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Leaving everyone behind in a cloud of dust

12:50.9

The now 69-year-old middle-distance runner and Olympian Markus Ryffel is a legend in Switzerland. His Swiss record over 5,000 metres seemed unbreakable. But Dominic Lobalu bettered Ryffel's 40-year record by 16 seconds at the end of May, setting a new mark of 12:50.9 minutes. In other words: Lobalu shattered the record.



3,000

Only days after his feat over 5,000 metres, Lobalu, 25, also broke the Swiss 3,000-metre record. The story behind the story: Lobalu fled to Switzerland from South Sudan. "I grew up as a refugee," he says. "This is my identity. And my goal is to win a medal. For all refugees." www.dominiclobalu.ch

1.39

This begs the question: do people in Switzerland have any time left for family life? Switzerland's birth rate has fallen to 1.39 children per woman, the lowest it has been for over 20 years. A developed country's population will age and decline without a birth rate of at least 2.1 – unless it is supplemented by immigrants. Like Dominic Lobalu.

Source: Federal Statistical Office

65,274

As Lobalu breaks records on the running track, working people in Switzerland – most in rather more sedentary occupations – are responsible for superlatives of a completely different kind. They work an average of 65,274 hours over a lifetime – completely "outperforming" their counterparts in France (55,620), Germany (53,098) and Luxembourg (51,859). Source: Eurostat, OECD

180,000

With or without children, cleaning and other household chores are another fact of life. There is always somewhere to wipe down or hoover. A plume containing 180,000 tonnes of Sahara dust blew over Switzerland on 30 March 2024. Swiss skies turned an eerie orange. Cue the next question in our editorial office: whose turn is it to do the spring cleaning? www.revue.link/dust Source: SRF Meteo

3.7

Talking of work, Switzerland's unemployment rate of 3.7 per cent is really low. Look for work and you will normally find it. Labour shortages are the big issue at the moment, with companies struggling to find the right employees.

Source: Federal Statistical Office