wheels are in motion. Perhaps it is just a matter of time before the diaspora can finally once again use Swiss bank accounts on reasonable terms. MARKO LEHTINEN, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



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Unsere Personaldirektorin, Frau Erina Peri, steht für weitere Fragen und Informationen gerne telefonisch zur Verfügung.

Work for undocumented immigrants.
Geneva model leads the way



It is a brave and welcome initiative in a world where the borders are re-closing. Having legal status means much more than paying tax. Recognising and condemning the abusive practices of some employers is a logical step. As for the argument about “work for the people of Geneva”, I find it hard to believe that they would accept poorly paid jobs over unemployment benefits.

The conditions for obtaining this permit are well established and its one-year duration enables every case to be monitored and re-evaluated. Open your hearts and minds, and your life can only be better! Well done! There is no place for slavery in modern society.

LAURE MABILLARD, SWITZERLAND

Large-scale panoramic paintings.
Renaissance of an object of fascination



It was some 60 years ago that I gazed at the Bourbaki panorama in amazement. It is a shame that these gigantic paintings receive so little attention.

ERNST RUETIMANN, THAILAND

Calling the panoramas, as in this article, the first mass medium in history is rather wide of the mark. What about the Sacri Monti in northern Italy, for instance that of Varallo in Valsesia? Between the Renaissance and Baroque periods, artists such as Gaudenzio Ferrari developed a multi-sensory experience which combined topography, architecture, sculpture and painting to produce a multi-media propaganda instrument of the Counter-Reformation which had mass impact.

REINHARD MANZ, GERMANY

Old-age pension reform.
Before the referendum



I have lived outside Switzerland since I was five years old, came back to Switzerland at the age of 21, worked there for six months and went to the USA. What will happen to me if I want to go back to Switzerland at the age of 65 and my pension from the USA is not enough to survive in Switzerland? Does the government have

a solution in this case? If not, it would mean that people like me couldn't ever go back because they wouldn't be able to afford to live in Switzerland. I've wanted to pay AHV from abroad for a long time but never got an answer from the AHV.

HEINZ KUHNE, USA

Editorial.
A dual identity

I am European. My mother was Swiss, my father was Italian, my husband is German, and our children are dual citizens. I speak six European languages and have relatives in the UK. I firmly believe we must learn to think, live and act as Europeans, without overlooking or forgetting the values and principles of our respective countries of origin. Admittedly, diversity usually brings a need for great effort, empathy and patience as well as persuasive lines of argument, determination and the willingness to compromise. Nothing can easily be pushed through or resolved once and for all. Diversity is nevertheless a rich asset offering great potential, and is therefore key to prosperous development.

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In the land of razor-sharp contours

Few countries are as comprehensively and precisely measured and mapped as Switzerland. The meticulously produced topographical maps make the mountainous and highly diverse country tangible. The shadows cast on the typical Swiss map also show that the sun is always shining in Switzerland, albeit from an impossible cardinal direction.

MARC LETTAU

Perhaps there is a simple reason why Switzerland has not really lost its bearings for so long – its highly accurate national maps. Every stone, every prominent linden tree, every country lane and every rivulet are recorded. Especially now during the summer months, the painstakingly mapped country becomes a paradise for hikers. The notion that they all wear red socks is a daft cliché. But what is not a cliché is the fact that hiking has become one of Switzerland's most popular recreational activities. The last major study on the topic indicated that 44% of the nation hike regularly. It is also true that the throngs of people on Switzerland's network of hiking trails – which cover 65,000 kilometres and are marked with 50,000 signposts – continue to rely as much as ever on topographical maps, whether in printed or electronic form.

It is also the case that hiking in Switzerland is more a safe pleasure than an exciting adventure thanks to the outstanding maps. There is no patch of land where you can easily get lost in the unknown in this rigorously mapped country, as the unknown does not really exist.

2017 is a special year, and not just for hikers. Tribute is being paid to the beginnings of the art of Swiss cartography this year. Guillaume-Henri Dufour, who in 1838 set about the task of covering the country with triangulation points from French-speaking Switzerland and ac-

curately mapping it, this year bears the title of "European surveyor of the year".

Dufour set a very high standard

An honorary title 142 years after Dufour's death? The tribute does not come too late, however. The many years that have passed simply highlight the tremendous accuracy of the first topographical maps of Switzerland, even from a current perspective. Dufour set the bar very high very early on. This explains why Swiss cartography continues to enjoy world fame today.

On the subject of world fame, At the "Exposition Universelle" – the 1855 world exhibition in Paris – Switzerland presented the proof copies of seven map sheets. Not much more of the nationwide project was actually available at this point. The jury nevertheless deemed it a "pioneering" achievement. The certificate for the "Medaille d'Honneur" awarded was signed personally by Napoleon III. The praise from Paris bore considerable weight as the French themselves had previously earned a reputation for turning cartography – which was beneficial militarily – into an art form. War and cartography went hand in hand. Victors must know the terrain. Swiss topographical maps were initially also intended for the use of army officers. However, in stark contrast to other countries, the exact mapping of Switzerland was never a military secret but instead a

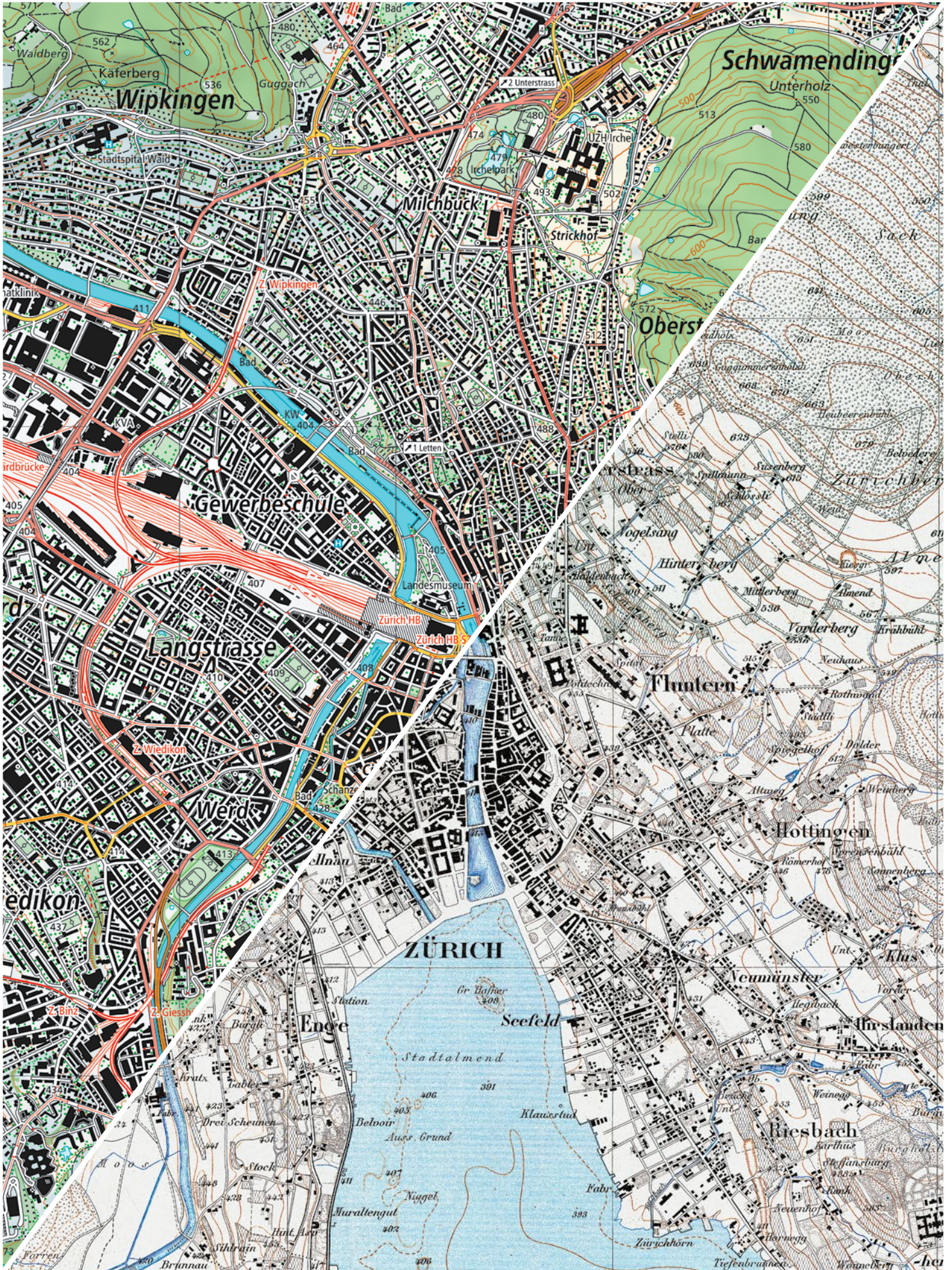
public – and aesthetic – project. The aim was to show how beautiful Switzerland was and to depict it in its entirety.

At that time there was no recreational pursuit society demanding navigational assistance. The popular pastime of "Landeskenntnis" (knowledge of the country) did not develop in bourgeois circles and crowded classrooms until the late 19th century. Initially, it was primarily the political elite of the Swiss Confederation who sought greater visibility for Switzerland, which had been conceived as a republic, as a step towards national unity. The thinking was that maps of the country do not just reflect reality, they also create it. They enable a common territory to be envisaged. The importance of the first maps of Switzerland in playing down differences and emphasising unity is illustrated not least by looking inside a wallet. When the first national topographical maps were printed, Switzerland did not even have a common currency.

Maps for nation-building

Dufour's maps provided Switzerland with clear contours. This was ultimately his contribution to nation-building. Fridolin Wicki, the current Director of the Federal Office of Topography (Swisstopo), underlines the political importance of the early maps of the country to "Swiss Review": "The diversity of the individual cantons disappeared in favour of national unity in the aesthetically produced maps."

The nation's enthusiasm for the work of its cartographers was highlighted by the national exhibition of 1883 in Zurich. The complete representation of Switzerland made up of individual map sheets was one of the



Cartography as clear and incorruptible evidence of change, such as here in the city of Zurich – one map produced in 1890, the other in 2013

main attractions. People continued to hold onto the fundamental belief that maps make it possible to envisage a country. Even in 1961, when the Federal Council approved the funding of a Swiss atlas, it declared that the initiative would produce an “intellectual weapon of Swiss self-assertion”. Switzerland does not have to project itself but instead emerges through its depiction.

This is a notion that is brought home to visitors to the Federal Palace today. The first thing they see in the solidly built hallways of the “Palais Fédéral” is not flags or statues but instead a large-scale map of the country, a set of Dufour maps reprinted and pieced together. The display’s message is that modern Switzerland does not have any neglected peripheral regions. Every far-flung valley and every tiny hamlet in the nation’s backwaters were depicted with pinpoint accuracy right from the outset. Swiss-style cartography means that nobody is overlooked and careful attention to detail extends right to the borders.

Mountains in the “Swiss fashion”

Maps are a constant. They are still printed, sold and used today in spite of all the electronic tools. Experts and mountain hikers believe that printed maps will survive. Their sensuous, haptic appeal and their reliability far from plug sockets or antenna masts are beyond doubt. The “Swiss style” of cartography is also a constant. The “Swiss style” includes the highly accurate and clear mapping of the Alps, finely produced and precise rock representations and the artistic emphasis of the mountainous relief, highlighted through shading. In other words the casting of shadows, which makes the mountains depicted appear particularly three-dimensional. The casting of shadows? There must be sunshine for shadows to be cast. In the

world of cartography at least, the sun is always shining in Switzerland, albeit from a peculiar cardinal direction. The shadows cast indicate that the sun is in the North West, a position where it is never found during the course of the year. However, the advantage of the misplaced sun is that it allows the cartographical reality to be presented extremely vividly and therefore realistically.

Alongside the constant factor – i.e. the maps – work at Swisstopo is dominated by the fundamental change brought about by digitalisation. Cartographers are still employed. But the creation of a “topographical landscape model of Switzerland” has been the focus of its day-to-day activities since 2010. A digitalised, three-dimensional landscape model is being created which, in addition to the landscape, includes and depicts all natural and artificial objects – such as buildings, transport routes and borders – with incredible accuracy. Survey aircraft equipped with high-performance scanners are recording the surface of the land.

1.8 petabytes of Swiss geo-data

The mountain of geo-data collected thus far has already reached an inconceivable scale. There is over 1.8 petabytes of data, and the project has not yet been completed. Swisstopo’s hope that many people will draw on this data one day is certainly not unjustified. One already available way of accessing Swisstopo data sets – the online map viewer at map.geo.admin.ch – is used daily by over 50,000 visitors, for instance.

Two examples indicate the direction in which the “map” of the future is heading: As the topographical landscape model includes every building, it can be used for political decision-making. Can new buildings be erected in town X? The topographical model enables additional building

From Dufour to Siegfried

The engineer Guillaume-Henri Dufour (1787 to 1875) from Geneva was commissioned by the Swiss Confederation in 1832 to produce the basis for a detailed map of Switzerland. In 1838, Dufour opened the Federal Topographical Office in Geneva. The Federal Office of Topography (Swisstopo), which emerged directly from it, is therefore Switzerland’s oldest federal office, older even than the modern federal state which was established in 1848. The individual pages of the “topographical map of Switzerland” were published on a scale of 1:100,000 from 1845 to 1865. These “Dufour maps” were the first official set to cover all of Switzerland. Dufour’s successor Hermann Siegfried (1819 to 1879) refined and perfected the style of Swiss maps. The “Siegfried maps” were characterised by contour lines, outstanding rock representations and light from an oblique angle. MUL

www.swisstopo.ch; www.tiny.cc/Zeitreise; www.atlasderschweiz.ch

cubes to be added to what currently exists. This produces new, realistic images for the issue of spatial planning, agglomeration and urban sprawl, which is the subject of intense and emotional debate in Switzerland. Swisstopo’s three-dimensional building model, which is also nearing completion, answers the question of whether the use of solar energy is worthwhile, taking account of the amount of sunshine on the roof. The modelling shows where the spire of the village church casts its shadow over the course of the entire year and day – obviously with the sun in its correct position in the universe. This solar land register will be available nationwide from 2018 and may drive forward the debate on energy transition.

Mapping what exists is political...

If modern cartography – or the creation of comprehensive geo-databases – becomes the basis for urban development processes and energy technology decision-making, doesn’t it inadvertently become highly political? “It has long been political without want-

ing to be,” remarks Swisstopo spokesperson Ruedi Böschi, pointing to another example. The continually updated maps of the country have long since provided evidence of climate change. Where earlier maps showed ice, current ones depict permanent rock. The maps also testify to the increasing rate of change. The changes from one edition of maps to the next have become ever greater since 1950.

Digitalisation now provides remarkable insights into the change. Combining current and historical maps enables a new form of time travel. Anyone who proceeds to Verbier in the Valais Alps online will find an extensive natural landscape and farmland with a handful of dispersed buildings (1856), will discover the age of development with winding roads climbing up the mountainside (1933), will see the first mountain railways to conquer the peaks (1963), will witness the tremendous increase in urban development (1971) and will realise that the town has since continued to grow (1982) and grow (1988) and grow (1995, 2001 and 2010). Similar journeys through time can be undertaken for any place in Switzerland. Maps pay silent but extremely reliable testament to change. They are entirely incorruptible witnesses, remarks Böschi, as “Swiss maps simply show what’s there”.

They simply show what’s there? That’s not always the case. National topography veered away from its principles during the Cold War years. Maps suddenly stopped showing places like the gunpowder factory in Wimmis and other militarily sensitive facilities. However, concealing what is there is not an easy task in this nation of high-quality cartographers. Since it opened, the extensive site of the gunpowder factory mentioned had been shown on every edition of maps from 1919 to 1962. The discrepancy between map and real-

ity has been rectified again since 1988. After disappearing for 26 years, the factory is suddenly back where it always was.

Razor-sharp errors

The principle that “Swiss maps simply show what’s there” has since applied again. Is Swisstopo by definition the distinctly humourless corner of the federal administration? On the contrary, it is a place of skilfully crafted jokes. If you look very carefully into the past, you may discover some rather whimsical little details. A white spider suddenly appeared on the side of the Eiger on the topographical map of the Interlaken region in 1981. Swisstopo cartographer Othmar Wyss had the audacity to incorporate this artistic detail based on a snowfield of the same name that is much feared by mountaineers. In the same year, the face of the “Hardermannli” – a rock formation resembling a human face – appeared on the south face of the Harder Kulm mountain near Interlaken. Shortly afterwards a mountaineer could be seen scrambling up a steep ridge near the Flüela Pass in the Swiss-Italian border region.

The very observant also found themselves rubbing their eyes in disbelief in 1983. A fat trout was so skilfully hidden from the proofreaders on the topographical map of Vallorbe in the wetlands of Lac de Remoray that it remained undetected. It was not until 1989 when the map was updated that the fish drawn by the cartographer Werner Leuenberger was plunged back into the depths of the lake. In 2011, the cartographer Paul Ehrlich, who specialises in the depiction of rock formations, found a good hiding place for a solitary marmot near to the Aletsch glacier. The animal remained undiscovered for years. Swisstopo is now faced with the delicate question of whether the furry animal can remain on the new edi-

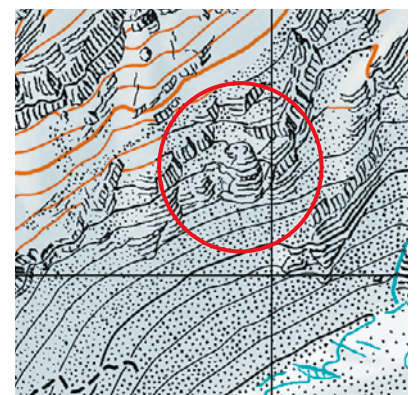
The “White Spider” is the nickname given to a much-feared snowfield on the Eiger. It actually appeared as a spider on the 1981 map.



The trout in Lac de Remoray in the Franco-Swiss border region escaped the sharp eyes of proofreaders in 1983.



The marmot, which found a hiding place above the Aletsch glacier on the 2011 map, went undetected for years.



tion of the map planned for 2019 given the federal office’s duty to depict reality as far as possible. The decision is keenly awaited. Five such jokes by cartographers have become public thus far. The history of Swiss cartography dates back 185 years. That means 0.03 pranks a year. A matter-of-fact, serious approach still predominates at Swisstopo.

Map extracts reproduced with the consent of swisstopo (BA170143)



The first step in Switzerland's energy transition

The Swiss people began the slow process of withdrawal from nuclear energy by approving the Energy Strategy 2050 on 21 May.

JÜRIG MÜLLER

Opponents of the new energy act laid it on thick – the front page of their propaganda pamphlet showed a woman shivering under the shower alongside the words: “Is it worth paying 3,200 Swiss francs more for a cold shower?” Inside, more questions were posed, such as: “Want a ban on bananas, coffee and meat because of excessive energy consumption?” The opposition’s message was clear – the implementation of the Energy Strategy 2050 would be expensive and reduce quality of life, lead to more bureaucracy and jeopardise energy supply.

But the fear campaign conducted by the Swiss People’s Party (SVP), which called the referendum against the bill, failed to achieve its goal. With 58.2% in favour, the Swiss people supported the new energy act on 21 May 2017 by an unexpectedly clear margin. This is the first package of the Energy Strategy 2050. Its aim is to reduce energy consumption, increase energy efficiency and promote renewable energies, such as hydropower, solar, wind and geothermal energy and biomass. It also prohibits the construction of new nuclear power plants. The energy package is thus also a course-setting decision that goes back to the Fukushima nuclear disaster in 2011. However, it does not stipulate a decommissioning date and the plants can continue to operate for as long as they remain safe.

Energy supply undergoing transformation

Yet the change in energy policy is not simply an act of political will – it has long been taking place in Switzer-



From “Nuclear Doris” to the architect of the energy transition

She was once known as “Nuclear Doris”. Swiss President Doris Leuthard got her nickname because a long time ago she sat on the board of a company that had a stake in a nuclear power plant. It was nevertheless Leuthard who as a member of the Federal Council proposed withdrawal from nuclear energy in 2011. It is down to her tenacity and ability to forge broad coalitions that Switzerland took the first step towards the eco-friendly energy transition in the referendum on 21 May.

The Federal Council’s longest-serving member has thus pulled off probably her greatest achievement at the ballot box. The combative, popular Federal Councillor, who has a deep understanding of her portfolio, has gone from one referendum victory to the next. Her referendum triumphs include the second Gotthard tunnel, the Railway Fund, the Motorways Fund, the Spatial Planning Act and the revised Radio and Television Act. The Swiss people have also followed her lead in rejecting a number of initiatives, such as the pro-public-service initiative and the popular requests for rapid withdrawal from nuclear energy and a green economy. The CVP politician and head of the influential Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications is regarded as a strong woman in national government and is at the height of her career. (JM)

land. Energy supply is undergoing transformation worldwide, too, and new technologies are developing extremely rapidly. It is just a question of whether and how this development should be structured. The Swiss nuclear power plants, some of which are very old, will be decommissioned over the next 25 years for economic and safety reasons, and fossil fuels will also be in short supply over the long term. BKW, for example, decided in 2016 to disconnect their nuclear power plant in Mühleberg from the grid at the end of 2019. This is partly why the politicians must establish the framework conditions to ensure national energy supply over the long term, and the economy needs planning certainty. The new energy act now ensures all of this to some degree.

But only to some degree. The new energy act does not enable the Energy Strategy 2050 to be fully implemented. Adhering to this strategy’s benchmarks – in other words, reducing energy consumption by 43% by 2035 and significantly increasing the share of renewable energies – would require incentive taxes. There is currently little to suggest that this second step of the change in energy policy will be taken. The definitive decommissioning of the Mühleberg plant in 2020 will also reveal the extent to which the shortfall in electricity even at that point can be made up with renewable energies or whether this can only be achieved by importing more power. Swiss energy policy promises to remain a hot topic.

An integral plan for food security

It started out as a popular initiative but is now a broad-based counterproposal from Parliament – food security could be enshrined in the constitution on 24 September 2017.

JÜRIG MÜLLER

Swiss agricultural policy is a perennial political issue. Four popular initiatives are now adding further spice to the debate – the “horned cow initiative”, “the fair food initiative”, the popular request for food sovereignty and the food security initiative.

Food security will be the first to be put to referendum. The Swiss Farmers Union called for the strengthening of food supply from domestic production through an initiative. The Federal Council was supportive of the fundamental issue but rejected the initiative because there is a very high level of food security in Switzerland and the authors’ concerns are already largely covered by the current constitution.

The proposal also met with much sympathy in Parliament. The National Council even initially approved the initiative. However, while the Council of States took the matter seriously, it rejected the initiative and presented its own counterproposal. This was eventually approved by Parliament by a large majority with cross-party support and is now being put to the vote at referendum as the only bill. The Swiss Farmers Union was also in agreement and withdrew its initiative in favour of the counterproposal.

Safeguarding farmland

In the view of the majority of MPs, the counterproposal’s wording is clearer and more precise, leaving less room

for interpretation than the initiative. If the Swiss people approve the bill, the federal constitution will in future include a comprehensive integral plan for food security: securing the bases of production, in particular farmland, resource-efficient food production adapted to the location, and an agricultural and food sector aligned to the market. Food waste is also to be combatted. The bill additionally incorporates issues from the fair food initiative and the food sovereignty initiative, two plebiscites focusing on socially-aware and eco-friendly agriculture. To some degree, food security is an overlapping element in all three initiatives.

In Parliament, even the counterproposal failed to convince some MPs from the FDP, SP and Green Liberal Party. They argued it offered nothing that was not already in the constitution. These dissenting voices can now take some comfort from the fact that the bill will not result in new agricultural subsidies – at least not directly. That is not the case with the “horned cow initiative”. This popular initiative seeks to ensure that fewer livestock farmers remove the horns of their animals to better protect their dignity. Financial support would be provided as keeping horned animals is expensive. But that is another story.

A large-scale pension reform

The old-age pension 2020 bill will also be put to referendum on 24 September. We dedicated several pages to this matter as the focus article in the May issue of “Swiss Review” owing to the bill’s major importance.

A referendum on the proposal is mandatory because the financing of old-age and survivors’ insurance (AHV) means an increase in VAT, which requires a constitutional amendment. If voters reject the additional funding for AHV, the entire reform of the first and second pillars will fail (AHV and occupational benefits provision). Even though the Swiss people can determine the fate of the entire reform package with the VAT bill, a far-left committee has also called a referendum against the Federal Act on the Reform of Old-Age Pension 2020. The increase in the pension age for women from 64

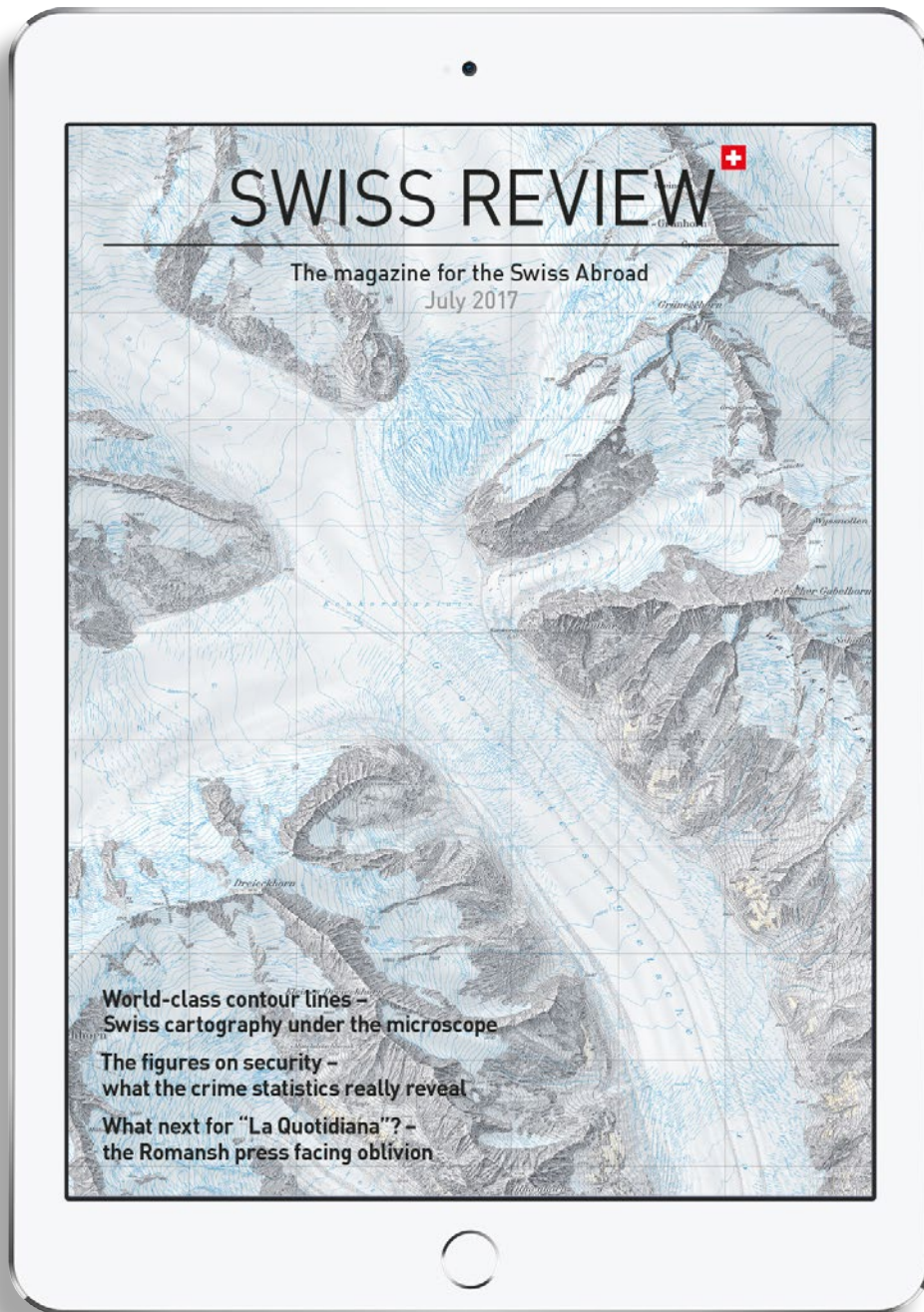
to 65 years of age is a particular bone of contention for opponents. It was unclear at the time of going to print whether the referendum would take place.

Conservative groups in Parliament also fought against the bill because they oppose the increase in AHV pension which should cover some of the losses in the second pillar resulting from the reduction in the second-pillar conversion rate. The SP resorted to an unorthodox step. In April 2017, the party held a vote amongst its membership – for just the fourth time in its history – on “the most important issue of the legislative period”. An overwhelming 90.6 % of the SP’s members supported the reform. (JM)

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Two small parties in a battle for survival

To be or not to be – the Green Liberals and the Swiss Conservative Democratic Party (BDP) face dissolution unless they make up significant ground by 2019.

JÜRIG MÜLLER

After briefly flying high they came crashing to the ground. And since then they have been flying by the seat of their pants and at risk of nosediving at any time. This rather crudely sums up the brief history of the two small Swiss parties, the BDP and Green Liberals (GLP). The GLP achieved spectacular success at the 2011 National Council elections, increasing their number of seats from three to 12. This was followed by a major collapse in 2015, with their representation almost halved to seven seats.

The BDP also endured a setback in 2015 after making gains in 2011. Their number of seats decreased from nine to seven. Both parties have since stagnated. The GLP has stabilised its position somewhat and since 2015 has won two seats in cantonal parliaments at elections in 12 cantons. The BDP, on the other hand, is on a downward trend and has lost eight seats in cantonal parliaments over the same period.

Positioning proves challenging

The two recently established centre-ground parties initially added some colour to politics. The BDP, which formed in 2008 after splitting off from the Swiss People's Party (SVP), initially attracted SVP voters who felt their party's tone had become too harsh. The GLP – established as a national party in 2007 – is still seeking to combine liberal economic and social policy with sustainable environmental policy. Both parties occupy the centre ground where a fight for survival was raging even before their arrival. One of the major challenges for both parties is therefore “their position on issues as they compete for attention”, as Claude Longchamp, the historian, political scientist and chair of the board of the research institute gfs.bern, told “Swiss Review”. “It is vitally important for a small party to be perceived as taking the lead on at least one issue. Its image is otherwise reduced to the role of king-maker. While that is attractive in terms of power politics, it quickly leads to the accusation of opportunism,” he says.

Longchamp believes the set-up of cantonal party structures and the recruitment of personnel also present major challenges. Both parties have struggled here, but the BDP had the slight advantage of being able to rely somewhat on the SVP's structures, particularly in the cantons of Berne, Grisons and Glarus. It was in government there from the outset. The power base in these three cantons was nevertheless not enough for the party to win further cantonal government seats. The BDP also fed off the charisma of its popular Federal Councillor Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf, who stepped down at the end of 2015 after eight years in national government.

Both recently founded centre parties also have a trust issue. A research study on voting conducted by the Swiss Centre of Expertise in the Social Sciences in Lausanne identified a divide between the politicians and the voters of the GLP and BDP. “This is particularly evident with the Green Liberals. The voters class themselves as left of centre, while the candidates see themselves as right of centre,” writes the “*Tagess-Anzeiger*”. “The BDP candidates are also further to the right than their voters.”

The GLP also suffered a setback with its first popular initiative. This proposal was intended to boost the election campaign but ended up a damp squib in election year 2015 of all times. Rejected by 92% of the electorate, the GLP's plan to abolish VAT in favour of a tax on non-renewable energies was a complete disaster and suffered an historic defeat. “As a result, they blew the chance of winning seats in Zurich and at federal level. The impact is still being felt,” says Longchamp. He believes the two parties still have a chance up to the federal elections in 2019 but warns: “They face collapse in the event of another election defeat.”

Martin Bäumle, the founding president of the Green Liberals, will not lead his party into this decisive election. In May, he announced that he will step down in August.

Bäumle put a great deal of passion into building up the GLP but is seen as a technocrat and an extremely dominant figure.



GLP President Martin Bäumle is facing difficult times. He is standing down. Photo: Keystone

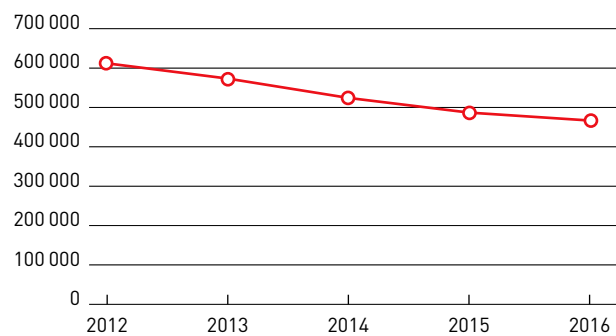
The sinister side of Switzerland

When Switzerland's crime statistics are published, the spotlight falls on the darker side of Swiss life. This year's crime figures nevertheless provide a glimmer of hope as the number of offences has fallen overall. It appears at first glance that Switzerland is becoming an increasingly safe place to live.

MARC LETTAU

Theft is rife in Switzerland. However, either the incentive to steal other people's property is decreasing or theft prevention is getting better. Switzerland's latest crime statistics indicate that fewer break-ins were recorded again last year. Whereas over 200 cases a day were recorded in 2012, there were just 127 in the latest statistics for 2016. This may not provide any comfort for the victims. The facts nevertheless point to the conclusion that while people may still not feel safe subjectively, security is improving statistically in Switzerland.

Criminal offences



Source: BFS (Polizeiliche Kriminalstatistik (PKS) 2016)

A look at the bigger picture raises hopes. It is not just "crimes against property" that are falling as the total figure for all offences has been declining since 2012. The Swiss crime statistics recorded 612,000 criminal acts in 2012. That figure has since fallen by almost a quarter and now stands at 448,000. More good news is that the statistics on young offenders have continually improved. The number of minors violating the criminal code has dropped by almost half since the standardisation of the sta-

tistics in 2009. Crime committed by young adults is also at a low. The prejudice against young people that they are not law-abiding enough has not been backed up.

Domestic violence and homicide

Switzerland's crime statistics nevertheless continue to reflect the depths of humanity. Of all things the most brutal type of crime remained at the same level as in previous years. With a murder rate of 0.6 cases in 100,000 inhabitants, Switzerland – together with Iceland, Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Kuwait, Bahrain and French Polynesia – is actually at the bottom of the list in terms of worldwide statistics on homicide. The figure is a long way off the rate in countries like Norway (2.2), the USA (4.7), Russia (9.2) and Venezuela (53.7). Though, from the viewpoint of the relatives affected, such comparisons are inappropriate as they do not make the 45 murders recorded in the latest crime figures any more bearable. The fact that almost half of the 45 victims lost their lives as a result of domestic violence is disturbing. This situation is so serious that even the usually matter-of-fact Federal Statistical Office made a very pointed statement: "A woman is killed as a result of domestic violence every three weeks." In total, 17,700 criminal cases of domestic violence were recorded.

Even crime statistics where overall numbers are falling have rogue upward trends. In Switzerland the upwards trend is for legal action taken against defamation. The number of cases of libel recorded has more than

doubled since 2009. Are Swiss standards of decency slipping? That is something which cannot be measured. However, the uninhibited style of "free speech" familiar from the comment columns of many media outlets may have pushed the figures up. "It is a short step from screenshot to criminal complaint, whereas slander in the pub can often not be proven," remarks the Zurich-based lawyer Martin Steiger who specialises in this field. The first sentences have now been passed down on people who have clicked the "Like" button on libellous Facebook content, committing the offence of distributing defamatory statements.

The digital underworld

Defamation in cyberspace is just one indication of a major change generally. The criminal fraternity is deviously shifting to digital networks. The trend is also confirmed by Stefan Blättler, President of the Heads of the Cantonal Police Departments. This presents obvious problems. Perpetrators work under the protection of the anonymity of the virtual world. Crimes facilitated by digital networks nevertheless affect the real world. Switzerland, too, faces the issue of the dark web, the anonymised corner of the internet where illegal goods – such as weapons, drugs, false passports, medicines, stolen credit cards and hacker services – can easily be acquired. As dark web customers often pay in bitcoins or other cryptocurrencies, no trace of their illegal activities is left. The easy availability of illegal goods – including weapons – presents new



dangers and makes the work of the police more difficult. Put simply, Switzerland, which has become a safer place statistically, is at the same time facing growing insecurity in a particular area. The dark web expert Otto Hostettler believes: “This will have a major impact on us. Huge black markets are emerging on the dark web at breakneck speed. This affects Switzerland too. Swiss criminals are also buying and supplying their illegal goods while the authorities and law enforcement agencies look on helplessly.” The police have indicated that they are taking action, but this new criminal phenomenon is proving extremely challenging.

A decline in offences recorded overall or the murky underworld of the internet that is obscure to the public – what are the headlines that have been appearing in the Swiss media? They play on minor differences. On the Rhine they indulge in the debate over why Basel-Stadt is now “Switzerland’s most criminal canton” with a crime rate of “110.1 crimes per

resident” (“Basler Zeitung” on 28 March). While Basel does in fact top the crime statistics, the situation is not nearly as dreadful as the newspaper quoted would have us believe. It gets snared by the figures. There are 110.1 offences of all kinds per *thousand* residents. One of the reasons why the figure is this high is that a disproportionately high number of bicycles are stolen in Basel.

Interlaken – an exceptional case

The shock news from Basel almost comes as a relief elsewhere. The tourist destination of Interlaken is pleased that it has not been designated as a hive of criminal activity this time around. This has frequently happened in the past, but an incredibly high number of offences are regularly recorded there. However, the case of Interlaken in particular illustrates the limited meaningfulness of statistics. All the crimes recorded in this place, which is visited by three million people a year, are set against a

The criminal fraternity is deviously shifting to digital networks in Switzerland too. Photo: Keystone

population of just 5,600 in the statistics.

If Basel has claimed the label of “high crime” canton this year, there must also be an extremely peaceful canton in the federal evaluation of criminality, and indeed there is. Nowhere was there less crime in 2016 than in the mountainous canton of Uri. The Uri police force has a quiet life. It does not believe the residents of Uri are better people per se, but there are greater social constraints in the rural environment. So, if a stranger appears in town it may be that the telephone at the police station soon starts ringing.

An iconic figure in Swiss winemaking and biodynamic viticulture

Marie-Thérèse Chappaz from Valais has put her faith in a natural approach to winemaking. The internationally acclaimed vintner ploughs her furrow without thinking too much about the cost. She portrays a land which has not forgotten poverty and is still distrustful of organic production.

STÉPHANE HERZOG

When she was 18, Marie-Thérèse Chappaz – whose mother was a wild-life photographer from Gruyère and whose father was a Valais-born lawyer – was anxious about which path to take in life. “I could not decide whether to train as a midwife and go abroad to carry out humanitarian work or become a winemaker,” she recalls at Liaudisaz, her family estate perched above the Rhône Valley and surrounded by vines on vertiginously steep slopes. After “a great deal of angst” and an internship at the hospital in Martigny which did not particularly inspire her, Marie-Thérèse Chappaz, who had been given 1,500 m² of pinot noir vineyards in Charrat by her

father, ended up choosing the grape. “My father insisted that I should take the land but I was worried that he just wanted to keep me close to him. I certainly didn’t want to become a capitalist by renting out the vineyard, so I decided to work the land myself,” she says. At the viticulture college in Changins, the young winemaker only had one female classmate out of 40 students. The principal told her that there were no prospects for women in this profession and that she would be better off looking for a winemaker to marry! This did not prevent her spending six years working in the cellars of the federal agricultural research station in Changins before moving onto Liaudisaz in 1987.

“The spiritual side of the biodynamic method – where the vine is seen as a living being – touched a chord”: The winemaker Marie-Thérèse Chappaz.

In life, as in the vineyard, Marie-Thérèse Chappaz adopted a completely unorthodox approach but was never ostracised, either because of her daughter – who was born after a love affair with a Kosovo Albanian – or on account of her career as a woman in a man’s world. “Wine is an expression of people’s feminine side – whether they are men or women,” she remarks. She also praises her counterpart Madeleine Gay, another figure in Valais winemaking, who was employed 35 years ago by the cooperative in Provins to help growers improve their wines. “It was tough for her. I, however, immediately became the boss and if an employee could not take orders from a woman, I could dismiss them,” she explains, drawing a comparison.

The natural approach

The second turning point in Marie-Thérèse Chappaz’s professional

A genealogy entwined with the history of Valais

Marie-Thérèse Chappaz’s roots run deep in Valais’ history. The writer Maurice Chappaz, husband of the author Corinna Bille, was her uncle. Maurice Troillet, who served as a cantonal councillor for 40 years and founded, among other things, the Provins cooperative, was her great-uncle. The estate and cellar of Liaudisaz, perched on the slopes of La Fontaine on the Fully hills, were built by this great political figure in 1942.



life was in 1997. She was in Tain-l'Hermitage in the Rhône Valley where she met Michel Chapoutier, an expert in biodynamic production, who introduced her to this natural approach that had been established in the 1920s by Rudolf Steiner, an anthroposophical doctor. "I looked at the vine and it was as if I had found the answer to a question that had been puzzling me for some time. The spiritual side of the biodynamic method – where the vine is seen as a living being – touched a chord. A door opened to a mysterious, novel and deep world. I've felt much more in harmony with the vine since changing tack," reveals the oenologist who has absolute faith in this technique. Artificial products are therefore dispensed with although copper is retained to combat mildew.

Cow horns are filled with manure that is diluted with water before being buried to fortify the land. The lunar cycle is taken into account when cultivating the soil. A horsetail and nettle infusion is sulphated in the wine. It is this world of biodynamics "with its forces that act invisibly", which Marie-Thérèse Chappaz adopted immediately. It has also won the winemaker from Valais international recognition with plaudits from the French Gault Millau guide and flattering ratings from the American wine critic Robert Parker (1996–97 for a 2014 Petite Arvine). All the fanfare surrounding her clearly puts the spotlight on her work but "there

are other people doing excellent things and it annoys me when journalists continually focus on me," says the celebrity winemaker.

Grape varieties from abroad

The biodynamic method still has a long way to go to convince winemakers in Valais, who tend to prefer a less restrictive organic approach. While producers in Valais have always been keen to import foreign grape varieties – "they like to try out new things in winemaking" – attitudes towards unconventional agricultural methods die hard in a place which was still enduring poverty in the last century and where the Rhône continued to flood the farmland of lifetime tenants.

"Until the 1980s, when there were no limits on production, vineyards provided a significant amount of income for many families. The influx of new methods, and hence new requirements, when people have struggled to survive, and chemicals have enabled vines to be grown in extremely difficult terrain, is seen by some as yet another constraint, a bit like in the developing countries, which are called upon by the West to pursue a sustainable development approach," explains the winemaker. She nevertheless believes the advent of organic winemaking, if not biodynamic production, is inevitable. "Having experienced poverty, the people of Valais have often focused on the short-term, but they have recog-



An 11-hectare vineyard

"I've restored the family vineyard," enthuses Marie-Thérèse Chappaz. The estate, established by Maurice Troillet in 1924, now covers 11 hectares, only three of which actually belong to the cellar owner. The rest are leased to members of his family. The Valais varieties – Petite Arvine, Marsanne, Cornalin, Humagne Rouge and Diolinoir – are found in abundance here, not to mention Dôle and other blends. The plots, which are divided up, extend from Fully to Charrat and along the Rhône as far as Leytron and Chamoson. Five hectares of this land, where the vines climb to a height of 900 metres, cannot be accessed by road. In 2016, production was increased to 45,000 bottles. As widely reported, in spring 2017 the vines in Valais were ravaged by a "black frost that came down from the mountain", as the winemaker puts it. Marie-Thérèse Chappaz lost around 20 % of her grapes while some producers lost up to 90 %.

nised the richness and beauty of their landscape, the importance of tourism to the canton and the need to protect this environment."

Marie-Thérèse Chappaz invests everything she earns in her vineyard but without necessarily thinking about the management of her business. To the point where she is sometimes forced to take out credit to meet costs. What is her most recent acquisition? Two horses to work on the vineyard. What about picking the grapes? That is done by hand. The estate's production aims to achieve excellence and purity. Some varieties are vinified separately to convey the distinctive character of the tiny plots of land (see opposite). Is the wine a good remedy for homesickness? "It's a little bit of the land you can take with you," concludes Marie-Thérèse Chappaz.

The only daily newspaper published in Romansh is facing closure

“La Quotidiana” has existed for 20 years. Unless something happens quickly, the newspaper will appear for the last time at the end of this year. It would be a huge loss for the already endangered Romansh language.



The optimism of 1997 is long gone.

Pictured: the former editor-in-chief Enrico Kopatz and publisher Hanspeter Lebrument with the first edition of “La Quotidiana”

Photo: Keystone

ANDREAS FAGETTI

With its 150 valleys and three official languages of German, Italian and Romansh, the canton of Grisons is a complex place both culturally and topographically. As if that were not enough, Romansh consists of five dialects which differ so greatly that the 60,000 Romansh speakers, whose vernacular varies depending on which valley community they come from, do not always immediately understand one another. No standard language has emerged. However, a uniform written language has existed since the early 1980s. Known as Ro-

mansh Grischun, it is an artificial language. When the first edition of “La Quotidiana”, with a circulation of over 6,000, rolled fresh from the press on 1 January 1997, it marked a milestone. It was the first daily newspaper in Romansh that would allow the language to develop into a linguistic bond – a never-ending process. So far, so good.

However, “La Quotidiana” could face closure at the end of the year unless the advocates of Romansh – politicians such as CVP National Councillor Martin Candinas and the Romansh lobbyists of Lia Rumants-

cha together with Somedia – can quickly find a sustainable financial solution. The biggest media group in the canton of Grisons, Hanspeter Lebrument’s Somedia, announced in March that it could no longer sustain annual losses of 300,000 Swiss francs and would close the newspaper at the end of the year.

The shortfall mainly comes from personnel costs for the editor-in-chief, layout designer, proofreader, a permanent freelance employee and the office staff. The newspaper’s layout is as complex as the canton in which it is published.

The supra-regional main section is written in Romansh Grischun, while the local ones are published in local dialects. This presents a major challenge for the proofreader who has to master all of the dialects as well as Romansh Grischun.

Constant fall in circulation

Like all daily newspapers, “La Quotidiana” is suffering from dwindling circulation figures. It now no longer has 5,000 to 6,000 subscribers, as at the outset, but just 4,000. The daily newspaper was never a lucrative business in any case. The market is too small and too fragmented. In Engadine, for example, the “Engadiner Post” is published in German. When “La Quotidiana”, a merger of various local newspapers in the Romansh language, was launched, the “Engadiner Post” responded by introducing a Romansh section.

While the situation is difficult, there is still hope. National Councillor Martin Candinas has submitted an interpellation in the National Council. He is seeking to establish whether federal government and the canton would be willing to provide financial support to secure the survival of the Romansh newspaper until 2020, providing enough time to find a sustainable solution. Grisons already receives 25 million francs of licence fee money every year from the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation for RTR, Romansh radio and television, which employs 160 people.

A proposal to save “La Quotidiana” is also being put together at the cantonal parliament of Grisons. Candinas remarks: “Time is of the essence as notice periods must be taken into account. We have to come up with a solution by August.” There is no alternative for this Romansh speaker, who grew up in Surselva and today lives in Chur – “La Quotidiana” simply has to be saved. “Any other out-

come would be a major setback for our language. For the language to survive, we Romansh speakers need these daily newspapers to preserve a living language, for our identity, solidarity and sense of community,” says the member of the board of trustees of the Agentura da Novitads Rumantscha (ANR) news agency. This organisation supplies all the Romansh media with news, including “La Quotidiana”, which could not survive in any case without its copy. The agency has existed since 1997 and took on editorial staff from “La Quotidiana” in 2009 to enable it to continue to be published. The agency is funded by federal government and the canton, which provide its annual budget of 1 million francs.

Migration from the Romansh-speaking region

Lia Rumantscha plays a key role for Romansh speakers and the survival of their culture. It was founded in 1919 as the umbrella organisation of all Romansh language societies and is their lobbying association, in a sense, which is supported by federal government and the canton. Some 40% of Romansh speakers now live outside the region where the language is spoken. The association believes that bilingual schools are vitally important. One such school exists in Chur to help ensure the survival of the language. Martin Candinas’ eldest son attends it. Candinas remarks: “We are facing tremendous challenges. The number of Romansh speakers is falling and many are leaving the region for educational reasons and better career prospects. This is why “La Quotidiana” is so important, but so too are bilingual schools outside the Romansh-speaking region. Otherwise nobody in the diaspora will speak Romansh within two generations and the language will die out.” That would be a huge and irre-

trievable loss for Switzerland – even if the songwriter Linard Bardill has a more relaxed attitude towards the situation. He wrote an obituary for Romansh four years ago in the “Tag-es-Anzeiger”: “Everyone wants to keep Romansh alive. We should let it go to go on for as long as it can...”

Digital salvation?

Martin Cabalzar, editor-in-chief of “La Quotidiana”, is now looking to the future. He managed the “Gasetta Romontscha” before it was merged into “La Quotidiana”. The newspaper’s distribution area was Surselva and its circulation stood at 6,000 copies. “If “La Quotidiana” is actually closed down, this newspaper could be revived,” he comments. “It would probably be viable just as a local newspaper but would represent a huge backwards step in terms of language policy.”

Cabalzar is therefore focusing on saving “La Quotidiana” by means of digital publication in the long term. Subscribers can already download the newspaper in PDF format, which is of particularly great benefit for homesick Romansh speakers abroad. However, “La Quotidiana” does not have a website where news is continually updated. These are dreams of the future – if there is one for the only daily newspaper published in Romansh. It now depends on the goodwill of the politicians and Somedia, who will probably get on board provided that they are no longer faced with losses. People are already working tirelessly to save “La Quotidiana”. The public will find out by the autumn whether it will survive or go to the wall.

Conductors born in Switzerland but acclaimed worldwide

The leading Swiss orchestras are primarily led by French, British and Italian conductors. But three Swiss conductors are currently enjoying global fame – Charles Dutoit, Philippe Jordan and Lorenzo Viotti.

CHRISTIAN BERZINS

When Switzerland's leading orchestra, the Tonhalle-Orchester Zurich, started looking for a new chief conductor in recent months, the question of whether the candidate should hold Swiss nationality was clearly not a factor. A Frenchman is being replaced. And over at the Zurich Opera House the chief conductor is Italian. Basel, Aargau and Geneva have British conductors, while there is a Dutchman in St. Gallen, a German in Lugano and both an American and an Italian in Lucerne. Swiss citizens only hold the top jobs at the orchestras of Biel/Solothurn and Berne.

Are there so few Swiss conductors, or do they not get an opportunity? Is there reason for concern? Let us not get ahead of ourselves, as this summary of the domestic scene is deceptive. Who is conducting the best orchestras in the world and has led a second-class one to world fame? The 81-year-old Swiss citizen Charles Dutoit. Who is the chief conductor of the Paris Opera and has a strong foothold in the world music capital with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra? 43-year-old Philippe Jordan from Switzerland. Who is enjoying a more meteoric rise than almost any other conductor and is wisely developing his orchestral knowledge? The 27-year-old Swiss conductor Lorenzo Viotti.

Untypically Swiss self-assurance

Is the fact that Lausanne-born Lorenzo Viotti always exudes such self-assurance and the impression of great knowledge about his art untypically Swiss? What is extraordinary about Vi-

otti is that his awareness of his own strengths is accompanied by almost masochistic self-criticism. Viotti nevertheless fends off external criticism by doing everything in his power to ensure the orchestra musicians know how important they are to him. He is a firm believer that everything else will take care of itself.



Lorenzo Viotti won the prestigious "Young Conductors Award" in 2015.

Photos: Keystone

The musical visionary studied percussion in Vienna because he wanted to sit at the back of the orchestra with the timpani and analyse the psychology of the musicians. He studied singing because he wanted to feel and understand the needs of an opera singer. He sang in a choir to gain an insight into how singers breathe. And he spent hours at orchestral rehearsals under the great masters – such as Georges Prêtre and Mariss Jansons – following the thought processes through, and was just as exhausted after three hours as the "real" maestros conducting. When one day he stands in front of their top orchestras he will have no fear. "The podium is the only place where I really feel at home. Obviously, I find it electrifying from the very first note – it's not fear, though, but rather

impatience. I then just want to look the musicians in the eye – and let go," he remarks. "That is the most wonderful moment in my life."

Lorenzo Viotti has been in the spotlight since winning the "Nestlé and Salzburg Festival Young Conductors Award" in summer 2015. A young conductor has to be prepared for such attention. Viotti knows the business, though. His father was the famous conductor Marcello Viotti. His mother always said: "Lorenzo will be a conductor one day." His father was sceptical and concerned that his son would find it too great a challenge to step out of his shadow. Today, Lorenzo is fortunately able to say that he was too young to imitate his father's style. He prefers not to remember his father as a conductor. He was more influenced by other leading conductors.

Fear of living in his father's shadow

The Swiss conductor Philippe Jordan, who will soon turn 43, experienced a similar situation. While he started out as an assistant to his father, Armin Jordan, he soon forged his own path. He avoided Zurich for a long period as he did not want to be seen as "Jordan junior" or "Armin's son". He even turned down the prestigious position of chief conductor at the Zurich Opera House once offered to him by the director Alexander Pereira. "Making my own way was very important to me. Switzerland was too small and my father's presence too great to allow me to do that," explains Jordan. He now occasionally visits Zurich to conduct the Tonhalle-Orchester. Someone who holds a chief conductor position in



both Paris and Vienna and is a guest conductor with the top ten orchestras in the world no longer really needs his native city.

While still in Zurich as a high school student in the queue with the rest of the audience for the opera house ticket office, he stood out because he seemed so mature and serious-minded. At the age of 16, he was already wearing checked jackets like the 80-year-old conductors of the day. Barely having graduated, Jordan began his training as an opera conductor in a way that few people had the opportunity to enjoy (or perhaps endure). This was nothing like the careers of high-flyers propelled into stardom by CD productions and marketing departments. His father did not simply let him conduct, but believed that his son had to understand the profession from the bottom up, to know what it feels like to sit at the piano for eight weeks of operatic rehearsals or if you still love Mozart's "Don Giovanni" when you have gone through the same parts a hundred times with the singers.

If you ask him about his trio of mentors at that time – Jeffrey Tate, Daniel Barenboim and his father – he immediately points out that there were four: "My most important mentor was the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra." This is typical of Jordan – only those who challenge themselves at the sharp end

43-year-old Philippe Jordan was quick to step out of the shadow of his father Armin.

The grand master Charles Dutoit in his element, pictured here in 1999.



stand to gain. As he puts it: "It's all about working with this sometimes indomitable beast – the orchestra." How can I rehearse well with the best and how can I get what I want out of them? What inspires them to perform? He constantly reflected on such questions. His education lasted several years. Jordan regarded this process as part of his training, while other young stars saw it as the achievement of their goal.

Lorenzo Viotti, too, has no fear of the major orchestras but is still learning from the smaller ones. He underlines with a proud sense of serenity that he has all the time in the world to pursue his career. "Whether or not people respect that, it's my life. You can't conduct the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra at the age of 25. It's a trap – it is detrimental psychologically and even worse artistically. If you stand in front of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra at the age of 25 or take on all of Mahler's symphonies at 30, what are you going to do at 50? Or at 70 come to that? Where will you find the drive and desire?" He has therefore already turned down prestigious offers to instead conduct in Lausanne, Jena and Nice – only occasionally succumbing to the temptations of the major orchestras and conducting the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. Who would pass up the

chance to drive a Ferrari if they knew exactly how to handle one?

Swiss cosmopolitan

Charles Dutoit has accomplished everything that lies ahead of Viotti but still captivates every orchestra and audience with his knowledge and charm. His nonchalance is infectious. Crossing the abyss-like pit of large symphony orchestras, he turns, full of verve, to the audience on the last bar and says with a wave of the hand: "You see, it's that easy."

Dutoit was born in Lausanne in 1936. He worked in Berne and Zurich until 1973, but then the world opened up to him and he to it. In 1977, he was appointed musical director in Montreal – leading the previously second-rate orchestra to world acclaim – and was at the same time the chief conductor of three leading orchestras while recording dozens of records. Those featuring the music of Berlioz and Debussy are still considered a benchmark. He then worked in London, Paris and Tokyo – a cosmopolite who even speaks Japanese.

If Zurich's Tonhalle-Orchester – allowing for speculation – had to choose its new chief conductor from one of these three, it would probably take Dutoit. Only his age goes against him, although if you saw him nonchalantly strutting on the podium in his white smoking jacket, you would soon forget how old he was. There again, the Zurich-based orchestra might regret not having appointed Lorenzo Viotti as its chief conductor in 2019. The rest of the world, the orchestras from Tokyo to New York, would be pleased they did not.

Tenderness over LSD and morphine

The novel “*Œil-de-mer*” by Valais-born Corinna Bille is set in Toulon on the Mediterranean and portrays an ecstatic and exhilarating love story.

CHARLES LINSMAYER

It is probably one of the most tender affairs imaginable. On the beach of Le Pradet near Toulon, Marthe, a blonde lady from Valais, is lying face down deep in a book when she starts to feel small pebbles being tossed onto her back every now and again. It is the young deep-sea fisherman Marceau, who is having a bit of fun. When she turns to speak to him, he makes out that he was trying to get rid of an ant on her back.

A love story unfolds between the Swiss woman and the young fisherman that could barely be more tender, gentle or poetic. Lust and eroticism are certainly not overlooked – the pair make love on the beach to the sound of the sea – but there is something chaste and insurmountable between them – she is married and the young fisherman is a million miles away from her in terms of education and social status. The woman from Valais visits Le Pradet for two further summers, her discreet, reserved letters crossing during the winter with his clumsy, love-struck correspondence, and then everything suddenly stops as if nothing had ever happened in the first place.

With “*Théoda*”, “*La Fraise noire*”, “*La Demoiselle sauvage*”, her poems and short stories, Corinna Bille, who was born in Sierre in 1912 and who also died there in 1979, is known for being a poet who turned Valais into a real, imaginary and even mythical setting like nobody else – with the exception of the novel “*Œil-de-mer*”, which recounts the love story between Marthe and Marceau on the beach of Le Pradet.

The biographical background

“I am unbelievably happy,” she wrote to her mother in Sierre on 22 July 1950. “I’ve found a true friend. He’s a young local fisherman. A simple soul, but absolutely wonderful. He fishes underwater and describes the seabed to me. He looks for bright red starfish for me and tiny mussels which I’m then supposed to eat alive with the shell.”

Corinna Bille spent three summers away from her husband Maurice Chappaz in Le Pradet from 1950 to 1952. By 1951, however, she had her small daughter Marie-Noëlle with her, which would have restricted her flirting with (the now married) Marceau, although she could not quickly forget him. The novel “*Œil-de-mer*”, which recounts the little love story so charmingly and subtly, was written from wistful memory in winter 1954/55 and rejected by one Parisian

publishing house after another, including Gallimard, Grasset, Julliard and Flammarion. “We were impressed by the fine poetry that pervades the entire novel – poetry of the sea, poetry of love and poetry of longing,” acknowledged Ernest Flammarion in his rejection letter.

Faithful or adulterous?

It was not until 1989, ten years after Corinna Bille’s death, that Maurice Chappaz had the novel, which was part of his wife’s estate, published by the Lausanne-based company “*Editions 24 heures*”. The author of this article asked Maurice Chappaz in 2008 whether he had been jealous of the fisherman. “I wasn’t jealous because I knew nothing about it,” he replied. “I only found out when I was preparing the novel for publication. But I don’t believe she was really unfaithful. We both knew we could trust one another.”

This does not completely concur with remarks made by Corinna Bille in a later text: “I was unfaithful – in thought if not in deed – and this barely stopped for years. Always madly in love with someone! It was my morphine or LSD, but I have to say that this fantasy helped me to get through life.”



“Back in her room, Marthe found a brown comb in her bathing towel, Marceau’s comb. It had an unusual aroma, both bitter and sweet. No, she was not disgusted by it. “It shows that this man is familiar to me.” Bewildered, she asked herself: “Am I falling in love with him? That’s impossible!” But she knew it was very possible, and an exhilarating shiver passed over her.”
(From chapter three of “*Œil-de-mer*”.)

Bibliography: “*Œil-de-mer*” is available in French from “*Editions de L’Aire*”, Vevey. The Corinna Bille reader in German “*Das Vergnügen, eine eigene neue Welt in der Hand zu halten*”, Reprinted by Huber No. 25, Huber-Verlag, Frauenfeld 2008, published by Charles Linsmayer, contains a chapter from the novel and an article on its background (translation by Hilde Fieguth).



Winter camp for children aged 8 to 14

Whether skiers or snowboarders, novices or at an advanced level, 8 to 14-year-old Swiss children abroad will have a great time at our winter camp.

Winter camp in Valbella (Grisons)

Date: Wednesday, 27 December 2017 to

Friday, 5 January 2018

Number of participants: 42

Cost: CHF 900 camp fee

Ski or snowboard hire: around CHF 150

Registration deadline: 15 October 2017

Registration

More precise information on the winter camp and the registration form can be found from 15 September 2017 at <http://sjas.ch/en/camps/registration/>. Reduced rates are offered in justified cases. The required form can be requested on the registration form. We would also be pleased to post you our information brochure on request.

Information:



Stiftung für junge Auslandschweizer
Fondation pour les enfants suisses à l'étranger
Fondazione per i giovani svizzeri all'estero
Fundazioni per giuovens svizzers a l'ester

Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad (FYSA)

Alpenstrasse 26, 3006 Berne, SWITZERLAND

Tel. +41 31 356 61 16, Fax +41 31 356 61 01

E-mail: info@sjas.ch, www.sjas.ch

An account of a grant recipient's experiences

Today, we feature an account by a young Swiss person abroad who grew up in Brazil. Paulo Wirz came to Switzerland as an 18-year-old to discover his grandparents' native country. He recently graduated with a bachelor's degree from Zurich University of the Arts (ZhdK).

"I was born in São Paulo, Brazil's largest city, but grew up in a small town with the exotic name of Pindamonhangaba. There was no cinema, theatre or shopping centre, and the only museum closed down, but there were outdoor activities to enjoy. [...] I encountered Switzerland for the first time in Pinda, as my grandfather's chair was in our living room. [...] I would never have thought at that time that I would ever learn to speak my grandparents' language. But straight after high school I had the chance to visit Switzerland for the first time in 2008 [...] after deciding to study photography. First, however, I had to do military service, where I was trained as a paramedic at the recruit school in Airolo. [...] So, I began my degree in Lausanne and learned to speak French fluently. Everything was going according to plan. However, I was unable to work enough because of studying full-time and would have been forced to drop out of my course due to a lack of money. My parents were unfortunately unable to provide me with much financial support, so I searched the internet for foundations. After lots of rejection letters, I came across AJAS (now *educationsuisse*) and finally saw a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel. Thanks to the support of *educationsuisse* and a grant from my home canton of Zurich, I was able to put all my energy into studying.

I will be eternally grateful for this opportunity. Without the support of

the *educationsuisse* staff and the grant office – which also helped me transfer to ZhdK – I would probably be somewhere else now. [...] The land of my grandparents has shown me so much and opened up so many prospects. All the different cultures and languages in one country taught me how important tolerance is and how well people can live together. It has definitely had a positive impact on my development. It is here that I first realised that you have to pursue your dreams and never give up."

Paulo Wirz wrote this article on his experiences for our 2015 annual report. You will find the annual report and his full article (p. 20-21) in German on our website at www.educationsuisse.ch. (<http://www.educationsuisse.ch/de/publikationen>)

If you have any questions about education in Switzerland, please contact our staff in Berne via email, by telephone or visit in person (by appointment). Our employees speak German, French, English, Italian and Spanish.

info@educationsuisse.ch

www.educationsuisse.ch.

Tel. +41 (0)31 356 61 04



educationsuisse

Alpenstrasse 26

3006 Berne, SWITZERLAND



Area for the Swiss Abroad – a big thank-you to everyone who donated!

We ran a campaign from May 2015 to autumn 2016 calling upon the Swiss Abroad to make a contribution to the renovation of the Area for the Swiss Abroad on Lake Lucerne. This area was acquired in 1990 – thanks to a collection raised amongst the Swiss Abroad, which was doubled by federal government – and officially inaugurated in 1991 as part of the 700th anniversary celebrations of the Swiss Confederation.

After 25 years, usage and the passage of time have left their mark. Our area therefore underwent extensive renovation in 2016. The existing grass pavers were repaired and their area doubled, and the power distribution was brought into line with modern standards and extended. This cost a total of around 231,000 Swiss francs, most of which was provided by the canton of Schwyz and local sponsors. However, the Swiss Abroad also played their part. A total of 114 donors from every continent contributed 70,879 francs. We wish to express our most sincere gratitude to them for their support.

While the collection is over, we would be happy to accept further donations. The bank account details are:

Stiftung Auslandschweizerplatz Brunnen, Kantonbank Schwyz, IBAN: CH91 0077 7002 0398 2195 1, BIC: KBSZCH22XXX.

The foundation will install a donor plaque for amounts over 5,000 francs on the memorial stone marking the foundation and inauguration of the area at the entrance.

Thank you all once again.

Alex Hauenstein,
President of the Area for the Swiss Abroad Foundation Board,
Robert Engeler,
Foundation Board member, Swiss Abroad sponsorship

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www.revue.ch

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Please advise your local embassy or consulate. Do not write to the editorial office in Berne.



The OSA's offers for young people this winter:

New Year's ski camp for young people in Les Diablerets (Vaud) from 27.12.2017 to 5.1.2018

Participants can look forward to a wide programme of activities in the heart of the Vaud Alps. As well as skiing or snowboarding lessons in small groups and a highly varied fringe programme, there will also be time to make new friendships. Those taking part will be looked after by a well-trained and highly motivated team of leaders. This offer is aimed at young people aged 15 to 18.

www.lesbosquets.ch and www.villars-diablerets.ch

Winter sports camp for adults in Saas-Grund (Valais) from 27.12.2017 to 05.01.2018

The winter camp for adults in Grächen was a resounding success. This winter too we are holding a winter sports camp in the Valais Alps for young adults aged 18 and over and the young at heart. This year's skiing and snowboarding camp is taking place in Saas-Grund. You can get a preview of the accommodation and ski resort at:

www.ferienhaus-schoenblick.ch and www.saas-fee.ch

German course in Lucerne from 8.1. to 19.1.2018

Four lessons of language teaching in the morning, joint activities in the afternoon and a welcoming host family. We will inspire participants to learn German, which is one of the four national languages.

Subsidy

The Youth Service has funding available to provide support for financially disadvantaged participants. Applications can be made via the following link:

www.swisscommunity.org/en/youth/reduction-of-fees

Registration start date

Registration for the winter sports offers begins on 15 September 2017. Further information on the offers and registration can be found on our websites

www.aso.ch and www.swisscommunity.org.

Youth Service contact details

youth@aso.ch / +41 31 356 61 00

Offers from partners:

Schweizer Jugend Forscht (Swiss Youth in Science): <http://sjf.ch/nationaler-wettbewerb-2018/>

Easyvote: <https://www.easyvote.ch>

www.facebook.com/ASOyouth

OSA advice

I have heard from various sources that tax has to be paid on the second-pillar pension and on old-age and survivors' insurance (AHV). Is this tax paid in my country of residence or in Switzerland, and what is the procedure?

AHV pensions are not subject to tax in Switzerland for people residing abroad and are not taxed at source. However, they must be declared in the country of residence where they may be taxed. You need to contact the tax authority in your country of residence for a definitive answer. In the case of second-pillar pensions, this depends on whether or not you receive a pension from a public service employment relationship (federal government, canton, commune).

Pensions from public service employment relationships are generally subject to withholding tax in Switzerland. They are therefore not generally taxed in the country of residence or if they are the tax paid in Switzerland is taken into account. However, there may be exceptions depending on any double taxation agreements in force and, in particular, on the recipient's nationality (this concerns dual citizens holding the nationality of the country of residence). There may also be double taxation in countries with which Switzerland has not concluded a double taxation agreement if the country of residence also levies a tax on these pensions.

Pensions from employment relationships under private law are subject to withholding tax in Switzerland if Switzerland has not concluded a double taxation agreement with the country of residence or if this is provided for by any applicable double taxation agreement. Double taxation may occur if the country of residence also levies a tax on these pensions which is not prevented by any double taxation agreement.

The principle that applies to taxation of second-pillar capital is that these capital payments are subject to withholding tax in Switzerland. Several double taxation agreements nevertheless provide for the opportunity to apply for reimbursement of this tax. Reimbursement is not an option in countries with which Switzerland has not concluded a double taxation agreement. Double taxation may occur if the country of residence also levies a tax on these capital payments which is not prevented by the applicable double taxation agreement.

You can obtain detailed information from the Double Taxation Agreement Department of the State Secretariat for International Financial Matters (SIF):

State Secretariat for International Financial Matters (SIF)

Double Taxation Agreement Department

Bundesgasse 3, 3003 Berne

Tel.: +41 58 462 71 29

Email: dba@sif.admin.ch

www.sif.admin.ch

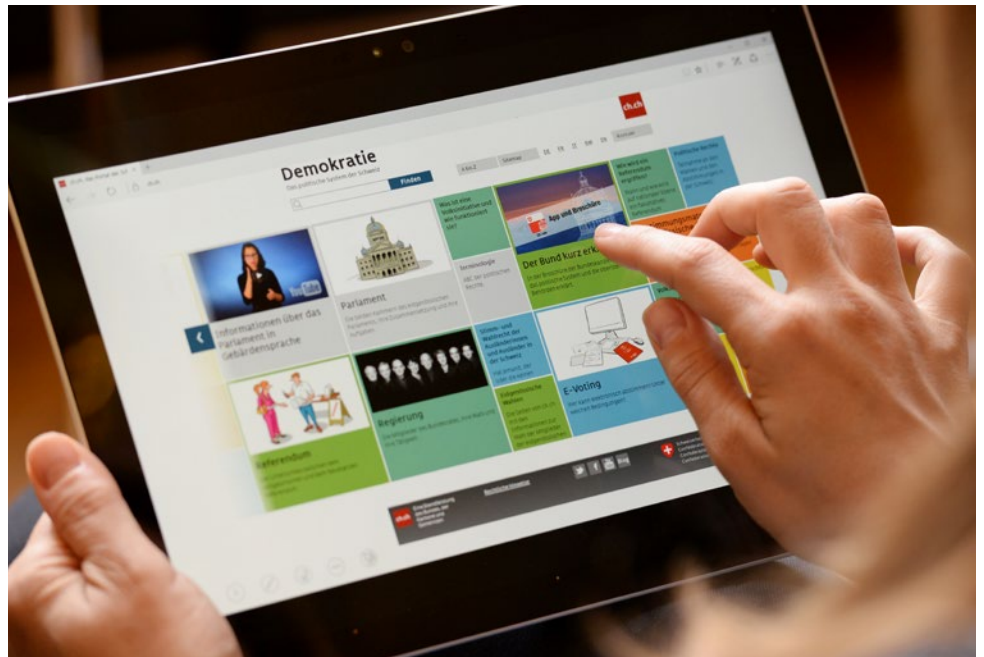
ABC of the Swiss political system at a single click

How do I correctly fill out a ballot paper? Who do I have to contact if I haven't received the voting material? Can Swiss living abroad vote? Who can vote online? Who can launch an initiative? What is the role of a cantonal government or parliament? Who can stand as a candidate in federal elections, and how? ch.ch/democracy, the new content provided by ch.ch, gives you answers to these and other questions.

ch.ch, the official portal of the Confederation, cantons and communes, has expanded its content with the addition of ch.ch/democracy, and now offers a wide range of information dedicated to how the Swiss political system functions. Fresh content and lots of links to external websites of federal, cantonal and communal authorities are brought together on one single website, making it easier and faster to access information on the functioning of the Swiss political system at all political levels.

The wide-ranging content published on ch.ch/democracy gives useful, practical information explained clearly and simply for all citizens, both in Switzerland and abroad. The new portal is especially useful for Swiss living abroad as it contains information of particular interest, including explanations on how they can exercise their political rights. On ch.ch/democracy citizens will find questions and answers such as: How can I vote if I don't live in Switzerland? Who can use e-voting? Who can I contact to obtain voting material? Can Swiss people living abroad participate in all elections and votes? Can they stand as a candidate in elections in their canton of origin? What conditions need to be met?

Besides giving this practical information, the ch.ch/democracy portal explains how the Swiss political system functions and how it is organised. There are several pages explain-



ing federalism, the principle of subsidiarity, the separation of powers between the legislative, executive and judicial branches, and the role of the Swiss courts. There are also descriptions of the various political parties and political movements in Switzerland.

ch.ch/democracy is continually being developed. We intend to add new and up-to-date multimedia content to address the needs and wishes of the portal's users both in Switzerland and beyond the country's borders.

The illustrations, graphics and video clips which augment the explanations in the texts

make ch.ch/democracy a dynamic and attractive website for younger citizens too. The public can also keep abreast of the latest news in our democratic system via www.twitter.com/ch_portal, and so exercise their political rights more easily.

The site is available in five languages: Italian, French, German, Romansh and English.

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Change at the Consular Directorate



Peter Zimmerli – from Berne to Atlanta

Dear readers,

I have been fortunate to serve as a bridge between you and the federal government over the past four years as the Delegate for Relations with the Swiss Abroad. I have always really enjoyed and attached great importance to my dialogue with fellow citizens, whether face-to-face at Congresses of the Swiss Abroad in Switzerland and abroad or through the federal government section of “Swiss Review”. The time has now come for me to depart as I will take over the direction of the Consulate General in Atlanta in the USA at the beginning of August. I wish to express my deepest gratitude to all the Swiss Abroad who enthusiastically represent Swiss values abroad.



Simone Jenny Flubacher – in Berne

Dear Swiss Abroad

I am very much looking forward to our future exchanges. This move takes me from dealing with preparations for emigration to addressing issues closer to you abroad. For 20 years I worked for the FDFA at various Swiss representations abroad. I returned to Switzerland at the end of 2012 where I set up the emigration advisory service at the Consular Directorate and dealt with various issues related to spending time abroad, emigration and returning to Switzerland. In July 2017, I will take over from Peter Zimmerli as the Delegate for Relations with the Swiss Abroad.

Important notice

Please notify your Swiss representation of your email address(es) and mobile telephone number(s) and/or any changes to these and register at www.swissabroad.ch to ensure you do not miss any communications (“Swiss Review”, newsletter from your representation, etc.).

The latest issue of “Swiss Review” and previous issues can be read and/or printed out at any time at www.revue.ch. “Swiss Review” (or “Gazzetta Svizzera” in Italy) is sent free of charge to all households of Swiss Abroad who are registered with an embassy or consulate general, either in printed format or electronically (via email or as an iOS/Android app).

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www.eda.admin.ch, email: helpline@eda.admin.ch

Federal referendums

Voting proposals are determined by the Federal Council at least four months before the voting date. The following proposals will be put to the vote on 24 September 2017:

- Federal Decree of 14 March 2017 on Food Security (direct counter-proposal to the popular initiative “For food security”, which has now been withdrawn) (BBl 2017 2383);
- Federal Decree of 17 March 2017 on Additional Funding for AHV (Old-Age and Survivors Insurance) by increasing Value Added Tax (BBl 2017 2381);
- Federal Act of 17 March 2017 on the Reform of Retirement Provision 2020 (BBl 2017 2393).

Further voting date 2017: 26 November

All information on the proposals (voting pamphlets, committees, recommendations of Parliament and the Federal Council, electronic voting, etc.) can be found at www.admin.ch/votes.

Popular initiatives

The following new federal popular initiatives had been launched at the time of going to press (deadline for the collection of signatures in brackets):

- “For clean drinking water and healthy food – No subsidies for pesticides and the prophylactic use of antibiotics” (21.09.2018)
- “For a ban on financing war material manufacturers” (11.10.2018)
- “Close down the nuclear power station – take responsibility for the environment” (16.11.2018)
- “Jobs for Swiss residents first” (13.12.2018)

The list of pending popular initiatives can be found at www.bk.admin.ch > under Aktuell > Wahlen und Abstimmungen > Hängige Volksinitiativen.



Food through the ages

The “What does Switzerland eat?” exhibition provides a glimpse into the saucepans of Swiss people. On display in Schwyz, it highlights the many facets of our cuisine, past and present. It focuses on the nation’s culinary heritage – famous classic dishes but also lesser known specialities, such as “Gumpesel” sausages from Meiringen.

“What does Switzerland eat?” – an exhibition at the Forum of Swiss History Schwyz. Until 1 October 2017.
www.nationalmuseum.ch/e/schwyz

Ladle holders were once commonplace, like this wooden one from the 18th century.



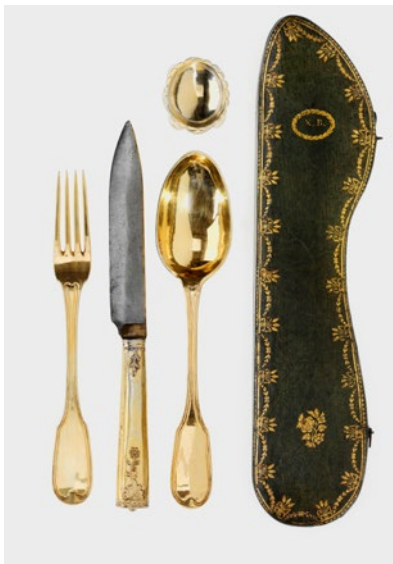
A slideshow provides an insight into the past: The typical menu of Swiss farmers in the 15th and 16th centuries consisted mainly of oats, whey cheese and dried pears ...



... while wealthy citizens enjoyed pheasant with bay leaves, ginger, peppers, nutmeg and cloves.



The exhibition also addresses the issues of hunger and excess.



Elegant silverware from around 1790, found in the kitchens of the upper echelons of society.

This is what a pressure cooker looked like 60 years ago: a metal pot from the Frauenfeld-based manufacturer Sigg.



This is what our food of the future may look like: insects on a skewer, laboratory-produced meat and micro-leaves.

Mr Brechbühl is Looking for a Cat



TIM KROHN:
"Herr Brechbühl sucht eine Katze"
Publisher: Verlag Galiani
Berlin. 480 pages; around
CHF 28.90/EUR 24

Sixty-five short stories that make up a novel – Tim Krohn's new book is set in a Zurich apartment building at the beginning of the 21st century. Students, single women, immigrants and pensioners live in this typically Swiss rental accommodation. Right at the outset we are introduced to the retired tram driver Brechbühl, who feels he is living a pointless existence, and later the single mother Julia, who is juggling her career with bringing up her child. The tender relationship of Mr and Mrs Wyss, an elderly married couple, and the illness-plagued marriage of the Costas, an immigrant couple, are sensitively portrayed. Every reader will be able to identify with one or other of the residents. It emerges that while living in an apartment block can be torment, it is also a place where new friendships can be forged. The characters – with their desires and fears – are described in great detail. The novel – constructed like a TV series – produces a pleasurable, riveting whole. Readers will not want to miss the follow-up.

The story has a fascinating background. The author started a crowdfunding appeal online to fund the project by selling the stories before they had even been written. The project is still running successfully today. Buyers select a human feeling from the list which the author is continually adding to. Expressions like cheerfulness, pride, tranquillity and happiness were chosen in this novel. The buyer can also give three personal words or numbers which are then woven into the story. The buyers, or the readers, therefore provide input into a story which the author skilfully creates and narrates, and incorporates into his plot for the residents. The author's language is colourful, humorous and straightforward. This book is not just highly recommended for homesick Swiss but for anyone who enjoys an entertaining read and is able to laugh at themselves. How and why does a cat find its way into Brechbühl's life? We will leave that to the reader to discover. This novel is the first volume of a work that will eventually comprise 15 volumes. The second volume will be published in the autumn.

Tim Krohn, who was born in Germany in 1965, grew up in the canton of Glarus in Switzerland. The author himself lived in an apartment building in Zurich for many years. Today he works as a freelance writer and lives with his family in Santa Maria Val Müstair in the canton of Grisons. He writes novels, stories, plays and radio dramas.

RUTH VON GUNTEN

The music's black...



ZEAL & ARDOR:
"Devil is Fine" (Radicalis).

Huge hype surrounded this musical venture, even before there were any recordings. The Basel musician Manuel Gagneux wondered what combining black slave music and gospel with black metal would sound like – a previously inconceivable blend. It was a whimsical project, but Gagneux put his all into it.

Just under a year ago, the vocalist and guitarist, who previously lived in New York, put the initial results of his experiment online under the name Zeal & Ardor – triggering an absolute frenzy. A journalist from the eminent American music magazine "Rolling Stone" heard the "Devil is Fine" track and was so impressed that he proclaimed his love for the obscure project from Basel worldwide.

The media attention was unprecedented – a full European tour with sorties to the USA was booked, and no less a figure than Slash from Guns N' Roses lauded Zeal & Ardor as one of the most exciting music projects of recent years, even before the debut album had been released.

The time has finally arrived – the album ironically entitled "Devil is Fine" has now been available for several months. It certainly lives up to all the hype. This very short album of just under half an hour combines black roots music with white black metal in an astounding way. Passionate gospel is interspersed with furious screeching and rapid blast beats. A fusion of mainstream and underground, groove and hard metal is produced. Gagneux has a powerful voice, which he demonstrates in intense bursts. He has a flair for metal, but also produces great melodies.

It comes as little surprise that Zeal & Ardor ultimately appeals to a broad pop audience just as much as to the introverted black metal scene. One small note of concern – the appeal begins to wear off over the course of an entire album. It will be interesting to see whether Zeal & Ardor can maintain the suspense and interest in their venture with a future album.

MARKO LEHTINEN

Ueli Steck



He must have been going very fast, as usual, when calamity struck on 30 April. The extreme mountain climber Ueli Steck was training on Nuptse in Nepal for a record attempt on Mount Everest. The conditions were ideal, but for some inexplicable reason Steck plunged thousands of metres to his death. He was well aware of the mortal danger of what he did. Destiny has now caught up with him.

Originally from the Bernese Oberland, he was regarded as the world's best solo climber and was well known for his speed. Steck did not just climb, he sped, and actually ran where inclines permitted. Steck broke record after record, surmounting the North Face of the Eiger solo in two hours and 22 minutes – a milestone in mountaineering. He was just 40 years old when he lost his life.

His death caused great dismay throughout the nation but also sparked a debate over how far extreme climbers should go in their ambition to conquer the eight-thousanders of this world ever more quickly. Steck lived his dream and was at one with nature, some said. He dined with death and lost, was the view of others.

The debate has now abated, and the next extreme mountaineers are gearing up to follow in Ueli Steck's footsteps. MARKO LEHTINEN

New status to facilitate integration

The latest figures indicate that around 39,000 foreigners are currently living in Switzerland as “temporarily admitted foreign nationals”. They mainly come from Eritrea, Syria and Afghanistan and have not been granted asylum but cannot be repatriated for various reasons. In these cases, “temporarily” effectively means permanently admitted. Some 82% of those concerned live off welfare benefits and have difficulty integrating into the world of work. For this reason, this status is deemed inadequate by the National Council, which has resolved to replace it with two new forms of status. In future, people who will clearly remain in the country long-term are to be given “protected” status and helped to integrate. People whose stay is limited will be deemed “temporarily in need of protection”. This status does not target integration.

No tax privileges on land sale

The National Council has abandoned its plans for tax exemption on the sale of agricultural and forestry land. The proposal stood no chance of adoption at the early-June session of the Council of States. The background is a Federal



Supreme Court decision in 2011 restricting the tax-free sale of property based on rural land rights. The conservative parliamentary groups wanted to revoke this ruling by amending the law. *Photo: Keystone*

Federal government tackles terror propaganda online

The propaganda of terrorist organisations like IS cleverly targets young people online. Federal government has therefore decided to provide financial support for several pilot projects combating the radicalisation of 12 to 25-year-olds online. The projects will be run by non-profit organisations. The aim is to highlight positive alternatives to the extremist propaganda. The Federal Social Insurance Office (FSIO) is taking the lead on the initiative. It has called for media project proposals on the “Jugend und Medien” website – FSIO wishes to co-fund three or four projects.



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Landesmuseum Zürich, Zürich Region, © Emanuel Ammor/AURA

Shift to inspiration at [MySwitzerland.com/cities](https://www.myswitzerland.com/cities) and share your most beautiful experiences at [#INLOVEWITHSWITZERLAND](https://www.instagram.com/INLOVEWITHSWITZERLAND)