

Becoming Swiss : municipalities with high and low naturalisation rates

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Swiss Club News

about Wilhelm Tell at Trudi Fill's Swiss Nest, eating Hans Scherrer's Schenkeli; as we celebrated la Fête de l'Escalade, led by two Genèveises, Nathalie Leamy and Anne-Claire Küng; when Heinz, and Peter Hynes ran our garage sale; as the children scraped clean the bowling alley on a rainy day in late winter ready for painting, in green, in Peter's honour.

Our club is about people, and the energy and life we bring to living our Swiss Culture, and our Swiss heritage. This is not to be taken for granted; it is something special, something we create anew every day, in a gesture of love, towards the club, towards each other. Hard won, easily lost. And, of course, all that I have written so far speaks to this element of our club, our success, our joy.

All this is owed to those who take part in our events, at Samichlaus, at our club sports day, at Trudi Brühlmann's monthly Jass Sundays, and John and Theresa Jordan's and Paul's shooting days on their farm, Oscar and Sharon Gamper's cleaning the clubhouse after events - and most of all the WSC committee.

Yes, to our club committee and the friends of the committee - Gabrielle Saville, John and Christine Alderdice, Flemming and Monika Sorensen, Rob and Jeanine MacDonald, Trudi Brühlmann among them - I now turn. The hours and effort and thought put into our yearly events and activities may be imagined. I tell you now they are considerable.

For many of you, there is no need for any reminder. You were presidents and committee members of our club, for many years. To you all, a large debt is due, and this we endeavour to repay.

So, club members. The hour has struck. The committee needs new members. We are a strong committee, and our meetings are always a lot of fun, and we get things done. To those for whom the committee is too big a step, we invite you to consider leading an event in the 2020-2021 year.

We, the committee, are experienced event planners and organisers; we offer training and support. Running a WSC Club is a fantastic thing to do. The results speak for themselves, living and enjoying our Swiss culture, as Swiss abroad.

The challenge is now yours, if you wish our club to survive and thrive.

E liebe Gruess
Bernie Napp
WSC president

Sunday 26 April 2020 from 2pm

Jassen. For details please get in touch with Trudi Brühlmann on 04 562 8019.

The SwissNest will resume its activities on Saturday 9 May 2020, the day before Mother's Day.

This is a cultural exchange along the lines of the Maori Kohanga reo, where the Swiss culture and all that it's made up of, is thrown into a couple of hours at the clubhouse, in a loose and relaxed way. It usually consists of organising a cup of tea and something Swiss to

enjoy with it, then sitting together and share a story, a craft, or a song, or Jassen for beginners. From 2-5pm at 21 Moores Valley Road, Wainuiomata. This gathering is well suited for the whole family, young and old.

Call Trudi on 021 565617 for more information, or just turn up.

Saturday 16 May 2020 - Fondue. Warm up for Winter.

Society AGM in Auckland

Queen's Birthday weekend. As mentioned above. Please book your seat on the bus by 30 April so we can plan accommodation. Call Trudi F. On 021 565617.

Your club secretary, Trudi Fill-Weidmann

Becoming Swiss: municipalities with high and low naturalisation rates

When it comes to gaining Swiss citizenship, where you live matters. Some municipalities have high rates of naturalisation while some have not granted citizenship to a single person since 1992. A recently published study by researchers at Geneva University (UNIGE) looks at naturalisation rates by municipality between 1992 and 2017.

The municipalities of Rueyres (VD), Kandergrund (BE) and Wintersingen (BL) have not granted citizenship to a single individual over this time period. 122 other municipalities are in the same boat. If the dates are narrowed to 2011 to 2017, the list extends to 261 municipalities.

One reason behind the low rates is size and distance from the urban centres where most foreigners find jobs. Rueyres (255), Kandergrund (805) and Wintersingen (620) all have small populations. In addition, they are all quite far from Switzerland's main urban centres. As a result, the number of foreigners living in Rueyres (7), Kandergrund (59) and Wintersingen (51) is low.

In addition to location and low foreign populations, fear of the stigma of failing the naturalisation process in small communes is another reason that might explain low naturalisation rates, according to one of the report's authors. Large populations confer greater anonymity.

At the same time there are small far flung communes with low foreign populations and high rates of naturalisation. For example Altbüron, with a population of 1,005, which includes 102 foreigners, naturalised 27 people between 2010 and 2017. Habs-

burg (433) and Eischoll (438) are two other examples of small communes with high naturalisation rates.

The municipalities of Zurich (3.48%), Lausanne (2.98%) and Geneva (2.71%) had high standardised naturalisation rates between 2011 and 2017. But Basel (1.66%) and Bern (1.42%) had rates below the Swiss average (1.91%).

The gross naturalisation rate is the number of naturalisations divided by the foreign population. The standardised rate is an attempt to calculate how easy it is to become Swiss in a municipality. It attempts to make rates comparable by adjusting for differences in age, country of birth and time in Switzerland, things correlated with application rates.

There are no great differences between French- and German-speaking Switzerland.

Standardised naturalisation rates between 2011 and 2017 in the cantons of Zurich (2.58%) and Geneva (2.83%) are not far apart. Philippe Wanner, one of the authors, points to small differences. In French-speaking Switzerland more is done to facilitate the naturalisation of young second generation foreigners. This bumps up rates a little west of the "röstigraben", a notional line dividing French and German speakers.

Gipf-Oberfick, a municipality that made headlines in 2017 over the rejection of the naturalisation of anti-cow bell campaigner Nancy Holten, has a standardised naturalisation rate of 1.23%, not too far below the Swiss average of 1.91%.

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