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**Report from our Delegate to the
Swiss Abroad, Heinz Leuenberger
76. SWISS ABROAD CONGRESS**

600 PARTICIPANTS FROM 45 COUNTRIES MET IN THE CANTON AARGAU TO DISCUSS MATTERS CONCERNING - MIGRATION - MOBILITY AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE '5th. SWITZERLAND'.

- The revision of the voluntary AHV/IV continues to hold centre stage. In very lively discussions it was pointed out that many of the arguments brought by the Authorities were unsubstantiated and basically flawed. In the interests of international mobility the Swiss Abroad Council requests the Government to work out a solution acceptable to all concerned. The Council criticised many of the figures so far presented as not

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standing up to closer scrutiny.

**PRESIDENT PLEADS
FOR MOBILITY**

Jean-Jacques Cevey, outgoing President of the Swiss Abroad Organisation, touched on the importance of compatriots living abroad. It is in Switzerland's interest to support their mobility rather than to put hurdles into place, particularly in areas of social and sickness insurance and education. It is also important to know more about the "fifth Switzerland" and to build a solid basis for a Swiss Abroad Policy in order to harness the immense potential it represents.

**FIFTH SWITZERLAND -
YOUNG AND FEMININE....**

According to a report in the 'Basler Zeitung' on the 30. June 1998 a total of 561'122 compatriots were registered with Consulates or Embassies in 193 countries.

62 % live in Europe, 27 % in the Americas, 4 % each in Australasia and Asia and 3 % in Africa. Since 1980 immatriculations have increased by 206'890 (58 %).

Dr. Rudolf Wyder, Director of the Swiss Abroad

Organisation believes that as many as 1 mil. Swiss could be living abroad without anyone even knowing about it.

-The structure of the "5th. Switzerland" shows that 62 % are aged between 18-65, 23 % are younger than 18, and 15 % older than 65, as opposed to 3 % fewer Juniors and 2 % more Seniors than "at home". As for the adults, 40 % are male and 60 % female. What, if anything does that tell you?

- After Zürich, Bern and Vaud, the Swiss Abroad now account for the 4th biggest Canton. France alone, with a contingent of over 143'000 compatriots, accounts for the 10 smallest Cantons. 15.7 % of the adults entitled to vote have registered their wish to do so.

MUTATIONS

National Councillor Georg Stucky (Zug) was elected as the new President of the Swiss Abroad Organisation, having held Office since 1992. He took over from retiring President Jean-Jacques Cevey on the 1st October.

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