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Life is more beautiful in Zurich

Zurich is still the best place to live, according to an international survey of the world's biggest cities. Geneva and Bern also made it into the top ten.



Switzerland's financial centre beat off competition from 215 cities worldwide in the 2008 quality of living rankings published by consulting group Mercer on Tuesday.

Around one-sixth of the Swiss population lives in canton Zurich, while the city itself has around 370,000 inhabitants. Some 85 of the 100 biggest Swiss companies have their headquarters in the area.

Geneva, home to many international organizations, came in joint second with the Austrian capital Vienna. The Swiss capital, Bern, was ranked ninth overall.

Merger used 39 criteria to assess quality of life, including political, economic and environmental factors, as well as health and education services.

1. Zurich
2. Vienna
3. Geneva
4. Vancouver
5. Auckland
6. Dusseldorf
7. Munich
8. Frankfurt
9. Bern
10. Sydney

from swissinfo

Heineken deal for Eichhof brews mixed feelings

The Swiss beer industry has shown mixed reaction to the news that Dutch beer giant Heineken plans to acquire the Lucerne-based Eichhof brewery.

Some in the industry view the takeover bid for Switzerland's last major independent brewer as an opportunity, while others have regretted the move.

If the transaction is completed as planned, the Dutch brewer would consolidate its number two position on the Swiss drinks market, with 23 per cent of market share, behind Denmark's Carlsberg, owner of the Feldschlösschen group, which has 40 per cent. No job cuts have been announced.

However, some Swiss newspapers and smaller industry members have bemoaned the fact that the last of the larger independent breweries – it had an eight per cent market share – has ended up in foreign hands.

St Gallen's Schützengarten is now the biggest independent brewery. In addition, there are hundreds of smaller brewers, which account for 18 per cent of the market, with 19 per cent covered by imported beers.

The Swiss are not huge beer drinkers. The per capita consumption is 57 litres per year – below the European average. It is far lower than neighbouring Germany (110 litres per capita), but still higher than that of France or Italy.

from swissinfo

Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside, thoroughly used up, totally worn out and loudly proclaiming: "WOW! What a ride!"

An Australasian Version of the Swiss Review

The editor of the regional news section of the Swiss Review for Australia, Marc Godat, has offered to include New Zealand and the Pacific in a new **Australasian** version of the regional news – which means that on the four middle pages of four out of the six Swiss Reviews per year we will be represented on a regular basis, and we'll find news of the Australian Swiss Clubs. Watch the space!



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