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Double taxation agreement with Italy

The National Council and Council of States resoundingly approved the amendment to the double taxation agreement with Italy in the spring session. As a result of this resolution Switzerland will provide Italy with tax information upon request.

More deaths, fewer births

In 2015 the highest number of deaths was recorded since 1918 when Spanish flu spread rampantly. Compared to the previous year, the number of deaths in 2015 rose by 3,300 from a total of 63,900 to 67,200. The number of deaths was particularly high amongst elderly people (6 % increase). This is explained by the flu outbreaks at the start of the year and the heat wave in July, according to the Federal Statistical Office. The number of live births in 2015 amounted to 84,800, which is 400 or 0.5 % fewer than in 2014. As every year, more boys (43,800) than girls (41,000) were born in Switzerland in 2015.

Social welfare rate the same as 10 years ago

Analysis conducted by the Federal Statistical Office indicates that the proportion of social welfare recipients stood at 3.2 % in 2014, which is identical to the 2005 level. The statistics also reveal that the risk of becoming a social welfare recipient is particularly high amongst children, foreign nationals, divorcees and those without post-school qualifications. The absolute number of people on welfare benefits climbed from around 238,000 to 262,000 between 2005 and 2014 but owing to population growth over the same period the social welfare rate is no higher than it was 10 years ago.

Yes to climate protection agreement

The Federal Council has approved the Paris climate protection agreement adopted by the UN last December. Federal Councillor Doris Leuthard travelled to New York to sign the agreement on 22 April. Switzerland is to halve its emissions by 2030 compared to 1990. The existing climate policy instruments – CO₂ levy on fuels, emissions trading system for large companies – will be continued and enhanced in some areas in order to achieve the targets.

Angela and Hassan

They had the public and police in Switzerland holding their breath – Hassan Kiko, a 27-year-old incarcerated at Limmatal prison for alleged rape, and Angela Magdici, a 32-year-old prison of-



ficer at the same institution. They disappeared together into the night on 9 February. They made for Italy in a BMW and there all trace of them was lost. But they felt the need to explain themselves and got in touch via video. He professed his innocence, and she declared that Kiko was the love of her life. The Bonny and Clyde tale ended a few days later. The police tracked them down in Romano di Lombardia and arrested them.

“There are too many refugees, say the people. There are too few people, say the refugees.”

ERNST FESTL, AUSTRIAN AUTHOR

“Unfortunately, we can anticipate that refugees will be an ongoing problem for decades to come.”

BARACK OBAMA, PRESIDENT OF THE USA

“The past five years have been a nightmare for many Syrian children. Today we must bring this nightmare to an end.”

FEDERAL COUNCILLOR DIDIER BURKHALTER

“Can foreign scenes our fatherland replace?”

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE (1749 TO 1832), GERMAN POET

“Exiles feed on hope. It's daily bread to them.”

AESCHYLUS (525 TO 456 B.C.), GREEK POET

“The big dragon will eat up all the nasty people one day!”

SIX-YEAR-OLD REFUGEE IN LAMPEDUSA

“Refugees are not pawns on the chessboard of humanity.”

POPE FRANCIS

“The individual must distinguish between what is humanly impossible and what is humanly possible.”

FRIEDRICH DÜRRENMATT (1921 TO 1990), SWISS AUTHOR

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