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EURES: The European job mobility portal

In 1993 the European Commission set up the EURES network. The abbreviation stands for European Employment Services.

EURES is a European network of national employment services, in 27 EU and EFTA member states. After the agreement on free movement of persons between Switzerland and the EU came into force in June 2002, Switzerland also became a partner in this network. EURES is designed to facilitate the free movement of workers within the European Economic Area.

EURES provides information on job opportunities as well as living and working conditions in

the European Economic Area, and offers advice and guidance. Employees and employers in cross-border regions can also take advantage of this service. In addition, EURES assists employers wishing to recruit workers from other countries.

The EURES network brings together public employment services, public and private-sector partners of these services (for example, trade unions and employers' organisations) as well as business and social partners in cross-border regions.

EURES not only offers Swiss employees a means of gaining professional experience abroad, but also provides Swiss employers with an opportunity to offer their services in other EU/EFTA states.

For more information, visit:
www.europa.eu.int/eures
www.euresinfo.ch

Packed with useful information: the new brochure on the Swiss tax system.

In June 2005 the Fiscal Information Office of the Federal Tax Administration in Berne published the 12th edition of its brochure entitled "Das schweizerische Steuersystem" ("The Swiss Tax System"). It can also be downloaded from the Internet.

This brochure, primarily intended as educational material for high schools and commercial colleges, will also prove useful for interested tax payers in Switzerland and abroad. Written in simple, easy-to-understand language, the text provides an

insight into the Swiss tax system accompanied by entertaining illustrations and cartoons. The brochure also provides information on the different taxes levied by the Confederation, cantons and communes. The section on statistics, showing the different cantonal tax burdens, will also be of interest.

The brochure was drawn up by the Fiscal Information Office of the Federal Tax Administration (FTA) in Berne and is published by the Information Commission of the Swiss Fiscal Conference: the Union of Swiss Fiscal Authorities, including FTA officials and directors of cantonal fiscal administrations.

The new version can be downloaded from www.estv.admin.ch/data/ist/d/index.htm

It is also available free of charge in all three official languages from the Fiscal Infor-

The screenshot shows the homepage of EURESinfo Switzerland. The top navigation bar includes links for Zurück, Vorwärts, Abbrechen, Aktualisieren, Startseite, Auto-Ausfüllen, Drucken, and E-Mail. The address bar shows the URL <http://www.eures.ch/>. The main content area features a large blue banner with the text "Willkommen bei EURESinfo Schweiz". Below the banner, there are several text boxes with questions in German, such as "Sie sind EU15^{1/2}/EFTA-Bürger/in und möchten eine neue private und berufliche Herausforderung in der Schweiz annehmen?", "Sie sind Schweizer Bürger/in und wollen Ihre Horizonte erweitern, indem Sie in einem EU15^{1/2}/EFTA-Land leben und arbeiten?", "Sie sind Arbeitgeber und haben Fragen zur Personenfreizügigkeit?", and "Sie sind EURES-Berater/in und benötigen Informationen über die Lebens- und Arbeitsbedingungen in der Schweiz sowie in den EU15^{1/2}/EFTA-Ländern?". A note at the bottom states: "1) Die Bezeichnung EU15 steht für die Länder Belgien, Dänemark, Deutschland, Finnland, Frankreich, Griechenland, Großbritannien, Irland, Italien, Luxemburg, Niederlande, Österreich, Portugal, Schweden und Spanien. Unsere Dienstleistungen erstrecken sich bis auf Weiteres nicht auf die zehn neuen Mitgliedstaaten." The footer includes a "top" link and an "ESTV update: 13.01.2005" message.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Swiss Tax System brochure. The top navigation bar includes links for Zurück, Vorwärts, Abbrechen, Aktualisieren, Startseite, Auto-Ausfüllen, Drucken, and E-Mail. The address bar shows the URL <http://www.estv.admin.ch/data/ist/d/index.htm>. The main content area features a large blue banner with the text "Willkommen bei der Informationsstelle für Steuerfragen". Below the banner, there are several text boxes with information in German, such as "Bundestelle, die auf dem Gebiet des Steuerrechts mit der Öffentlichkeitsarbeit für den Bund (ESTV und EFTV) und manchmal auch für die kantonalen Steuerverwaltungen (Schweiz: Steuerkonferenz) betraut ist", "Allgemeine Zielsetzung", "Haupttägliche Tätigkeiten", and "Dokumentation für ein breites Publikum". The footer includes a "top" link and an "ESTV update: 13.01.2005" message.

PEOPLE'S INITIATIVES: "For a flexible retirement age"

This initiative is open for signature until 21 December 2006. Initiative Committee: "Für ein flexibles AHV-Alter", PO Box, 3000 Berne 23. You can download signature forms for current initiatives from www.admin.ch/ch/d/pore/vi/vis10.html

INITIATIVE: "No appeal on naturalisation decisions"

The Swiss People's Party (SVP) has launched a federal initiative "for democratic decisions on naturalisation". The initiators are of the opinion that the Federal Court's ban on naturalisation by ballot (ruling of 9 July 2003; BGE 129 I 232) turned Switzerland's democratic order on its head. The initiative aims to correct this. According to the SVP, it will also stop "mass naturalisation".

The people's initiative calls for a change to the Swiss federal constitution. A fourth paragraph would be added to Article 38, governing the acquisition and loss of citizenship, stating that communes are ultimately responsible for decisions on naturalisation. Voters in a commune would define in the communal constitution which communal organ would be authorised to grant citizenship of the commune. The organ's decision would be final, and no appeals would be permitted.

VOTING

Federal Referendum of 27 November 2005. Federal decree of 17 June 2005 on the people's initiative "for GM-free food products". Change of 8 October 2004 to the Employment Law (trading hours for shops in public transport centres).



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Rabies doesn't stop at the Swiss border

The Swiss Federal Veterinary Office in Berne has published a brochure entitled "Ich reise mit Hund oder Katze" ("Travelling with dogs or cats"). The Office recommends that people prepare early for travel with animals.

Not only those resident in Switzerland but also Swiss living abroad can run into problems if they travel with their dog or cat, because different countries enforce different rules for entry. For example, since 1 October 2004 the European Union has required a "pet passport" for dogs and cats being brought into a member state, as well as a means of identification either by microchip (transponder) or tattoo.

As a Swiss Abroad, are you planning to visit Switzerland or any other country in Europe with your pet? The brochure provides information about precautions to be taken and will help dog and cat owners to avoid unpleasant surprises at the border. It is important to find out about the requirements for entering and leaving a country well in advance.

The rules governing the import of dogs and cats vary from one country to another. Take, for instance, the regulations governing epizootic diseases, parasites or animal protection: In Switzerland dogs with cropped ears and docked tails are not, in principle, allowed to be brought in. However, regulations in the individual countries are primarily aimed at protecting the spread of rabies. Anyone intend-

ing to travel should therefore find out the rabies situation in the destination country. For travel to countries where not only wild animals but also dogs, cats and even human beings can contract rabies (so-called urban rabies), special precautions must be taken and it is essential to obtain a permit from the Swiss Federal Veterinary Office for the return to Switzerland. The current list of countries with rabies cases can be viewed online at www.who-rabies-bulletin.org/ql_2005/startql_05.html

The brochure can be downloaded from the SFVO website at www.bvet.admin.ch or can be ordered from the following address (please include a self-addressed C5 envelope with sufficient postage):

*Swiss Federal Veterinary Office,
"Reisebroschüre", PO Box,
3003 Berne.*

SwissInfoDesk – the link to information about Switzerland

SwissInfoDesk is an electronic information service operated by the Swiss National Library. The website contains the most important Internet links to various Swiss topics.

SwissInfoDesk is a service provided by the Swiss National Library (SNL) in Berne. The information platform was launched by the SNL in August 2003. At that time the website was only available in English, but has now been extended to include German and French. The Italian version of SwissInfoDesk currently covers only the home page and the individual services.

Information about Switzerland can be obtained from the list of links categorised by topic. This facilitates a targeted search. The SNL is continually collecting, classifying and expanding information on the range of

topics. The list of topics covers history, geography, politics, culture, language, economy, education, training, research, media and sport. Online forms are provided for enquiries. The SNL's qualified specialists make every effort to answer enquiries within a short time. Depending on the degree of difficulty, they need between 24 and 36 hours to research the enquiry. For complex enquiries the first half hour is free of charge, and every subsequent 15 minutes spent processing the enquiry costs CHF 20.

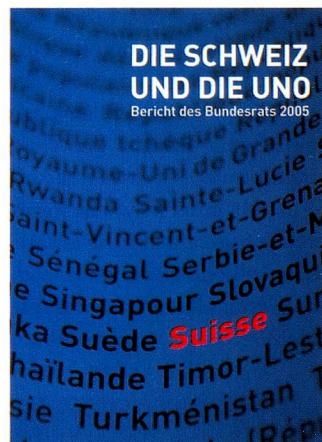
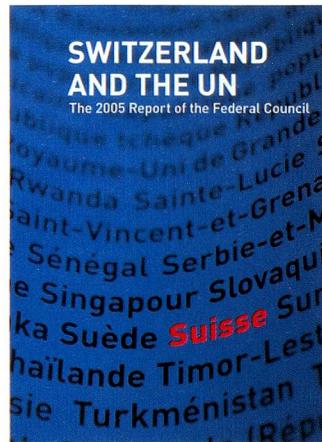
Want to know more? Then visit the SwissInfoDesk home page! www.snl.admin.ch/swissinfodesk/indexd.html

Switzerland and the UN

The Federal Council has submitted to Parliament its third annual report, "Switzerland and the UN", on Switzerland's co-operation with the UN and the international organisations based in Switzerland. Ahead of the important upcoming events, the report concentrates on three main topics: the reform of the UN, the preparations for the Millennium Summit +5 and the 60th General Assembly, as well as the current challenges facing international Geneva.

The report presents Switzerland's contributions and priorities in these areas.

An illustrated brochure on the report is available online (www.dfae.admin.ch/sub_uno/e/uno).



html) and can be ordered free of charge. When ordering please indicate your name, address and the required language (German, French, Italian or English) to:
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