

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 48 (2021)
Heft: 3

Vorwort: Bainvegni en il pajais da las bleras linguas
Autor: Lettau, Marc

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: 22.08.2025

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

Bainvegnì en il pajais da las bleras linguas

- 5 Mailbag
- 6 Focus
Switzerland – a nation of polyglots
- 10 Politics
Switzerland outlaws the burka
- 12 Images
Philippe Rahm and the art of human warmth
- 16 Literature
Ernst Frey crossed the USA as a tramp from 1891 to 1894
- News from your region
- 17 Covid-19
Swiss politicians tried to silence the scientists
- 19 Profile
Genevan sailor Alan Roura is most at home on the open sea
- 21 Report
The Ghost Festival – huge numbers but uncannily quiet
- 25 SwissCommunity news
- 28 Notes from the Federal Palace
- 30 Books / Sounds
- 31 Top pick / News



La pitschna Svizra è in pajais pluriling, in pajais cun gist quatter linguas naziunalas uffizialas: Quai accentuain nus adina puspè gugent. Nus descrivain quest fatg sco insatge prezios è spezial. Mo apunta, i dependa. Pajais na discurren betg. Ils umans sun quels che discurren – en ina lingua u apunta en pliras linguas. Igl è dimena decisiv sch`ins viva en in pajais pluriling cun umans plurilings ensemen ubain sche gruppas d`ina suletta lingua vivan ina sper l`altra. Tar l`emprim cas stat diversità linguistica per ritgezza e multifariadad, tar l`auter cas plitost per foss e cunfins. Nua stan las Svizras ed ils Svizzers dimena en chaussa plurilinguitad? Be fitg paucs èn famigliarisads cun tut las quatter linguas svizras. Tuttina n`è la plurilinguitad betg be in mitus. La nova enquesta da l`uffizi federal da statistica demussa: La plurilinguitad da la populaziun svizra permanenta s`augmenta cuntinuand. Actualmain duvran 68 da 100 personas regularmain duas, trais, quatter u dapli linguas en lur mintgadi. 68 pertschient vivan propi pluriling: Precis quai è la valur a la quala ins avess da mesirar la plurilinguitad d`in pajais.

Perhaps you speak each of Switzerland's four national languages. Or perhaps you don't. Or maybe your Romansh is a bit rusty. Whatever the case, the passage above speaks of the linguistic diversity that we Swiss naturally like to think of as something quite precious. Although it depends on how you look at it. After all, countries don't speak – people speak. In a single language, or even in several. The decisive factor in a multilingual country is whether multilingual people engage with each other – or whether respective language communities keep to themselves. In the first case, language diversity is a valuable cultural asset. In the latter, it is a source of division.

What about people in Switzerland? Very few of us speak all four national languages. Nevertheless, new surveys show that multilingualism is no myth. Switzerland's permanent resident population is becoming more polyglot, with 68 per cent currently saying that they use two, three, four or more languages on an everyday basis. In other words, 68 per cent live multilingual lives – a figure that gauges our true flair for languages. This edition's Focus article examines what this means in practice.

Perhaps another thing to consider is that language diversity boils down to more than just linguistic aptitude – it is also a frame of mind and a reflection of our willingness to understand other people. **MARC LETTAU, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**