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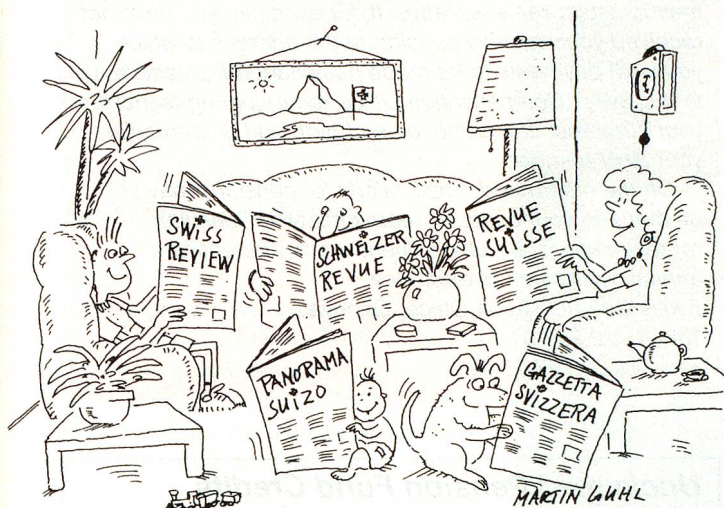
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The number of Swiss Abroad has been steadily increasing, and the circulation of Swiss Review has now passed 355,000. We are of course very pleased about this, but it also increases the

costs. The fact is that more than half of our budget is now spent on mailing. In order to reduce this in favour of improving the content of the magazine, we therefore suggest that you cancel your individual copy if you are one of several persons in your household receiving Swiss Review.

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Swiss National Science Foundation – 2000 call for applications for grants

The Research Council of the Swiss National Science Foundation is inviting applications for grants to fund advanced research fellowships in the fields of humanities and social science, mathematics, natural science and engineering, biology and medicine, and social and preventive medicine. The grants are available to students under 35 years of age (born in 1965 or later) for a period of one to three years and must be used for study abroad. Persons already studying abroad must perform their fellowship at a different university. The deadline for applications is 1 February 2000. For information and application forms, contact the Fellowship Office of the Swiss National Science Foundation (Tel +41 31 308 22 22), PO Box 8232, CH-3001 Berne. E-mail: fellowships@snf.ch. Home page: www.snf.ch.

Fellowships in clinical and experimental medicine are offered by the Swiss National Foundation for Fellowships in Medicine and Biology. Deadlines for applications: 1 February, 1 May and 1 October 2000. For application forms and further information, contact the SSMBS Secretariat, c/o F. Hoffmann-La Roche AG, Bau 52, Raum 311, CH-4070 Basle (Fax +41 61 688 94 89).

Swiss Abroad statistics 1999

Another increase

At the end of June 1999 there were 572,957 Swiss registered at Swiss embassies and consulates around the world. Compared with the end of June 1998 this represents an increase of 10,144 persons (or 1.8%) of which 2,025 have Swiss nationality only and 8,119 are dual citizens.

399,175 or 69.67% of Swiss Abroad are dual citizens and 340,046 (59.35%) live in European Union member states (see table).

70,063 of Swiss Abroad of voting age have registered at consulates and embassies to exercise their voting rights. This

Austria	12,148
Belgium	6,576
Denmark	2,521
Finland	1,173
France	148,580
Germany	67,608
Greece	2,722
Ireland	1,159
Italy	40,262
Luxembourg	826
Netherlands	6,497
Portugal	2,473
Spain	18,613
Sweden	4,147
UK	24,741
Total:	340,046

represents 16.13% of the 434,308 potential voters. **NYF**



Initiatives in brief

UN Initiative

The initiative "For Switzerland's adhesion to the United Nations (UN)" is supported by a multi-party committee of well-known personalities and calls for the following amendment to the Federal Constitution:

1. That Switzerland become a member of the United Nations.
2. That the Federal Council

be empowered to submit to the General Secretary of the United Nations an application for Switzerland's adhesion to this organisation and a declaration to adhere to the obligations contained in the UN Charter.

UN membership is also one of the Federal Council's legislative objectives.

NYF

Perpetrators of sexual and violent crimes

A private multi-party committee has launched an initiative "For lifelong internment for perpetrators of sexual or violent crimes who are judged to be highly dangerous and untreatable", calling for the following amendment to the Federal Constitution:

1. If expert assessments for the purposes of a trial find that a person who has committed a sexual or violent crime is dangerous to the public and incurable or untreatable, he must be con-

finied for life due to the high probability of re-offending. Early release and parole are out of the question. 2. Only if new scientific findings prove that the perpetrator can be cured to the extent that he no longer represents a threat to the public may a new assessment be made. Should such re-assessment result in the release of the perpetrator, the authority responsible for his release must assume responsibility in the event of re-offending. 3. All as-

sessments of perpetrators of sexual and violent crimes must be conducted by at least

two separate, independent experts, and take into account all germane criteria. ■

ATTENTION

all recipients of an AHV/IV pension

Since 1 January 1999, recipients of an AHV/IV pension requiring information on payment of their benefits must contact the Swiss Compensation Office, 18 Avenue Edmond Vaucher, CH-1211 Geneva directly, rather than their consular representative. If, for example, you have not received your monthly pension or the address to which you wish payments to be made has changed, please write to the Swiss Compensation Office remembering to include your surname, first name, date of birth and, in particular, your AHV number.

On the other hand, applications for pensions may still be made to your consular representative. Consular representatives are also still entitled to authenticate annual certificates of existence.

Swiss Compensation Office, Geneva

Tel +41 22 795 91 11

Fax +41 22 797 15 01

Unclaimed Pension Fund Credits

The Federal Council has amended the Swiss Federal Law on Vesting in Pension Plans and approved an executive ordinance with the aim of addressing the issue of "unclaimed credit balances" in occupational pension funds. Acting as a central office, the Occupational Pension Scheme Security Fund provides information to applicants and keeps a register of all incoming data. While the register is not open to the public, the central office for second pillar pension plans ("2. Säule") will divulge related information to insured persons and those entitled to benefits.

Address: Zentralstelle 2. Säule, Sicherheitsfonds BVG, PO Box 5032, CH-3001 Berne, Tel +41 31 382 05 91.

Current popular initiatives

The following popular initiatives are still open for signature:

For mother and child – for the protection of the unborn child and aid for his mother in distress

(until 2 December 1999)

Dominik Müggler, PO Box, CH-4011 Basle

Equal rights for handicapped persons

(until 4 February 2000)

Konrad Stoker, ASKIO, Effingerstrasse 55, 3008 Berne

For Switzerland's adhesion to the United Nations (UN)

(until 3 March 2000)

Association for Switzerland's Adhesion to the United Nations (UN), PO Box 734, CH-4003 Basle

For the safe and wholesome provision of medication (Medication Initiative)

(until 15 March 2000)

Swiss Apothecaries Association, Max Brentano, Stationstr. 12, PO Box 193, CH-3097 Bern-Liebelfeld

Lifelong internment for perpetrators of sexual or violent

crimes who are judged to be highly dangerous and untreatable

(until 3 May 2000)

Self-help Group "Licht der Hoffnung", Anita Chaaban, PO Box, CH-9471 Buchs SG

Against abuse of the right of asylum

(until 25 November 2000)

Swiss People's Party, Aliko Panayides, Brückfeldstrasse 18, PO Box, CH-3000 Berne 26

For popular initiatives to be put to the vote within six months, excluding the Federal Council and Parliament

(until 22 December 2000), Flavio Maspoli, National Councillor, Medeag SA, 6648 Minusio

For redirecting surplus gold reserves to the AHV fund (gold initiative)

(until 10 February 2001)

Swiss People's Party, Peter Kneubühler, Brückfeldstrasse 18, PO Box, CH-3000 Berne 26.

Moratorium on taxes

(until 1 March 2001),

Liberal Democratic Party of Switzerland, Johannes Matyas, PO Box 6136, CH-3001 Berne.