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Heft: 3: Dayana Pfammatter - blazing a trail as Switzerland's first-ever yodelling graduate

Vorwort: The cost of living on an island of prosperity

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4 Focus

Prosperous Switzerland has an acute cost-of-living crisis

8 Top pick/News

Confusion over the financial situation of the military

10 Culture

Yodelling graduate Dayana Pfammatter wants to pass on her knowledge

12 Society

Antisemitism in Switzerland on the rise amid the war in Gaza

14 Sport

Does successful integration in Swiss football also apply to women?

**18 Politics**

Emphatic yes to state pension increase is a historic result

News from your region**22 Images**

“Nothing” – an exhibition that makes a lot out of zilch

24 Notes from the Federal Palace

Switzerland wants to grow its digital public services

27 SwissCommunity news

Berne academics develop an e-voting solution for the “Fifth Switzerland”

Launch of two new stamps dedicated to the Swiss Abroad

31 Discussion

Cover photo: yodeller Dayana Pfammatter.
Photo: Alain Amherd

The cost of living on an island of prosperity

More and more families in Switzerland are struggling to make ends meet.



Surely that's a misprint. We are talking about families who live in Switzerland, one of the world's richest countries, right? How can they be struggling? They should try living somewhere less prosperous.

We can react dismissively, but the simple truth is that money is too tight to mention for many families around the country. So let me spell it out again. Despite impressively high salaries and high employment levels, more and more families in Switzerland are struggling to make ends meet. And many such households are supposed to be comfortably ensconced in the middle-income bracket. What has gone wrong?

I can offer one hypothesis off the top of my head: Switzerland has very high standards in many areas of life. The prices of goods and services reflect this, to put it mildly. Unfortunately, we often have no other choice but to dig deep into our pockets. This particularly applies to tenants, for whom astronomically high rents have become a fact of life. Obviously, Swiss standards extend to housing. Bargains are few and far between.

It is a similar story with healthcare. The quality of Swiss medicine is second to none, but we pay for this through eye-watering health insurance premiums. Rents and healthcare premiums are the biggest monthly expenses for many families. Our lead article on page 4 tells you about all the other little and not-so-little factors that are fuelling a very Swiss cost-of-living crisis.

Dayana Pfammatter provides us with our feel-good story. The yodeller pictured on our front cover is the first person in Switzerland to have completed a master's degree at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts with yodelling as the main subject (see page 10). When yodelling became an academic subject at Lucerne, there were fears it would set up an overly polished aesthetic. But Pfammatter has allayed any concerns with her love of traditional, natural arrangements.

MARC LETTAU, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

“Swiss Review”, the information magazine for the “Fifth Switzerland”, is published by the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad.

