

**Zeitschrift:** The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

**Herausgeber:** Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

**Band:** - (1979)

**Heft:** 1758

**Rubrik:** Swiss Welfare Office

#### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

#### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

#### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

**Download PDF:** 04.02.2026

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**

# ANNUAL REPORT 1978 SWISS WELFARE OFFICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

We are pleased to present our Annual Report for 1978. Looking back, one is tempted to say that 1977 was the year of survival and 1978 the year of recovery.

We were fortunate in receiving a substantial subsidy of Sw.Fr. 20,000 (£5,181) from the Swiss Federal Authority which greatly boosted our finances throughout the year. Our very close allies and supporters Freundinnen junger Mädchen and Pro Filia again supported us with their usualy contributions of Sw.Fr. 3,000 each and Pro Filia generously gave us an extra subsidy of Sw.Fr. 1,000 for which we were especially grateful. Many who had helped us following our appeal in 1977, helped us again with a donation during 1978 and we were, of course delighted to receive a cheque of £250 from the City Swiss Club. We managed to close the year with a credit balance of £7,224,07.

Our administrative costs have always been low. Members of the Committee offer their services in an honorary capacity, our relief stand-in Mrs. Gunn gives her services free and our landlord, the Swiss Benevolent Society not only provides us with free office accommodation but also contributes £500 annually towards our funds. Furthermore, they pay two-thirds of our secretary's salary. The amounts for assistance given and the reimbursements received, almost balance which is a clear sign that the help we provide is appreciated and we can rely on the loans given to young people being repaid once they have returned home.

On the 18th July our President, Mrs. G. Gyssler, chaired her last meeting and handed over to Mrs. R. Rast who had agreed to act as President for an interim period. Mrs. Gyssler joined her husband in the USA following his promotion and transfer. Mrs. Gyssler devoted practically all her spare time and efforts to the cause of the Welfare Office and we cannot thank her enough for all the services she rendered.

Mrs. K. Feitknecht took over as Treasurer from Mrs. Rast, Mrs. Cottet resigned as Vice-President

and was succeeded by Mrs. G. Schwab.

Some of the economic forecasters in Switzerland voiced their anxiety for the financial outlook in 1979 and predict tighter measures being applied both in the public sector and industry. We, of course, would be hit directly by these steps and sincerely hope that the contributions from our sources "back home" will not be curtailed and that we may still count on this much needed support from official and private sources.

More important still is that we should do all in our power to attract donations and publicise the work of the Welfare Office as widely as possible.

The unique geographical and social structure of Switzerland may be responsible to a large extent for the fact that our young people find it much harder to cope with life in a big city and adapt to very different circumstances in a cosmopolitan place. The Welfare Office therefore plays a very important role as an advisory body and its existence must be safeguarded at all cost.

The 280 new cases of which 39 were young Swiss men, consisted of 228 German speaking, of which 55 were Welfare Cases, 48 French speaking, of which 3 were Welfare Cases, 4 Italian speaking, of which 0 were Welfare cases.

We have noticed with considerable misgivings and uneasiness, that the number of 17-year-olds and in some cases even 16-year-olds, in breach of Home Office regulations, coming to England is increasing. We are firmly of the belief, and we know that the Swiss Embassy and the Swiss Church agree with us, that this is too young for the majority of girls. Many of them are not old enough to cope with the complex problems of being away from home, living with people with different attitudes, habits and language, playing a very different role and in most cases speaking little English and often not knowing who to turn to in case of need. Very few of these girls know of the existence of the Welfare Office and, sadly, there are a number of au pair agencies both here and in Switzerland who prefer, for reasons best known to themselves, to ignore the services of the Welfare Office until a more serious problem arises such as illness or stealing.

Talking of problems — quite a number of young girls are unfortunately unable to look back on their time in England as happily as they would have hoped. We have found that many, of the very young girls who come to England straight from

school without having decided on a professional future, find it difficult to really profit from their time here. It is as if the uncertainty of what to do when they return to Switzerland, holds them back from fully enjoying their stay here.

Then there is another disappointed group of girls who want to get away from it all, having problems with either their parents, boyfriends or in many cases with themselves. Unfortunately, these problems have a knack of sneaking into a suitcase and do not remain sitting on a shelf or in a drawer during their time in England. Dealing with that sort of problem far away from home, can prove too much for many girls and often results in their returning to Switzerland prematurely.

It is therefore one of our most urgent tasks for 1979 to publicise the existence of the Welfare Office and to win the trust and the co-operation of all the organisations, not only au pair agencies, Berufsberatungsstellen and Church organisations, but also all those in contact with these young people, in the hope that they will at least know of our existence and have our address when they come to England.

As in previous years the Welfare Office could not have fulfilled its task without the help, support and understanding of a great number of friends and organisations.

The Swiss Federal Authority, the Swiss Benevolent Society, the Federation of the Swiss Churches, Pro Filia, Freundinnen junger Mädchen and many loyal contributors have helped us to remain on a sound financial basis.

Our special thanks once again to Mrs. A.-R. Sharp of the Swiss Benevolent Society whose help, advice and knowledge we make use of time and time again.

We have once again been able to benefit from a good rapport with the Swiss Embassy, the Ministers of the Swiss Church in London, the Swiss Catholic Mission and the helpers of the Swiss Youth Club.

We are grateful to Miss Alder, the Warden of the Swiss Hostel, for providing beds for many of our girls, sometimes at very short notice.

We hope to be able to rely again on the greatly valued understanding and help of our numerous friends here and in Switzerland in the coming year.



## SWITZERLAND'S FOREIGN TRADE DURING THE 1st HALF-YEAR 1979

IMPORTS	Value in millions of francs	Variations in % compared with the 1st half-year 1978
Agricultural and forestry products	2,616.5	-4.3
Energy	2,164.2	26.3
Textiles and clothing	2,214.8	5.0
Paper and its articles	747.9	7.7
Leathers, rubber, plastic	767.6	6.5
Chemical products	2,551.5	15.6
Materials for the construction, ceramic, glass	416.3	7.0
Metals and metal work	2,116.3	2.5
Machinery	3,394.6	1.4
Vehicles	2,481.0	5.2
Instruments, watches	2,621.6	1.3
Other various products	837.6	10.7
TOTAL OF IMPORTS	22,930.0	5.8

### Breakdown by economic areas (millions of francs and in per cent)

OECD-countries total	20,369.2	7.9
- OECD Europe	18,023.7	9.1
• EEC	16,060.4	9.4
• EFTA	1,635.7	6.5
• other countries	327.6	8.1
- OECD other countries	2,345.5	-0.7
Non-OECD countries total	2,560.8	-8.6
- developing countries	1,838.5	-4.9
• of which OPEC	531.7	-2.7
- centrally planned economies	659.3	-18.7
• Europe	612.0	-19.9
• Asia	47.3	-0.6

EXPORTS	Value in millions of francs	Variations in % compared with the 1st half-year 1978
Metallurgical industry	10,818.3	2.2
Chemical industry	4,484.5	3.1
Textiles and clothing	1,559.8	1.7
Foodstuffs and tobaccos	673.3	-2.9
Books, newspapers	128.8	5.5
TOTAL OF EXPORTS	21,342.3	2.3

### Breakdown by economic areas

OECD-countries total total	15,766.4	6.0
- OECD Europe	13,381.2	6.9
• EEC	10,820.4	9.2
• EFTA	1,926.2	-2.9
• other countries	634.5	2.3
- OECD other countries	2,385.2	0.9
Non-OECD countries total	5,575.9	-6.8
- developing countries	4,488.8	-5.6
• of which OPEC	1,311.6	-27.5
- centrally planned economies	910.8	-13.1
• Europe	821.8	-13.8
• Asia	89.0	-6.1

## THE SWISS FOREIGN TRADE IN JUNE 1979

### Switzerland's Balance of Trade

Period	Imports	Exports	Balance	Value of exports as a % of the value of imports
(in million Sw.Fr.)				
1978 June	3,975.8	3,864.6	-111.2	97.2
1979 May	4,133.3	3,804.2	-329.1	92.0
1979 June	3,922.7	3,846.1	-76.6	98.0
1978 Jan.-June	21,683.1	20,857.8	-825.3	96.2
1979 Jan.-June	22,930.0	21,342.3	-1,587.7	93.1