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Cross-border love knows no bounds

When it comes to love, more and more Swiss people are falling for foreigners. Nearly 38 per cent of weddings in 2006 were between a Swiss and a non-Swiss partner. It is a number that has steadily increased since 1970, when the percentage was less than half that.

Swiss men are more likely to marry a foreigner than Swiss women are but the number of Swiss women choosing a foreign spouse is steadily rising. In the 1990s, marriages between Swiss women and foreign men accounted for about a third of bi-national pairings in Switzerland. Since 2001, that figure has increased to nearly 44%. One reason for this is a change in the law. It used to be that Swiss women lost their Swiss citizenship upon mar-

rying a foreigner, but since 1992, that has no longer been the case.

About 60% of foreign partners hail from the EU, but globalisation has encouraged the Swiss to cast their nets even wider in pursuit of true love. Swiss men are especially fond of women from Eastern Europe, Latin America and Asia, while Swiss women are keen on North Africans, Turks and men from the Middle East. According to a Zurich study, bi-national marriages are especially fragile – particularly when the woman is Swiss and the man is a foreigner. Some 75% of such couples who married in Zurich in 1994 were divorced within ten years. In contrast, the divorce rate for Swiss women married to Swiss men was about 15%.

Men get hungry too

Baby on the way?

Pregnancy sympathy in male partners has a strong psychological and biological basis, according to Swiss researchers. They say it is quite common for a man to share his pregnant partner's mood swings, morning sickness or cravings for industrial amounts of chocolate fudge ice cream up to and after the birth of a child.

Tiziana Perini, a psychotherapist and researcher at Zurich University, is conducting a study into the phenomenon of pregnancy sympathy with 37 couples. Her work centres on male hormone levels and involves comparing samples from two groups – one without chil-

dren and the other expecting for the first time. She says that 50 per cent of her subjects have reported experiencing mood swings. A smaller number have experienced fluctuations in weight and appetite as well.

Perini says the experiences of men are not only rooted in human evolution but are also reflected in nature. The less a species reproduces, the greater the incentive to ensure each offspring survives, she says.

A shift from quantity to quality presents the paradox in modern lovemaking: less "making", but more love.

Swissinfo

Greenpeace thinks of lonely hearts

Environmental organisation Greenpeace Switzerland has set up an online dating service for environmentally conscious singles called lovepeace.ch.

Officially launched on Valentine's Day, it will provide, apart from a search for the perfect part-

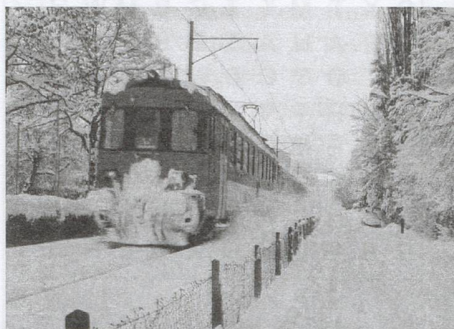
ner, tips on greener lifestyles, on how to protect the environment better, how to be politically active, and travel advice.

Greenpeace says that even "Greenies" want to find love and the right partner.

swissinfo

Swiss railways are the world's busiest

Swiss railways have been ranked the busiest in the world, figures from the International Union of Railways (ILU) have shown.



On average around 94 trains circulate on each line every day in Switzerland – more than its nearest rival, Japan, where there are around 75 trains per line a day. But the number of trains in use means Swiss railways are nearing saturation point, particularly on the suburban and major lines, and there is no room left to manoeuvre.

The Swiss also top the world table of the annual number of kilometres citizens travel by train each year.



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