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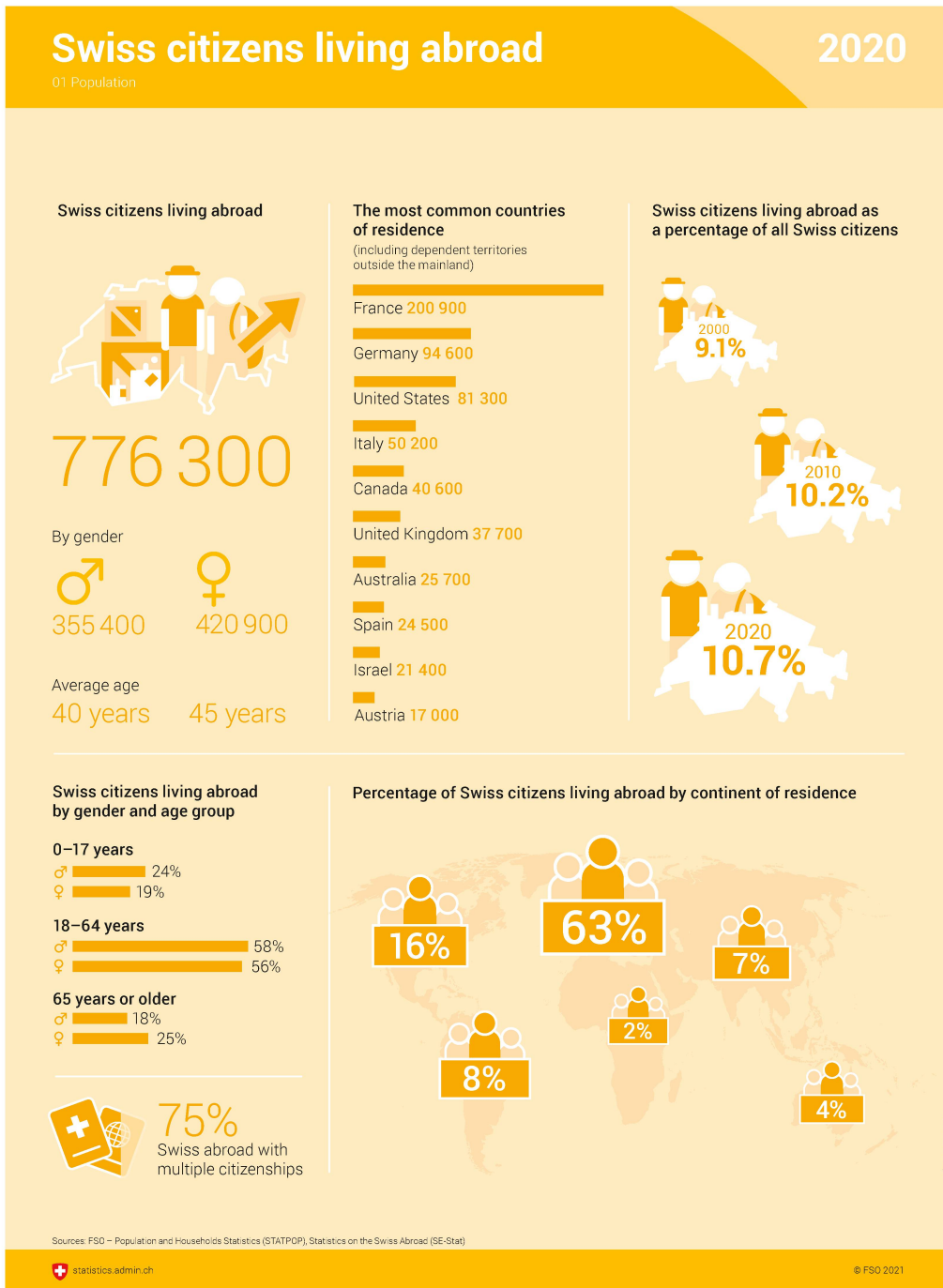
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One fifth of Swiss Abroad are younger than 18

At the end of 2020, 776,300 Swiss were living abroad. The “Fifth Switzerland” therefore has roughly the same population as the canton of Vaud. Our focus on young people in this edition of “Swiss Review” is pertinent, not least in view of the latest government statistics on Swiss citizens living abroad, which show that 21 per cent of Swiss Abroad are under 18.



The number of Swiss who live abroad and are registered with a Swiss representation increased in 2020 by 0.7 per cent to 776,300. According to statistics published by the Federal Statistical Office, 163,800 of Swiss Abroad are under 18. This figure is slightly up on the previous year. Children and teenagers therefore account for a good fifth of the “Fifth Switzerland”.

In relation to this young demographic, it is noticeable how the numbers vary from continent to continent: up in Europe (+1.3%), but down in Africa (-5.6%), the Americas (-2.1%), Asia (-1.5%) and Oceania (-1.2%).

In absolute terms, France was home to the highest number of young people with Swiss passports at the end of 2020, with 42,500. Next came Germany (21,000), the USA (14,300), Israel (9,900), Italy (9,400) and the UK (8,800). The picture is different when we look at the proportion of young people in relation to the entire Swiss expatriate communities of individual countries. Israel is the country with the youngest Swiss community, with 46 per cent who are aged under 18. The UK, Chile, and Turkey have the next-youngest Swiss populations, with 24 to 28 per cent under 18.

More than four fifths of all 163,800 Swiss Abroad under 18 have one or more nationalities in addition to Swiss citizenship. The proportion is particularly high in countries including Turkey, Italy and Chile, where 94 to 97 per cent of the younger demographic have at least one other nationality.

Further information: Federal Statistical Office > Look for statistics > Population > Migration and integration > Swiss citizens living abroad

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Schools that promote Swiss values in addition to knowledge

The Swiss Confederation supports the 18 officially recognised Swiss schools abroad. All these places of learning not only provide Swiss education around the world, but also contribute to Switzerland's cultural footprint abroad, thereby promoting understanding of our country and its traditions and values.



Playing during the break at the Swiss School in Singapore. Photo provided

All the schools were established through private initiatives by Swiss expatriates. The oldest was founded in Italy as early as the 19th century. Schools were also established in Egypt – in Alexandria and Cairo – between 1921 and 1929, but these had to be closed by around 1970. The first schools popped up in Latin America during the Second World War, and later in Asia, while the most recent school to open was in Beijing in 2017. There are now 18 Swiss schools abroad in total, at which around 260 Swiss teaching staff currently give lessons to over 8,000 pupils, of whom some 1,500 are Swiss nationals.

At present, the federal government subsidises these Swiss schools in ten different countries to the tune of around 18 million Swiss francs each year, thereby covering an average of 25 to 30 per cent of their total operating expenses. The Confederation provides this financial support in accordance with the Swiss Schools Act, which was completely revised in 2014. Based on Article 14 of the Swiss Schools Act, the federal government also provides just under 430,000 francs in annual funding for Swiss education abroad at 11 locations where there are no Swiss schools.

Furthermore, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) and the Federal Department of Home Affairs (FDHA) have a service agreement in place to support *educationsuisse*, the umbrella association of Swiss schools. *Educationsuisse* represents these schools' interests in Switzerland, providing them with a variety of services in areas such as administration and further education.

The Swiss schools abroad operate in accordance with Swiss teaching methods and the Swiss curriculum,

offering the Swiss high-school diploma and International Baccalaureat (IB) qualifications that open the way to further education in Switzerland or the relevant host country. In addition, each school has a “home canton” that provides educational advice and supervision.

From Brazil to Thailand

Swiss schools are located in the following countries and cities:

Brazil

- Colegio Suíço-Brasileiro, Curitiba
- Escola Suíço-Brasileira, São Paulo

Chile

- Colegio Suizo de Santiago, Santiago de Chile

China

- Swiss School Beijing

Italy

- Scuola Svizzera Bergamo
- Scuola Svizzera Catania
- Scuola Svizzera di Milano
- Scuola Svizzera di Milano in Cadorago/Como
- Scuola Svizzera di Roma

Colombia

- Colegio Helvetia, Bogotá

Mexico

- Colegio Suizo de México, Mexico City
- Colegio Suizo de México A.C., Cuernavaca
- Colegio Suizo de México A.C., Querétaro

Peru

- Colegio Pestalozzi, Lima

Singapore

- Swiss School in Singapore

Spain

- Colegio Suizo de Madrid
- Escuela Suiza de Barcelona

Thailand

- RIS Swiss Section in Bangkok (RG)

Multilingualism (German, English, French, and the local language) is considered an important asset. The schools in Bogotá and Singapore also offer French in addition to German teaching. A dedicated French stream was introduced at the Swiss School in Singapore (SSiS) at the beginning of the 2019–20 school year. The school’s successful mixed-age-group learning approach also applies to this new stream, which now covers the entire primary school curriculum. Teaching in the German stream follows the “Lehrplan 21” curriculum that applies in Switzerland’s German-speaking cantons, while the French stream is based on the “PER” (Plan d’études romand) syllabus in the French-speaking cantons, albeit adapted to local conditions.

The Swiss schools are highly renowned in their respective host countries. Their graduates, of whom many are local, maintain a lifelong association with Switzerland.

RUTH VON GUNTEN, EDUCATIONSUISSE

Federal votes

The Federal Council determines voting proposals at least four months before the voting date.

Everything you need to know about voting proposals (voting pamphlets, committees, recommendations by Parliament and the Federal Council etc.) is available at www.admin.ch/votes or via the Federal Chancellery’s VoteInfo app.

The Federal Council decided that there will be two federal proposals submitted to the people on 26 September 2021:

- Federal Popular Initiative “Reduce tax on salaries, tax capital fairly”
- Amendment of the Swiss Civil Code (Marriage for all)

Popular initiatives

The following federal popular initiatives have already been launched at the time of going to press (deadline for the collection of signatures in brackets):

- No new popular initiatives have been launched.

The list of pending popular initiatives is available in German, French and Italian at www.bk.admin.ch > Politische Rechte > Volksinitiativen > Hängige Volksinitiativen

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