

**Zeitschrift:** Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad  
**Herausgeber:** Organisation of the Swiss Abroad  
**Band:** 35 (2008)  
**Heft:** 3

**Rubrik:** Imprint

### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

**Download PDF:** 12.12.2025

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**

## *A wealthy older generation, but the young are in debt*

**T**HE 55 TO 75 AGE GROUP is the best-off financially in Switzerland. These are the findings of a study conducted by the Federal Social Insurance Office, which examined the economic circumstances of 1.5 million Swiss aged between 25 and 99. This is the first time that data on income and assets has been analysed on such a scale. It shows that the Swiss three-pillar system of old age, survivors' and disability insurance has proved successful, and only around six percent of the population are poor.

The study confirms that pensioners enjoy a high degree of financial security. In addition to retirement benefits from social insurance, a third of 65 to 69-year-olds still receive earned income of around CHF 10,000 per year. A significant proportion of them also have income from assets which, for the most part, peaks shortly before retirement. Almost one in five retired couples even has gross assets totalling more than a million Swiss francs.

The risk of becoming poor has therefore declined. The study shows that a fifth of families today with three or more children have limited financial resources. Two other risk groups are single women and single mothers. 40% of single mothers and a quarter of single women of employment age are exposed to a greater risk of poverty. The study also confirms that the average income of women of all ages is always lower than that of men.

People under forty living on disability insurance are also on the poverty line. While the financial situation of families and single parents generally improves as their children grow older, those living on disability insurance usually have no opportunity to improve their financial circumstances over time.

When the results of the study appeared in the press, many older people wrote readers' letters questioning this statistical increase in wealth of the older generation. They referred to cases of widows having to live on minimum old age and survivors' insurance benefits and a small pension. They also made it quite clear that they had always lived frugally, managing to put something away even on small incomes and with large families.



Heinz Eckert

Those who wrote the letters were certainly not wrong about this. The significant increase in private bankruptcy among young people shows that money is often managed negligently. Around a third of 18 to 24-year-olds are in debt. Mobile phone bills are often to blame. They also spend a small fortune on clothes, shoes and electronic entertainment goods. As they get older, they arrange leasing agreements for cars. If they then lose their jobs, they get into a financial mess which it takes these young people years to recover from, if they ever do.

Now that payment by instalments is termed "leasing", it no longer has a negative connotation, in fact quite the opposite. Grandparents' advice to only buy something when you can afford it is hardly ever heeded today.

HEINZ ECKERT, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



Rhaetian Railway from "Switzerland's most wonderful means of transport" (on page 7)

5  
Mailbag

5  
Books: Alfred Escher

7  
Images: Switzerland's most wonderful means of transport

8  
Banking confidentiality: a shaky pillar in Switzerland's financial centre

### *Regional news*

13  
Politics

14  
Notes from Parliament

16  
Lucerne's Bourbaki Panorama has a new splendour

18  
OSA news

20  
Giovanni Lombardi: a man from Ticino to link Europe and Africa

22  
Profile: Evelyne Binsack

23  
Echo

Cover photo: The caricaturist "Chappatte" on the issue of banking confidentiality

**IMPRINT:** "Swiss Review", the magazine for the Swiss abroad, is in its 35th year of publication and is published in German, French, Italian, English and Spanish in 20 regional editions. It has a total circulation of 400 000. Regional news appears four times a year.

■ EDITORS: Heinz Eckert (EC), Editor-in-Chief; Rolf Ribi (RR); René Lenzen (RL); Alain Wey (AW); Gabriela Brodbeck (BDK), responsible for "Notes from Parliament", Service for the Swiss Abroad, DFA, CH-3003 Berne Translation: CLS Communication AG ■ POSTAL ADDRESS: Publisher, editorial office, advertising: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad, Alpenstrasse 26, CH-3006 Berne, Tel.: +41 31 356 61 10, Fax: +41 31 356 61 01, Postal account (Swiss National Giro): 30-6768-9. Internet: www.revue.ch ■ E-MAIL: revue@aso.ch ■ PRINT: Zollikofer AG, CH-9001 St. Gallen. ■ CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Please advise your local embassy or consulate. Do not write to Berne. Single copy: CHF 5 ■