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Swiss abroad statistics for 2006 published

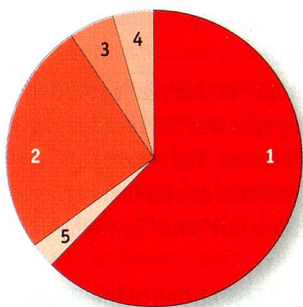
The number of foreign-resident Swiss citizens is rising constantly. This year it has topped 640,000.

A total of 645,010 Swiss men and women were registered with Swiss embassies and consulates at the end of December 2006. This means that the number of our compatriots living abroad rose by 10,794 over the previous December. In all, the foreign-resident Swiss community has risen by about 11 percent since 2000. 460,065 Swiss have dual citizenship (71.3%).

European Union countries are the preferred foreign domiciles of 390,182 of the Swiss (60.5%, see table). France has by far the biggest group of Swiss nationals (171,732), while large Swiss communities can also be found in Germany (72,384), Italy (47,012), the United Kingdom (27,326), Spain (22,680) and Austria (13,380).

Outside Europe, most Swiss citizens live in the United States (71,984). The statistics also show that women make up half of the Swiss adults living abroad.

The Swiss abroad worldwide



1 Europe 402,560 4 Australia & Pacific Region 27,643
2 America 164,055 5 Africa 18,380
3 Asia 32,372

146,615 (22.9%) are under the age of 18.

Of the 494,802 citizens eligible to vote, 111,249 (22.5%) have actually registered with Swiss missions in order to exercise their voting rights.

The statistics can be consulted at the following address: www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/doc/publi/ptrali.html

The Swiss abroad in EU Member States

France:	171,732
Germany:	72,384
Italy:	47,012
United Kingdom:	27,326
Spain:	22,680
Austria:	13,380
Belgium:	6,934
Netherlands:	6,912
Sweden:	4,506
Greece:	3,191
Denmark:	2,901
Portugal:	2,782
Hungary:	1,691
Finland:	1,444
Republic of Ireland:	1,387
Czech Republic:	1,166
Luxemburg:	980
Poland:	583
Cyprus:	434
Slovenia:	296
Slovakia:	231
Malta:	149
Estonia:	36
Lithuania:	26
Latvia:	9
Total:	390,182

“The Swiss Confederation: A Brief Guide 2007”

In March, the Federal Chancellery published the brochure “The Swiss Confederation: A Brief Guide 2007” in the four national languages and English. The brochure is free of charge.

The Federal Chancellery’s publication is extremely popular. Due to overwhelming demand in recent years, the print run has been increased slightly and now totals 230,000 copies.

The 84-page “Brief Guide 2007” opens with an interview with Federal President Micheline Calmy-Rey conducted by

parliamentary reporter Christiane Imsand.

The brochure explains the political system of Switzerland, the civic rights of its citizens, and the structure of the National Council and Council of States. As always, there are photographs of the councillors as well as information about their election dates and which commissions they sit on. The legislative procedure is also described in simple terms. In addition, the brochure details the work of the various authorities: the Federal Council, departments and federal offices, parliamentary services, Federal Chancellery, Federal Court and Federal Insurance Court as well as the two new first-instance federal courts.



The photos in this year’s edition were taken by photographer Julie de Tribolet from western Switzerland.

The brochure can be ordered free of charge from :

Bundesamt fuer Bauten und Logistik (BBL), Vertrieb Publikationen, CH-3003 Berne, Fax: +41 (0)31 325 5058, Internet: www.bundespublikationen.admin.ch

Updated “Advice for Swiss citizens living abroad” now available in electronic form

The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs first published its “Advice for Swiss citizens living abroad”, a guide for the Swiss abroad and those considering moving abroad, in April 1993. A new edition of this brochure was published in German and French in 2002, and a new Italian edition appeared a year later. This year the publication was updated in electronic form.

The reprints of 2002 and 2003 have repeatedly been updated in recent years. However, for reasons of cost, the DFA has not reprinted the brochure, opting instead to provide the most important changes over the Internet.

Together with several federal agencies and the organisations representing the Swiss abroad, the DFA has now completely revised the guide, although the 2007 version is only available in electronic form. The brochure is due to be reprinted again next year.

The up-to-date version of the guide can be found at the following address: www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/doc/publi/ptrali.html

The printed version can be ordered free of charge either from: Bundesamt fuer Bauten und Logistik (BBL), Vertrieb

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Please note: The printed version dates back to 2002!

For orders by post, please enclose a self-addressed label.

Halting the construction of second homes in Switzerland

In June 2006, the Helvetia Nostra committee launched the popular initiative "No more unbridled construction of second homes" (see issue 5/2006 of Swiss Review).

The initiative wants to restrict the building of second homes in Switzerland.

The initiators fear that a repeal of the Lex Koller law on the acquisition of real estate by foreign residents would create a spatial planning fiasco in Switzerland and radically accelerate the country's desolation and destruction. In an attempt to counteract this trend, they have proposed adding a new article (75a) to the Federal Constitution that would limit second homes to 20 percent of the total number of residential units and restrict the gross floor area used in each community for residential purposes. Furthermore, they want to oblige local authorities to publish figures for the proportion of first homes and details of the extent to which they are implementing the new legislation.

In certain tourist areas, this would effectively halt the construction of second homes. Helvetia Nostra sees this as an

POPULAR INITIATIVES

The following initiatives have been launched since the last issue:

- "For people-friendly cars" (until 27 August 2008)
- "For tax relief on building society savings for purchasing owner-occupied property and funding energy-saving or environmentally friendly construction" (the Building Society Saving Initiative; until 27 September 2008)

Signature forms for current initiatives can be downloaded in German, French or Italian from the Federal Chancellery site: www.admin.ch/ch/d/pore/vi/vis_1_3_1_1.html.

VOTING

Federal referendum of 17 June 2007

- Amendment of 6 October 2006 to the Federal Invalidity Insurance Act
 - Date of the National Council elections: 21 October 2007
- No federal referendum will be held on 25 November 2007.

opportunity to preserve what character and charm remain in our landscapes and residential areas.

The Constitutional amendments would also involve changes to the Transitory Regulations of the Federal

Constitution. A new clause (Art. 197 item 8) would oblige the Federal Council to issue a decree containing the necessary regulations on the construction, sale and registration of second homes in the Land Registry if the necessary act does not come into force within two years (paragraph 1).

In addition, if the constitutional changes were approved, building permits issued in the intervening period would be declared null and void. This intervening period would be defined as the period between 1st January of the year following the constitutional amendment and the date at which the regulations entered into force (Art. 197 item 8 new paragraph 2 of the Transitory Regulations to the Federal Constitution).

The initiative can be signed until 20 December 2007.

Diplomatic service entrance examinations 2007/2008

Are you dynamic, motivated and keen to promote the interests of Switzerland abroad? Are you flexible and open-minded towards other cultures and open to change? Are you interested in politics, business, culture and the history of Switzerland? Then you are the right person to meet the challenges of the future within the Federal Department for Foreign Affairs (DFA).

The DFA has a wide range of exciting jobs in a variety of specialist areas. New staff are recruited through entrance examinations.

Conditions for entry: Applicants must be Swiss citizens and aged under 35 in the year in which they apply. They must be university graduates with a Bologna master's degree or equivalent foreign qualification. In addition, they must have a good working knowledge of two official Swiss languages and a foreign

language, and have no previous convictions. Applications from law, economics or business graduates are particularly welcome.

Applications should be sent to Direktion fuer Ressourcen und Aussennetz, Personalgewinnung und Marketing, Freiburgstrasse 130, Buero A.3017, CH-3003 Berne to arrive no later than 6 July 2007. Complete information (in German, Italian and French) on the entrance examinations, procedure and timetable can be found on our Web site:

www.eda.admin.ch/diplojobs

In order to increase the proportion of female members of the diplomatic service, the DFA is particularly keen to recruit more women. Applications from representatives of Swiss linguistic minorities are also especially welcome.

For further information, please contact us by e-mail: concours@eda.admin.ch

EDA, Direktion fuer Ressourcen und Aussennetz, Personalgewinnung und Marketing, CH-3003 Berne, www.eda.admin.ch

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