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# Official Communications

## Customs Hints for Non-Residents

If you are preparing for a trip to Switzerland you will want to know the Swiss entry and customs regulations. The most important provisions are contained in this text. More detailed information will be willingly supplied by the Customs Authorities in Basle, Schaffhausen, Chur, Lugano, Lausanne and Geneva, by the Federal Veterinary Office, Berne (animals, meat and meat products) and by the Division of Agriculture, Berne (plants).

### Customs Regulations

#### 1. Exemption from Duty

Tourists who are domiciled abroad may import the following goods free of duty and other taxes:

a) *Personal effects*, such as: Clothing, underwear, toilet articles, sports gear, cameras and amateur cine-cameras and the appropriate films, one portable radio set, one portable television set, one portable typewriter, one portable sound recording and playback machine, camping equipment of all kinds, two hunting or sporting guns or one hunting and one sporting gun with ammunition (up to 100 rounds per gun) and other everyday requisites for use on the journey or during their stay in Switzerland. In principle, only *used* personal effects are exempt from duty. In the case of goods with no obvious signs of use the Customs Authorities can ask for the import duty to be deposited. This will be refunded upon production of the import document when the goods are exported.

b) *Food for the journey* (including soft drinks) – one person's normal daily consumption.

c) *Alcoholic beverages and tobaccos*

Quantities obviously intended to be put into store are excluded (butter maximum 125gm., i.e. 4½oz.).

Single parts of a whole that are imported simultaneously count as one article. If their total value exceeds Sw.Frs. 100.–, they are jointly liable to duty.

Objects and merchandise whose value exceeds Sw.Frs. 100.– are liable to import duty even if they are jointly imported by several persons travelling together.

Persons under 17 years of age are entitled to import half the above quantities free of duty. If you import for your personal use goods (except alcoholic beverages, tobaccos and goods to be put into store) other than those for which you can claim the above-mentioned exemption up to Sw.Frs. 100.–, these too are exempt from duty provided their retail value does not exceed Sw. Frs. 50.–.

The concessions listed under sub-sections b) to d) can only be granted if the tourist declares the goods personally when crossing the border.

#### 2. Import and Export Prohibitions and Restrictions

No import licence is required for goods admitted free of duty under Section 1 or dutiable goods in quantities not exceeding tourist norms. The import and export of firearms (other than hunting and sporting guns), the import of meat and meat products, of wine in excess of 10 litres, and of certain animals and plants and products made from them are subject to special regulations.

The importation of the following goods is absolutely prohibited:

- from all countries in Africa and Asia, including Turkey and the Soviet Union: meat and meat products made from solid-hoofed and cloven-hoofed animals, with the exception of tinned goods.

#### 3. Exemptions for Tourists in Transit

Tourists in transit through Switzerland may bring in goods for their personal use and for immediate re-exportation up to a value of Sw.Frs. 400.– (in the case of travellers from European countries) or Sw.Frs. 2000.– (travellers from non-European countries) without special formalities. However, they must expressly declare them as transit goods to the Swiss Customs on entering the country.

### Veterinary Regulations

*Dogs* and *cats* brought into Switzerland from abroad must be accompanied by a veterinary certificate stating that the animal has been vaccinated against rabies. The vaccination must have been carried out at least 30 days and not more than one year before entry.

The certificate must be made out in German, French, Italian or English and give the following details:

- animal's owner (name and address)
- description of the animal (breed, sex, age, colour)
- attestation that the animal was examined by a veterinarian prior to vaccination and found to be healthy
- date of vaccination against rabies, type of vaccine, name of manufacturer and serial number of vaccine
- stamp and signature of the veterinarian.

	Tourists from European countries	Non-European countries
aa) <i>Alcoholic beverages:</i>		
– up to 25°	2 litres	2 litres
– over 25°	1 litre	1 litre
bb) <i>Tobaccos:</i>		
– cigarettes	200	400
– or cigars	50	100
– or pipe tobacco	250 grammes	500 grammes

#### aa) Alcoholic beverages:

- up to 25° 2 litres
- over 25° 1 litre

#### bb) Tobaccos:

- cigarettes 200
- or cigars 50
- or pipe tobacco 250 grammes

The exemptions listed under aa) and bb) apply to persons aged 17 or over.

d) *Goods other than food for the journey, alcoholic beverages and tobaccos* provided that

- the total value of the goods does not exceed Sw.Frs. 100.–, and
- the goods are intended as presents.

- from all countries: absinth, absinth imitations and narcotics;
- from all countries: fresh and frozen poultry;
- from Spain, Portugal and Africa: pork and pork products made from domestic pigs or wild boar, with the exception of tinned goods;



On 24th September 1978, the people and the Cantons have **accepted the creation of the Canton of Jura** with 1309722 yes, 281917 no and all Cantons.

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Certificates in other languages must be accompanied by an officially certified translation into one of the four languages mentioned above.

*Dogs and cats which are not accompanied by a valid certificate will not be admitted to Switzerland.* A certificate is not required for animals only in transit through Switzerland by rail or air.

## Currency Regulations

The import of foreign banknotes to a value exceeding 20 000 Swiss francs per person per three-month period has been prohibited since 27th February 1978.

## Motor Vehicles and Boats

No customs document («triptyque», «carte de passage» etc.) is required for the temporary importation of motor vehicles and boats by persons domiciled abroad,

provided they are intended for the tourist's personal use. However, they must be covered by a third-party insurance adequate for Switzerland.

The driver of a motor vehicle must carry his driving and vehicle licences; national and international licences are recognized.

**With every good wish to a pleasant trip and happy days in Switzerland**

*Swiss Customs Administration*

## The new 50-franc banknote

Format 159 mm x 74 mm



linguistic gifts, he received badly-needed support from many quarters.

Originally intended for the Church, he turned in the course of his studies to medicine, which was better suited to his scientific inclinations. In 1541 he graduated as a doctor of medicine in Basle. Before finishing his medical studies he taught for three years as Professor of Greek Language at the newly-founded Lausanne Academy, a post he obtained on the strength of his work on a comprehensive Greek-Latin dictionary. In 1541 we find Gessner back in Zurich, where he took up a lectureship in philosophy, physics and ethics. Five years later he became Professor of «physica naturalis et moralis», and in 1554 he was appointed Chief Doctor of the City of Zurich.

In the course of his life Gessner produced innumerable works on the most varied subjects. During his Lausanne period he had already written a «Botanical Handbook» and an index in Greek, Latin, German and French of all known plants. The latter demonstrates his interest not only in botany but also in philology.

At the age of 25 Gessner began his «Bibliotheca universalis», the first great bibliography. It embraces about 3000 authors and probably some 10 000 works. A «Historia animalium» (history of animals) and a «Historia plantarum» (his-

The 50-franc note was issued at the beginning of October as part of the new banknote series. It is devoted to the polymath Konrad Gessner.

Gessner lived from 1516 to 1565, during that period of intellectual upheaval typified by the major events of the 16th century, the Reformation and the Renaissance, and his work should be viewed against this imposing background. He was a polymath, an indefatig-

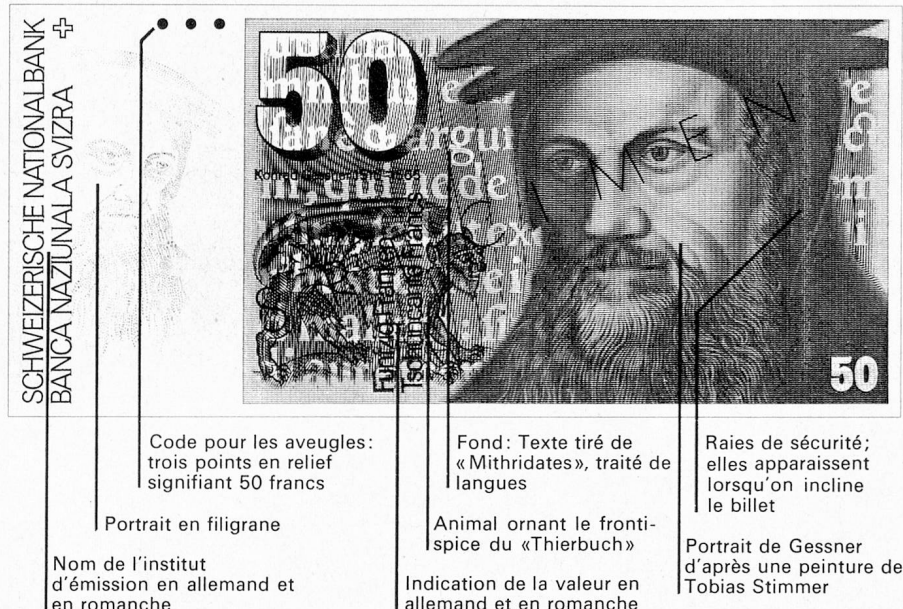
able researcher and creator, whose fame spread far beyond the frontiers of his own country.

Born in Zurich on 26th March 1516, the son of a furrier, Konrad Gessner grew up in straitened circumstances and had to struggle against poverty and need for the greater part of his life. By superhuman efforts he produced an enormous literary output, much of it hack-work for publishers. Thanks to his industry and his



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tory of plants) testify to his vast knowledge of natural history. Besides this scholarly activity he did an immense amount of work, often of a pioneering nature, in his capacity as Chief Doctor. He had at his disposal a – for those days – huge range of medicines and he developed the technique of distillation to the level of an art. In 1564 bubonic plague broke out again in Zurich. As the city's Chief Doctor, Gessner had to advise on how to combat this epidemic, an almost hopeless undertaking at that time and for long afterwards. He himself was struck down by the disease a year later and died of it on 13th December 1565.

## Total Revision of the Federal Constitution

### Preparatory Work

I  
The preparatory work on a total revision of the Federal Constitution was triggered off by the Obrecht and Dürrenmatt motions. On 13th October and 30th November 1965 Messrs Karl Obrecht and Peter Dürrenmatt respectively presented motions to the States Council and the National Council asking that the Federal Council should examine material which would establish whether a total revision of the Constitution was necessary and how urgent it was. Both submitted that the current Federal Constitution ought to be thoroughly examined and extensively adapted to present and future needs, and that the necessary revision could not be achieved simply by changing details piecemeal. They also expressed the hope that the carrying out of this important and constructive task would help to combat the vague uneasiness felt in many quarters. The Federal Council accepted the two motions during its 1966 summer session and both houses of parliament tacitly approved them. When transmitting them the Federal Council asked for a report on whether total revision was desirable and what form this work should take.

### II

In May 1967 the Federal Council set up the «Wahlen working group», consisting originally of nine and later of ten members. This group submitted to the cantons, the universities, the political parties and other interested circles a detailed questionnaire without any guidelines on how it was to be answered. The replies reflected the whole

spectrum of opinion in Switzerland; they were published in four parts in 1970.

In September 1973 the working group issued its final report, setting forth the structural elements of a future Federal Constitution. With this comprehensive survey of themes and suggestions, and their own views on the main problems involved in a revision policy, the Wahlen working group cleared the way for the second phase of preparations for a total revision; in fact, they recommended the Federal Council to instruct a large commission of experts to continue the work and to draw up a draft Constitution.

### III

Before the end of 1973 Federal Judge Kaufmann, Professor Morand, Professor Eichenberger and Professor Wildhaber were given the task of formulating constitutional provisions based on the final report, which ensured that there would be a smooth transition between the preliminary work already done and the second phase. They produced two working papers, which were complemented by an exposé by Professor Aubert and published in autumn 1974. The first endeavoured to sift the results obtained by the Wahlen working group; the second was a summary of the first. In May 1974 the Federal Department of Justice and Police, on the strength of the working group's recommendations and in agreement with the Federal Council, set up a new commission of experts, composed of 46 members, under the chairmanship of Federal Councillor Kurt Furgler. At the end of 1977, after 19

sessions, it submitted to the Federal Council, in accordance with its mandates, the draft of a totally revised Constitution, accompanied by a report.

### IV

The Federal Council has decided to subject the draft Constitution and the commission's report to a broad consultation process, in which everyone will be able to take part. The purpose will be to assess the proposed innovations and the desirability and feasibility of a total revision. The revision procedure will also have to be discussed. An alternatives to the procedure laid down by the present Constitution – voting on a new Constitution as a whole – one might envisage, for example, separate votes on various subjects («packages»); dividing the Constitution into an uncontested «main package» and various controversial matters; or, finally, a combination of a vote on the Constitution as a whole and secondary votes on various versions of controversial sections. In this connexion the question arises whether such procedures would be covered by the provisions of the existing Constitution or whether it would first be necessary, in certain cases, to create a legal basis by means of a partial revision; a constitutional assembly might also be given the task – after the necessary modification of the Constitution – of drawing up a draft Constitution.

The consultation process will last until mid-1979 and the results will be analysed by the middle of 1980.