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# Switzerland in the UK

5/10

## The health of the nation

How Great Britain and Switzerland compare

Dramatic differences in the healthcare and life expectancy of people living in Britain and Switzerland are revealed in recent healthcare statistics published by the OECD, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development\*.

With its crisp mountain air and clean environment, Switzerland is traditionally seen as a healthy nation while the UK is perceived as industrialised, overcrowded and less healthy and these stereotypes have been justified by the OECD findings.

They show that Switzerland's mortality rates are lower, waiting times are shorter and medical technology is more advanced resulting in patient satisfaction levels that are the highest in Europe.

While Switzerland's lead may be partly due to its geography, it is also supported by the country's healthcare system which is seen as one of the world's finest.

Financed through a tightly regulated insurance industry it enables the people to decide how much they spend on their healthcare rather than being financed by taxation and under Government control, which is the case with the UK's National Health Service.

The result is a comprehensive and universal service with fewer inequalities and better access to healthcare than in the UK.

However, these benefits come at a cost. OECD figures show that Switzerland outlays 10.8 per cent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP), second only to

Norway and the United States. The UK spends just 8.4 per cent, putting it in 16th position among the OECD's 33 member states.

Switzerland spends €3,640 a year per capita while the UK spends €2,461. However, in Switzerland a greater proportion goes on private healthcare with a spend of €1,487 as opposed to €428 in the UK.

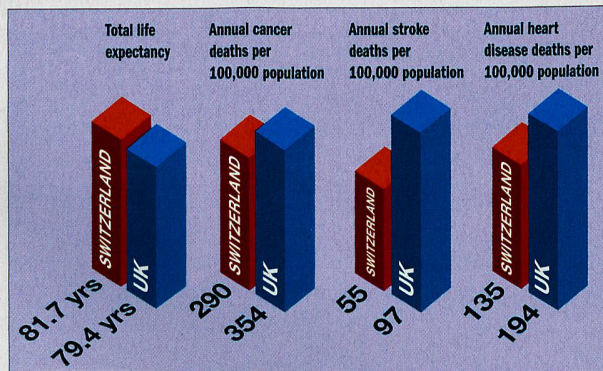
The bottom line is that you can expect to live longer in Switzerland where average life expectancy from birth is 81.7 years (women 84.2, men 79) compared with 79.4 years in the UK (women 81.6, men 77.2).

Life expectancy at 65 is also higher with women tipped to live for a further 22.2 years in Switzerland and 20.1 years in the UK and men anticipated to live for a further 18.6 years in Switzerland but 17.4 in the UK.

Also, Swiss hospitals are better equipped with nearly three times more Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scanners and more

than four times the number of Computerised Tomography (CT) scanners than in the UK.

*\*Formed in 1961, the OECD provides a setting where the governments of 33 countries compare policy experiences, seek answers to common problems, identify good practice and coordinate domestic and international policies. Its aims are to support economic growth, boost employment and raise living standards.*



A matter of life and death: What the latest OECD statistics have to say about some of differences between the two countries

### Revealed: Forgotten Swiss hero



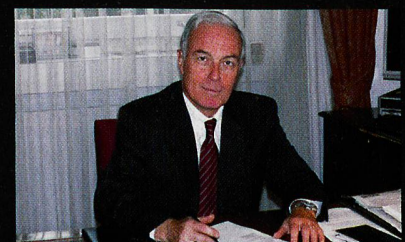
He was a Swiss who joined the D-day Invasion to save lives and lost his own. Now there are plans to honour him in his homeland. Turn to Page 3.

### Celebration: National day



Three hundred and fifty London Swiss get together to fete the birth of the Confederation with a giant party. Story and pictures in centre pages.

### Pledge: Ambassador's promise



The new ambassador, Anton Thalmann, sees part of his role going out and about to meet his fellow Swiss in all parts of the country. See Page 7.



Switzerland in the UK has its own Internet site, continually bringing you up to the minute news of the latest events as well as major stories from the most recent issues and links to other interesting sites in both the UK and Switzerland. To access it go to: [www.swissreview.co.uk](http://www.swissreview.co.uk)

News about any forthcoming events that will be of interest to our readers should be emailed to: [editor@meakin.net](mailto:editor@meakin.net)





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# Another wartime Swiss hero 'who should be honoured at Penthes'

It's the forgotten story of a Swiss living in the UK who during the war volunteered to join the Royal Navy as a sick bay attendant and was to heroically lose his own life while saving others in the Normandy invasion.

The remarkable story of Arturo Fanconi is recalled in a letter to the *Swiss Review* from a reader living in Hove.

## Rudy Compagnoni writes:

I read with interest the article concerning the recognition of Cpl. Schiess at the Château de Penthes in Geneva.

I believe another Swiss should be equally honoured.

Arturo Fanconi, whose parents came from Poschiavo in the Grisons, and who had an interest in first aid, volunteered as a sick bay attendant in the Royal Navy.

He was present at the Utah beach in Normandy on D-Day in June, 1944. He repeatedly went into a minefield to treat and retrieve wounded Americans until he was himself killed.

For this he was awarded the Prince Albert Medal in gold. The highest award for saving life. Incidentally it was the final time this decoration was awarded.

If so happens that while visiting Normandy some years ago we visited a museum at Quineville near Utah beach where this heroic event is recorded – complete with photo and copy of the citation.

I also saw a letter written by the colonel of the American regiment involved.

My own family also comes from Poschiavo and they knew Arturo's family. I also met Arturo when he



The Prince Albert medal: Named after the consort to Queen Victoria and made of solid gold, it was awarded for the saving of life at sea.

visited us on leave.

His family live in Ilminster, Somerset.

I believe that after the war a deputation from Poschiavo visited Arturo's grave at a Normandy cemetery.

With the importance of Henri Dunant and connection with the Red Cross I feel that Arturo's bravery should also be recorded at the Château de Penthes.



## How to contact the editor

Reports of Swiss society activities and coming events, and articles and correspondence for the 'Switzerland in the UK' section of the *Swiss Review*, should go to the editor:

Derek Meakin

30 Manor Road

Bramhall SK7 3LY.

Tel: 0161 296 0619.

His email address is: [editor@meakin.net](mailto:editor@meakin.net).

All enquiries regarding advertising should go to:

Jeffrey Long

19 Heather Court

Bingley BD16 4BA.

Tel/Fax: 01274 560 780.

• The *Swiss Review*, with its 'Switzerland in the UK' supplement, is published four times a year – in January, April, August and October. The next issue, will be published in January 2011.

## Utah Beach: the gauntlet of death

Utah Beach, one of the key landing sites on the Normandy coast, was the scene of ferocious fighting as the Allied invasion of France got under way in the early hours of D-Day, June 4, 1944.

The assault started when hundreds of landing craft, built of plywood and each carrying 36 American troops, and others ferrying in amphibious tanks, reached the beach before the German defenders knew what was happening.

Further inland, waves of paratroopers were dropping from the skies. But what started as a largely silent stealthy operation soon erupted in an explosion of fire as the battle to secure the vital beach got under way.

The Battle of Utah Beach was to become a textbook classic. But it came at a price.

The troops swarming into the mile-wide beach were met with a relentless barrage of artillery fire which cost the lives of 300 men.



Armed to the teeth, American troops scramble ashore at Utah Beach

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# London Swiss celebrate National Day in the capital's oldest college

Accordianist and restaurateur Armin Löttscher lives up the event with those traditional Swiss songs that always bring back fond memories of the homeland.

There was an exciting new location for Swiss living in London for their annual celebration of Swiss National Day – and what a superb venue it turned out to be.

University College London, acclaimed as the fourth top university in the world, has 648 professors – far more than any other

university in the UK – and an academic and research staff of more than 4,000. It has a student community of 22,000, almost a third of them from more than 140 countries outside the UK.

It was this academic powerhouse that played host for the first time to the many Swiss societies and clubs in the London area for a joint celebration of National Day, and the event attracted more than 350 Swiss, including many with their English friends.

Leading members of the Swiss community turned up to ensure everything went off without a hitch, including Ambassador Alexis Lautenberg using the

occasion to say goodbye. Embassy chef Jacques Pasquier was there with his team of helpers to look after the food. Celebrity chef Anton Mosimann had designed a superb Mosimann special salad, and top Ticinese architect Ian Giuliani was head barman in charge of a tempting array of drinks.

And there was music galore to keep everyone on their toes. Top musician Claudio Allodi, whose wife is Swiss, brought along his famous orchestra, Armin Löttscher with his accordion led the lively children's lampion parade, and there was a surprise appearance of Frances Jones with her alphorn.

In many parts of Britain other Swiss clubs were celebrating National Day in their own individual way. At the event in Manchester, which always attracts a large number of Swiss from many parts of the Northwest, professional horn players Helen and Neil Grundy brought along their alphorns. And over in Yorkshire Swiss club members went really up in the world by getting together at the ancient Cow and Calf Inn at the top of Ilkley Moor with its very spectacular views of picturesque Wharfedale, one of the longest and most beautiful valleys in the county.



Retiring Swiss Ambassador Alexis Lautenberg makes the most of the occasion to say a personal farewell to his many friends in the Swiss community. As guest of honour, this was his last official function as ambassador before leaving London for his new home in Brussels



Starting 'em young: Getting to grips with the mysteries of the alphorn



National Day is the ideal time to catch up with old friends and share reminiscences





## The team from Zug who want to redesign the kitchens of Britain

Leading Swiss kitchen appliance firm V-ZUG has come up with an alternative solution for wealthy British investors whose income has been decimated by the recession. Take the money out of shares and make a lifestyle investment in a top quality kitchen!

As potential clients move their cash around in an attempt to weather the financial storm, many are seeking new ideas. V-ZUG believes that purchasing a high-end kitchen is a

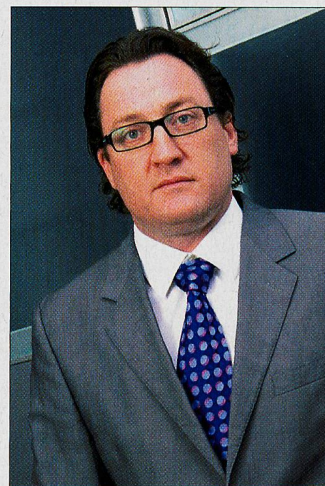
good alternative investment and this is one of the reasons why it has decided to move into the UK market at a time when others are pulling out.

Time will tell whether it is a good idea. But managing director Tim Hutchinson, who has been importing Swiss goods to the UK for 17 years, is confident that the quality of its products will prevail.

"Ours is a very special range indeed and we intend to protect it carefully and wisely," he says. "We are offering

a splendid and genuinely different proposition for British consumers who are looking for top quality kitchen appliances that have their own identity and don't follow the crowd."

To protect its brand, V-ZUG will not be seen on every high street but will be sold through special 'destination' studios. Earlier this year it opened its new UK showroom and distribution centre which includes a fully working training kitchen. For further details, visit [www.vzug.co.uk](http://www.vzug.co.uk).



**Tim Hutchinson: Been importing from Switzerland to the UK for 17 years**



Part of the fully working training kitchen in the V-Zug training centre

### SWISS BUSINESS BRIEFS

#### New kit deals

Geneva-based sportswear supplier Burda has signed kit deals with rugby's Northampton Saints and football's Wolverhampton Wanderers, Leicester City and Watford. It is also the official supplier to the British Handball Association.

#### Tattoo contract

Swiss event infrastructure supplier NUSSLI has won a contract for planning and construction of the grandstand at the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoos for 2011 and 2012.

#### No icing on this cake

Swiss cheese specialist Emmi has teamed up with Eric Lanlard, the star of Channel 4's Glamour Puds, to create a stunning wedding cake made entirely of cheese. The five-tiered masterpiece featured award winning cheeses from the Emmi range including Tête de Moine which was used for the top section and to create the rosettes that decorated the cake.

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## New Swiss Ambassador Anton Thalmann: 'I look forward to a long and profitable acquaintance with the Swiss community in this country'

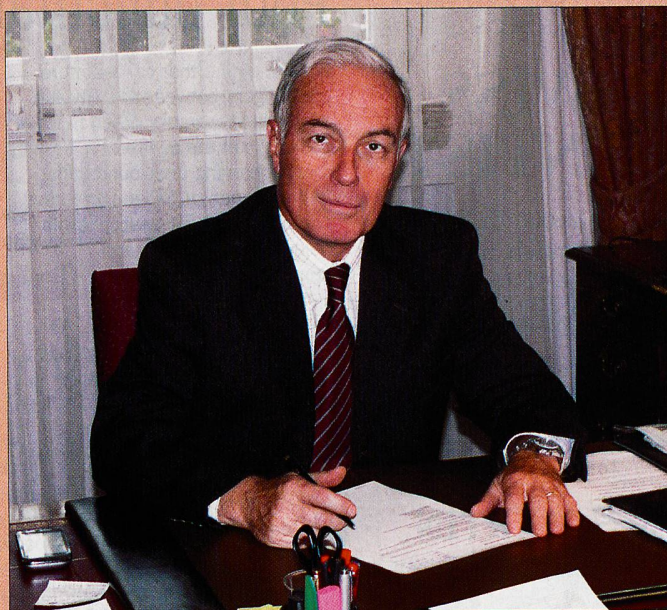
Anton Thalmann, who has succeeded Alexis Lautenberg as Swiss Ambassador in London, has sent this message to readers of the *Swiss Review*:

I am delighted to extend a warm greeting to all my fellow citizens via the pages of the *Swiss Review* as I begin my term as Ambassador of Switzerland in the United Kingdom.

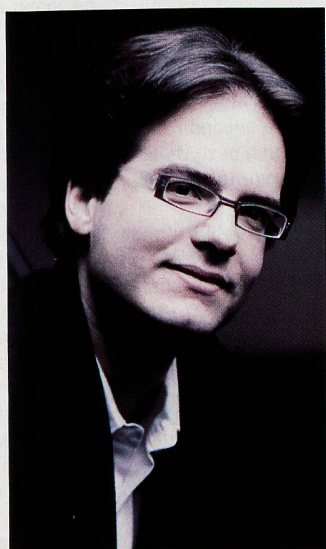
Switzerland and the UK have a long and strong shared history, and it is my hope and expectation that the ties that bind us will only strengthen further in the coming years.

In an increasingly globalised world our activities here at the Embassy aim to highlight both the distinctive specificities of Swiss culture and society, and the fruitful collaborations and exchanges we can share throughout the UK as part of our public diplomacy programme.

I look forward to a long and profitable acquaintance with the Swiss community in all parts of the country as part of this work, and wish you all every success in your continuing endeavours.



Ambassador Thalmann at his desk: 'We have a long and strong shared history'



Francesco Piemontesi in concert

## Prize winning pianist Francesco in Award Concert tour

One of the first tasks for Ambassador Thalmann when he arrived in London was to confirm the Swiss Ambassador's Award Concert tour which has become a regular event in the Swiss community calendar.

This year's tour features young Swiss pianist Francesco Piemontesi, with performances at the Wigmore Hall in London on October 26, Manchester Cathedral on October 27 and St Cecilia's Hall, Edinburgh on October 28.

Born in 1983, Francesco studied with Lora Doallo in Lugano and with Arie Vardi in Hanover. He first came to international prominence as a prize winner in the 2007 Queen Elizabeth Competition in Brussels and through his close

collaboration with the pianists Alfred Brendel, Cécile Ousset, Alexis Weissenberg and Mitsuko Uchida. In 2009, he received a fellowship from the Borlett-Buitoni Trust and was also announced as a BBC New Generation Artist. Highlights of his programme include

Bach's Partita no 1, Schubert's Piano Sonata D 664, Liszt's La Vallée d'Obermann and Schumann's Fantasie.

With a particular interest in chamber music he has performed as soloist with leading orchestras and has recorded for EMI Classics.

### Dr Nigel Chatwin

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## Poor punctuality lands easyJet in trouble

It's the airline that carries more passengers between the UK and Switzerland than any other. But now easyJet is at the centre of a growing row concerning poor punctuality.

Thousands of passengers have complained about unacceptable delays, cancellations and supplementary charges.

Swiss newspapers have criticised the budget airline. And even its founder, Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou has joined the outcry.

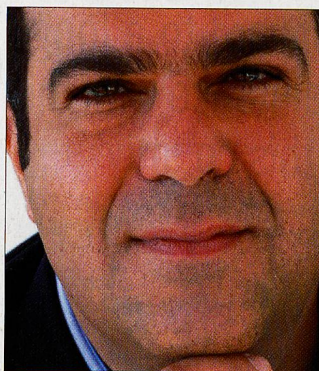
Sir Stelios quit the board in May in a row over strategy but he is still the largest single shareholder with 38 per cent of shares. His private holding company, easyGroup, owns the 'easy' brand and licences.

Following reports that less than 50 per cent of easyJet's international flights left the UK's Gatwick airport on time, Stelios sent a scathing letter to chairman Sir Michael Rake demanding that the company improve its performance by October 17.

If there is no improvement, he warned he would terminate the airline's ability to use the 'easy' name and orange brand.

easyJet Chief Executive Carolyn McCall has admitted that they have an issue with punctuality and put it down to crew shortages which were being investigated.

The company maintains that it



**Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou: Joined the outcry about poor performance**

has not breached any conditions that would allow Stelios to terminate its brand licence.

Switzerland has more than a passing interest in easyJet's activities.

Last year the operator carried

four million passengers to and from Geneva airport, making it the No 1 airline with 38 per cent of the market. It employs 362 airport staff and creates more than 4,000 jobs in the Geneva region.

Its importance to the region's economy is even stronger during the Winter when it runs 50 flights a day between British airports and Geneva, carrying 10,000 British skiers each week-end.

Earlier this year, easyJet concluded a court battle with Stelios over the use of the licence for non-airline products such as car hire while he wants 75 per cent of its profits to come from air transport.

However, despite taking a £65m hit from the volcano disruptions, easyJet recently posted a 5.3 per cent rise in three-month revenue to £759.2million. It still expects full-year pre-tax profits in the range of £100/150million.

## And SWISS increases flight frequency

SWISS International Airlines is to introduce a second Airbus A320 on its successful Heathrow-Geneva route, starting next March.

The route was only launched earlier this year in response to high customer demand.

At the moment three of the aircraft used on this six times daily route are operated by sister airline bmi.

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