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Editorial



For centuries, people have crossed borders under political, social and economic imperatives. The only difference has been the direction of migration flows. Back in the 19th century, Switzerland was an emigration country. This fundamentally changed in the early 20th century. Nowadays, Europe is seen by many migrants as a successful model of western culture. And if they can just make it to “Paradise Europe”, their dreams will come true. The revolutions in North Africa have set numerous political and economic refugee flows in motion. However, “Fortress Europe” has long closed its gates to the masses. Many migrants have been forced to return to their home countries, sometimes on more than one occasion. Others have found asylum in Switzerland and may remain.

Asylum seekers form only a small percentage of total migration flows. Labour migrants are by far the largest group. In 2011, a total of 142 471 persons immigrated to Switzerland. Labour migrants from EU-27 member states accounted for 40.2 % of these newcomers and labour migrants from third states accounted for 7.9 %. A further 30 % moved to Switzerland by virtue of family reunification.

A strong Swiss economy is dependent on immigration. Since 2011, nationals of 25 EU/EFTA member states are now fully entitled to live and work in Switzerland under the terms of the Swiss-EU bilateral agreement on the free movement of persons. For Bulgarian and Romanian nationals, quotas and restrictions will remain in place until no later than 31 May 2016. In 2012, the EU is expected to request that Switzerland extend the bilateral agreement to include Croatian nationals.

We wish to protect and encourage cultural diversity and prosperity. However, migration-related problems such as wage dumping need to be addressed. Moreover, immigration can only be accepted when everyone understands that the purpose of immigration is to enter the labour market, not to secure unemployment or welfare benefits.

At the same time, anyone who lives and works in Switzerland must also become integrated. Successful integration requires willingness on the part of foreigners as well as openness on the part of the Swiss population. Learning a national language and becoming familiar with social norms are also essential in ensuring successful integration. Priority in federal migration policy is therefore given to the creation of traineeships and language courses.

The present report provides an overview of the wide range of activities carried out by the 742 employees of the Federal Office for Migration along with the main themes handled. I hope you will enjoy reading this report!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Gattiker'.

Mario Gattiker
Director of Federal Office for Migration

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Nicola M. from Italy has run a shoemaker's business for 20 years.

Year at a glance

Brief outline

Impact of North African crises on migration to Switzerland

In 2011, Arab countries set a transformation process in motion for which the development and outcome remain uncertain. 2011 was a year of civil protest movements against the previously inviolate authority of the political elite. The aim of the protest movements was to fight for human dignity, greater freedom and social justice. For Switzerland, this led to a significant increase in asylum seekers from North Africa.

Dublin Association Agreement

The Dublin Association Agreement came into force on 12 December 2008. The Dublin Agreement ensures that only one Dublin country has jurisdiction over a particular asylum application. This prevents asylum seekers from submitting multiple asylum applications in various countries. Between the date when the Swiss-EU bilateral agreement on Schengen/Dublin cooperation became operational (i.e. 12 December 2008) and 31 December 2011, Switzerland requested that 21 382 (2011: 9347) asylum seekers be transferred to another Dublin country. In 16 699 cases (2011: 7014), the Dublin country concerned confirmed that it was responsible for processing the asylum application and that it was therefore willing to take over the case.

Revision of Ordinance on the Issue of Travel Documents for Foreign Nationals

Since 1 March 2010, foreign travel restrictions for persons temporarily admitted to Switzerland for asylum have been lifted. This measure is intended to encourage greater integration of these persons. This lifting of travel restrictions drew criticism from cantonal migration authorities, foreign diplomatic/consular missions and numerous politicians. An FOM working group, which was also comprised of cantonal representatives, carefully reviewed the Ordinance of 20 January 2010 on the Issue of Travel Documents for Foreign Nationals (SR 143.5). The revised draft should go into effect on 1 July 2012.

Integration plan

In March 2011, the Confederation established the parameters of a four-step integration plan. First of all, the Foreign Nationals Act (SR 142.20) will be revised to legally anchor the principle of "expectations and encouragement". Secondly, special legislation will be revised to include provisions on integration and foster equal opportunities. Thirdly, specific measures will be taken to encourage integration. Lastly, integration dialogue will be intensified.

Integrated border management

The Schengen Association Agreement has fundamentally changed the way in which people are checked at the border: although people can now freely move across internal borders, border checks on the external borders have become more stringent. This change in system requires new Schengen-wide coordination of measures to fight illegal migration and cross-border crime. Closer cooperation at the national level is a vital prerequisite for this.

FDJP report on measures to accelerate processing of asylum applications

On 23 November 2010 the Political Institutions Committee of the Council of States (PIC-S) has decided to examine and discuss the draft revision of the Asylum Act (SR 142.31). The committee members welcomed the draft, the main purpose of which was to simplify and accelerate processing of asylum applications. FDJP was also asked to draft a report on various measures that could be taken to significantly reduce the amount of time needed to process these applications.

Free movement of persons

Since 1 May 2011, restrictions on the free movement of nationals of EU-8 member states (Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Slovakia, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia), including quotas on work permits, have been lifted. Immigration of Eastern European nationals to Switzerland significantly increased from 1 May to 31 December 2011. While demand has mainly been for skilled workers in construction, hotel industry and agriculture, there has also been an influx of less skilled workers.

Schengen acquis

Since the signature of Schengen Association Agreement on 26 October 2004, the EU and Switzerland have added a total of 131 Schengen acquis to the Schengen Association Agreement. So far, there have been no further Dublin acquis. In 2011, 11 Schengen acquis fell under the remit of the Federal Office for Migration. Most of these acquis related to Schengen visas and the EU's External Borders Fund (EBF).

Key figures in 2011

- Last year, Switzerland issued 434 383 Schengen visas. As in the previous year, most of these visas were issued by Swiss consulates in India, followed by those in China and Russia.
- At the end of the year, there were 1 772 279 (2010: 1 720 393) legally resident foreigners in Switzerland. Of these legally resident foreigners, 1 147 185 persons (2010: 1 101 760) were EU-27/EFTA nationals. The proportion of foreigners to the total Swiss population stood at 22.3 %.
- 99 932 EU-27/EFTA nationals immigrated to Switzerland. Around 65 % of these foreign nationals immigrated to Switzerland for the purpose of taking up employment.
- 37 854 persons were granted Swiss citizenship. As in previous years, those naturalised came chiefly from Serbia, Italy and Germany.
- 22 551 persons applied for asylum in Switzerland. Most of these asylum seekers came from Eritrea, Tunisia, Nigeria, Serbia, Afghanistan, Macedonia, Syria, China, Somalia and Kosovo.
- Of the 19 467 asylum applications handled at first instance in 2011, 3 711 persons were granted asylum. This corresponds to an approval rate of 21 %.
- 2 231 persons obtained residence permits as hardship cases.
- A total of 2 771 persons left Switzerland under the federal return assistance programme.
- Swiss authorities ensured the removal by air of 9 461 persons. 70.5 % of these cases fell within the scope of the Asylum Act and 29.5 % fell within the scope of the Foreign Nationals Act.
- In 2011, the FOM issued 8 382 bans on entry.



The Forum for Migrants helps with integrating the migrant population.

1. Overview

The figures speak for themselves:

- Since World War II, over two million people have immigrated to Switzerland or live here as the descendants of immigrants.
- At the end of 2011, there were over 1.77 million legally resident foreigners in Switzerland.
- One in every four employed persons in Switzerland has a foreign passport.
- At over 22 %, Switzerland has one of the highest foreigner-to-total population ratios in Europe.
- Migration makes a larger contribution to Switzerland's population growth than in the classic immigration countries USA, Canada and Australia.
- Around one in every ten Swiss citizens lives abroad.

2. Historical context

Switzerland was predominantly a country of emigrants until well into the 19th century. It was mainly impoverished small-holder farmers that were forced to leave the country to escape unemployment and demographic pressures. The most popular destination countries – apart from Switzerland's neighbouring countries – were North and South America, Australia and Russia. With the advent of industrialisation towards the end of the 19th century, Switzerland went from being a country of emigration to one of immigration. In 1890, the registered inflow of immigrants exceeded the outflow of emigrants for the first time. Compared to other countries, the more attractive working conditions and full freedom of movement favourably influenced immigration to Switzerland from neighbouring countries. In 1914, the level of legally resident foreigners in Switzerland peaked at approximately 600 000 persons, resp. 15 % of the usual resident population – a development that gave cause for great concern among Swiss nationals. In 1925,

Hugenotten



Ende Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts wanderten französische Protestanten – Hugenotten genannt – wegen ihrer religiösen Überzeugungen aus Frankreich nach Europa. Im Jahr 1563, nach dem Vertrag von Amboise, wurde ihnen erlaubt, sich in der Schweiz niederzulassen. Sie brachten ihre Kenntnisse in der Textilindustrie mit und gründeten dort Fabriken. Die protestantischen Kantone der Eidgenossenschaft nahmen Zölle für diese Waren ab und gewährten ihnen Schutz vor Verfolgung durch die katholischen Kantone.

Die Revolutionen von 1848/49



1848 wurde die Schweiz zu einem Bundesstaat mit moderner Verfassung. Die Linien der Grenze Europas waren begeistert dankbar. Die konservativen Regierungen der europäischen Staaten hatten jedoch ein solches liberales Konzept nicht akzeptiert. 1848/49 kam es in den meisten Staaten Europas zu bürgerlichen Revolutionen, deren Erfolg jedoch fraglich war. Die Revolutionen in der Schweiz waren im Endeffekt gescheitert. Rund 12 000 politische Flüchtlinge gelangten damals in die Schweiz. Wegen der Aufnahme dieser Flüchtlinge wurde die Schweiz von den umliegenden Staaten unter Druck gesetzt.

Handwerker und Firmengründer



Nach 1840 zogen deutsche Handwerker auf der Suche nach Arbeit von Stadt zu Stadt. Auf diese Weise besiedelten die «Bodenlosen» auch die Schweiz. In der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts gründeten ausländische Pioniere zahlreiche Unternehmen, unter anderem Nestlé, Bally und Dab.

Bourbaki-Armee



1871 überschritten in Lausanne innerhalb von 48 Stunden 87 000 Soldaten der zerschlagenen französischen Armee die Schweizer Grenze. Die Intervention der Bourbaki-Armee stellte die erste große Herausforderung der Rote Kreuzes dar. Nach sechs Wochen verließen die französischen Soldaten die Schweiz wieder.

Migration facts

the Federal Council was given authority to establish a policy on refugees, foreign nationals and the labour market to counter the "excessive influx of foreigners". In the period of National Socialism, Switzerland did not want to be perceived by refugees as a country of asylum but rather as merely a transit country. This policy led to the steady reduction in the number of legally resident foreigners in Switzerland. By the middle of World War II, the foreigner-to-total population ratio had reached a historical low of around 5 %, or 223 000 people. This was also the result of a restrictive asylum policy, which led to the expulsion of thousands of Jewish refugees to the Swiss border.

The favourable economic development in Switzerland after World War II resulted in a great demand for foreign labour. Most of these "guest workers" were Italian nationals who found employment in the agricultural, industrial and construction sectors. Until the mid-1960s, Switzerland's post-war

policy on foreign nationals was essentially based on the principle of rotation whereby foreign workers were only allowed to stay in Switzerland for a few years to fill cyclical gaps in our economy. Furthermore, work permits were not automatically renewed and integration of these foreign workers was not an established objective.

Despite these restrictive measures, the number of guest workers continued to rise steadily. In 1970, for the first time in its history, Switzerland had over one million legally resident foreigners. Heated discussions on the "excessive influx of foreigners" led to a culmination point with the Schwarzenbach initiative, which was narrowly rejected by the Swiss electorate in the same year. The authorities reacted to growing xenophobic tendencies within the population by launching a series of capping measures to limit the influx of foreign workers who now came mostly from Yugoslavia, Turkey and Portugal. Despite an

Sozialisten, Anarchisten, Kommunisten



Wirtschaftsaufschwung



Touristen und Studentinnen



Erster Weltkrieg



Gegen Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts landeten auch Flüchtlinge in der Schweiz an, die die gesellschaftliche Ordnung und den Kapitalismus bekämpften. Es handelte sich um Sozialisten, Kommunisten und Anarchisten. Auch Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels und Michail Bakunin kämpften in der Schweiz für ihre Sache. Die Schweizer Behörden gestanden diesen «Umstürzler»-Freiheiten zu. Anarchisten, die gelegentlich aus der Schweiz ausgewiesen wurden, durften jedoch bald schon keine Flüchtlingsgaranten mehr machen.

Zwischen 1895 und 1914 erlebte die Schweiz einen besonders intensiven Wirtschaftsaufschwung, was zu einer starken Zunahme der Einwanderung führte. Für den Bau der Eisenbahnstrecke durch den Gotthard, den Simplon und den Lötschberg sowie die Erstellung von Strassen und Staudämmen wurden vor allem Italiener rekrutiert.

Sied der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts wand die Schweiz als Touristenzentrum bei den Engländern, Deutschen, Franzosen und Amerikanern hoch im Kurs. Es setzte ein regelrechter Sturm auf die Berge ein – mit Seil und Haken, aber auch mit Behnen wurde Spitze um Spitze angesetzt. Zudem schleppten sich um die Jahrhundertwende viele russische Studenten an schweizerischen Universitäten für das Medizinstudium an, da ihnen im Heimatland keine Ausdehnungsmöglichkeiten offen standen.

Mit Ausbruch des Ersten Weltkrieges vertrieben junge Ausländer die Schweiz in Schrecken, um in den Krieg zu ziehen. Im Verlaufe des Krieges suchten vor allem kriegsunfähige Schütz in der Schweiz. Auch wurden Verwundete und Kranke aus den Krieg führenden Ländern aufgenommen. Von den Bundesräten und den Bundesämtern wurden die «Einschweiser» als die grosse Irre Gelehr für die Schweiz angesehen. Der Führer der sozialistischen Jugend, der Deutsche Wilhelm Müller, wurde deshalb 1918 ausgewiesen.

1895

1914

economic recession in the mid-1970s and cantonal quotas on annual and seasonal workers, the number of legally resident foreigners continued to rise under the effects of family reunification, prompted by a restrictive naturalisation policy. In 1994, the number of legally resident foreigners in Switzerland exceeded the 20 % threshold for the first time. The year 2000 popular vote approving the Swiss-EU bilateral agreement on the free movement of persons marked a milestone in Switzerland's relationship to its foreign labour force: skilled and unskilled workers could now be recruited from EU/EFTA countries. The admission of foreign workers from non-EU/EFTA countries, in contrast, was only possible for persons with high professional qualifications.

After World War II, parallel to the legal influx of labour, a large number of people also came to Switzerland as refugees. Until the early 1980s, Switzerland had special programmes to readily admit large numbers of people in need of protection: 14 000 Hungarians in 1956, 12 000 Czechs and Slovaks in 1968 and several thousand refugees from Tibet, China and Indochina. Since the early 1980s, the number of asylum applications, particularly from Turkey, Lebanon, Sri Lanka and the West Balkans, as well as from other countries of origin, has shown a marked increase, peaking at 46 000 applications in 1999. After the end of armed conflict in the Balkans, the number of asylum applications in Switzerland and in most European countries decreased significantly. In recent years, Switzerland has registered an average of approximately 16 000 asylum applications per year. Due to political upheavals in

Arab countries since December 2010, the number of asylum seekers once again increased. Over one hundred thousand people, mainly from North Africa, have fled to Europe. In 2011, Switzerland received 22 000 asylum applications instead of the 15 000 that it had initially anticipated. Despite the comparatively low proportion of asylum seekers to the total number of legally resident foreigners in Switzerland (2.5 %), the issue of asylum continues to fuel heated debates among Swiss inhabitants, politicians and the media.

In recent years, it has become increasingly clear that refugee flows are taking a back seat to economically motivated migration flows. "Migration pressures", "illegal migration", "economic refugees", "combating abuse", but also "protecting genuine refugees" and "integration" have become the new buzzwords. Discussions pit the proponents of a more restrictive asylum policy (e.g. more stringent provisions in the Asylum Act, faster processing of asylum applications, more effective enforcement of removal orders, etc.) against those who favour a more generous one. Both sides agree that there is a need for a uniform and coherent migration strategy that gives equal weight to domestic and international aspects and leads to greater dialogue with our foreign partners. There is also agreement that Swiss migration policy will only be successful if a balance can be struck between the core values of security, prosperity and solidarity and if Switzerland is able to reap rewards from migration.

Antifaschisten



Nach der Machtübernahme Mussolinis flohen zahlreiche seiner polit. Gegner in die Schweiz. Viele Deutschen die Schweiz jedoch nur als Transitland auf dem Weg nach Paris. Die italienischen Antifaschisten wollten für die Schweiz Regierung eine Bedeutung in den Beziehungen zu Italien dar.

Nationalsozialismus und Zweiter Weltkrieg



Zur Zeit des Nationalsozialismus wollte die Schweiz das Flüchtlingsrecht nicht als Asylland, sondern bloss als Transitland zur Verfügung stellen. Der Chef der Eidgenössischen Fremdenpolizei warnte vor der "Verfälschung" der Schweiz. Verhandlungen zwischen der Schweiz und Deutschland führten zur Kennzeichnung der Passa deutscher Juden mit dem "J" (Juden). Im Sommer 1942 verhängten die Schweizer Behörden die Schließung der Grenze, obwohl bis zu diesem Zeitpunkt Informationen über die Deportationen und die Verhinderung der Juden hatten. Für die gesamte Kriegszeit sind über 24 000 Flüchtlingsanträge an die Grenze nachgewiesen. Der Anteil jüdischer Flüchtlinge an den As- und Migrationsanträgen ist nicht bekannt, muss aber hoch gewesen sein. Dagegen über wurden rund 51 000 Zivilflüchtlinge aufgenommen.

Die Zeit der Hochkonjunktur



In den 1950er- und 1960er Jahren herrschte in der Schweiz Hochkonjunktur. Die von den Unternehmen zusätzlich benötigten Arbeitskräfte wurden in den Nachbarländern nicht mehr gefunden, insbesondere in Italien. Die "Gastarbeiter" waren vor allem in Baugewerbe, in den Fabriken, in der Landwirtschaft und im Reinigungssektor beschäftigt. Gewisse Krisen bei Flüchtlingen eine Überforderung der Schweiz und kämpften für eine massiven Reduktion des Ausländerbestandes.

Ungarn-Aufstand



Nach der Niederschlagung des Ungarn-Aufstandes im Jahre 1956 durch die Sowjetunion kamen rund 14 000 Ungarn in die Schweiz. Ihnen schenkte eine Welle der Solidarität entgegen. Sie wurden ohne weitere Abklärungen als politische Flüchtlinge anerkannt.

Tibeter



1980 haben die ersten tibetischen Flüchtlinge in der Schweiz an. Ihnen folgten rund 5000 weitere Tibeterinnen und Tibeter. Diese Menschen wurden in der Schweiz mit offenen Armen empfangen.

3. Conclusions

A look at the historical context reveals the main migration challenges that Switzerland has had to face over the years. While new problems have emerged in recent decades, the main migration challenges have remained largely unresolved and constitute present and future concerns for Swiss migration policy.

With this in mind, nine conclusions may be drawn:

- In the past, Switzerland has demonstrated its ability to handle and assimilate a large influx of migrants. It is an immigration country surrounded by other immigration countries.
- Migration is a reality; it is a part of our human history. Globalisation facilitates mobility and accelerates migration.
- National and international tools are needed to steer legal and illegal migration flows.
- A good migration policy is one that makes our country more prosperous and competitive. Foreign workers can make an important contribution along this line.
- It is impossible to clearly separate Switzerland's policies on asylum, foreign nationals and the labour market. People often leave their home countries for several reasons. Specific attempts should be made to classify migrant groups, their objectives and underlying interests.
- Migration patterns and reasons for fleeing may vary, but a country's migration policy always needs to strike a balance between conflicting objectives: adhering to a "humanitarian tradition" while nevertheless avoiding "an excessive influx of foreigners".
- Migration and integration are two closely linked aspects of Swiss policy that must be continuously reconciled in order to safeguard the interests of both Swiss citizens and legally resident foreigners in Switzerland.
- Migration and integration cannot be achieved without tensions or conflicts. Swiss citizens and migrants share the same burden.
- Migration and integration can work if a coherent concept reconciling the two can be found. The opportunities and risks associated with migration and integration must be the subject of continuous public debate.

Prager Frühling - Tschechen und Slowaken	Chilenen	Boat-People	Asylsuchende aus aller Welt	Drei Kreise - Zwei Kreise
 Rund 51 000 Tschechen und Slowaken flüchten nach dem Einbruch des Trugens des Warschauer Paktes in die Tschechoslowakei von 1968 in die Schweiz. Von der schweizerischen Bevölkerung und den Behörden wurden diese Flüchtlinge humanitär und unpolitisch aufgenommen.	 Nach dem Militärputsch in Chile von 1973 gewährte die Schweiz rund 1000 Personen aus diesem Land Aufnahme. Das waren weit mehr, als der Bundesrat eigentlich wollte.	 Über fünf Millionen Menschen flüchten zwischen 1975 und 1985 vor zentralen Konflikten in Indochina, wie oben auf Booten. 1979 erreichte die Schweiz eine Luftschleuse nach Solothurn und Rogg Tassano von Flüchtlingen in die Schweiz. Die schweizerische Bevölkerung zeigte eine immense Anteilnahme, als die Dämmerung der Diktatur in Indochina schon Raum in der Einwanderung drohte.	 Seit Beginn der 1980er Jahre nahm die Zahl der Asylsuchende in der Schweiz stark zu. Aufgrund der kriegsbedingten Ereignisse in Bosnien und Herzegowina sowie im Kosovo flüchten sehr viele Menschen aus diesen Regionen in die Schweiz, so sie vielfach Verwandte oder Freunde hatten. 1999 wurden rund 45 000 Asylsuchende registriert, wobei es nach mehrheitlich im Rapperswil-Jonaer Handelshaus. Seither sank die Zahl der Asylsuchenden.	 Die Frage, aus welchen Ländern die Schweiz ihre Arbeitskräfte rekrutieren soll, sorgte in der jüngsten Vergangenheit immer wieder für heftige Debatten. Heute wird das »Zwei-Kreise-Modell« praktiziert. Dem ersten Kreis gehören die EU- und EFTA-Länder an, dem zweiten alle übrigen Länder. Aufenthaltsbewilligungen für Staatsangehörige aus EU- und EFTA-Ländern werden gemäss dem Personenfreizügigkeitsabkommen erteilt. Die Zuwanderung aus dem zweiten Kreis ist auf qualifizierte Arbeitskräfte beschränkt.

4. New developments

In recent times, global migration flows have changed and intensified. Relations between Switzerland and the EU have become close as a result of bilateral agreements covering many different areas, including migration. Switzerland therefore works with its EU partners – and in many cases in direct cooperation with countries of origin and transit countries outside the EU – to face new challenges.

Globalisation continues to accelerate global trade and make it more affordable. The transfer of information over the Internet and cellphone networks has revolutionised the way in which we live. People are also becoming more geographically mobile. As air transport capacities increase and both Internet and cellphone coverage spreads to remote regions, more people find these services less expensive. In many developing countries, Internet, cellphone and satellite TV are now commonplace. Some emerging countries are actually already ahead of the rest of the world. More people are now aware of events transpiring on the other side of the planet and also have the possibility to travel there.

Over the past few years, many regions have experienced robust economic growth, which has gradually shifted the global balance towards Asia. However, the world's richest countries are still in Western Europe and North America, with Australia being the richest country in the Pacific. Generally speaking, these countries apply restrictive immigration policies. True global mobility is only really available to a small elite, most of whom come from the world's richest countries.

Millions of people remain in a situation of poverty without prospects. These push factors have led to a considerable increase in the number of people who are willing and able to leave their home countries, even more so under migration pressures. There are also pull factors such as a demand for workers in countries such as Switzerland. For one thing, the Swiss economy needs workers from outside the EU. Migration is viewed as offering benefits to Switzerland, and a permit procedure exists to enable the Confederation and the cantons to manage migration flows. At the same time, however, there has also been a market for labour that was either illegal or borderline legal. Here, we are mainly referring to work done under the table by people who lack a work permit but also to prostitution and drug trafficking. Illegal migration has been fuelled by lucrative business prospects, especially for employers and financial backers. It is also sustained by the fact that many people arriving in Switzerland have no opportunity to legally live and work here.

Globalisation has therefore made it possible for an unprecedented number of people to obtain information about distant locations and to migrate there. Given different levels of prosperity and economic growth – as well as democracy and human rights – people have naturally taken advantage of the possibilities afforded to them. In 2010, the number of international migrants (nearly 50 % of whom are women) reached an all-time high: according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), 214 million international migrants, i.e. around 3 % of the world's population, spend over one year outside of their country of birth. This figure does not include refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), about 16 million in all, who mainly seek refuge in countries that border conflict zones.¹

Alongside the general increase in migration, highly developed countries have become more knowledge-based, which has led to a decrease in demand for unqualified workers. With introduction of the Swiss-EU bilateral agreement on the free movement of persons, Switzerland decided to apply a restrictive policy on immigration by third-state nationals. Most international migrants, particularly from less developed countries, therefore did not meet the stringent criteria. Signature of the Swiss-EU bilateral agreement on Schengen/Dublin cooperation is an expression of Switzerland's commitment to work with its EU partners. Switzerland places considerable value on the social integration of migrants, which would have become more difficult in a situation of uncontrolled immigration of unqualified workers.

While complete openness to international migration is not an option for Switzerland, our country has nevertheless been affected by it. Switzerland realised early on that immigration had to be controlled at the external borders of the EU, before migrants reach the Swiss border. This prompted Switzerland to enter into cooperation agreements with the EU. It also intensified its foreign policy in the area of migration by developing new approaches: e.g. migration partnerships, targeted bilateral agreements, return assistance, structural projects in the country of origin, programmes to prevent illegal migration, and active migration dialogue with key partner countries.

¹ Only about 10% (i.e. roughly 1.6 million people) of all refugees worldwide live in Europe.





Italian nationals are the largest group of foreigners in Switzerland.

Migration 2011

1. Schengen visas

Schengen visas are valid for short-term stays (i.e. no longer than 90 days within a 180-day period) usually required by tourists and business travellers. A single Schengen visa allows the holder to travel anywhere within the entire Schengen area, including Switzerland. A total of 434 383 Schengen visas were issued in 2011. As in 2010, our consular missions in India, followed by China and Russia, issued the largest number of Schengen visas. Like other Schengen countries, Switzerland also maintains a list of countries for which consultation with fellow Schengen countries is required. Whenever a national of a country on this list submits a visa application at a consulate of a Schengen country, the Swiss authorities will be systematically informed and given the option of raising objections to issuance of a Schengen visa to the applicant in question. In 2011, this consultation procedure led to around 54 607 consultation requests by Switzerland (incl. consultations where Switzerland represented another Schengen country). At the same time, Switzerland received consultation requests (H forms) from other Schengen countries regarding roughly 308 843 visa applications in 2011. In addition, Switzerland performed background checks on 286 472 people in response to consultation requests from Schengen countries. Consultation requests are channelled through an online network (VISION system) of national VISION offices. Each national VISION office acts as the point of contact for the other VISION offices in the network.

Schengen countries can have another member country process visa applications on their behalf. In 2011, Switzerland signed agreements to represent the following countries in visa-related matters: Austria in Tiflis (Georgia); France in Astana (Kazakhstan); Slovenia in Quito (Ecuador), Montevideo (Uruguay) and Dar es Salaam (Tanzania); Estonia in Ramallah (Palestinian territory); Norway in Antananarivo (Madagascar). In 2011, Switzerland also signed agreements to be represented by the following countries in visa-related matters: Austria in Sofia (Bulgaria), Tirana (Albania) and Zagreb (Croatia); France in Almaty (Kazakhstan); Spain in Port-au-Prince (Haiti) and Niamey (Niger). This type of visa representation has been formalised in bilateral agreements with the countries concerned, and these agreements have been signed by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), working in close cooperation with the Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP).

2. Immigration and foreign resident population

At the end of December 2011, the usual foreign resident population in Switzerland stood at 1 772 279² (2010: 1 720 393). A total of 1 147 185 (2010: 1 101 760) people (just under 65 % of the usual foreign resident population in Switzerland) are nationals of EU-27/EFTA member states; 625 094 (2010: 618 633) or 35 % are nationals of other states. The number of EU-27/EFTA nationals increased by 4.1 % compared to the previous year. The number of third-state nationals increased by 1 %. The largest group of foreigners is comprised of Italian nationals (290 546 persons, 16.4 % of the usual foreign resident population in Switzerland), followed by German nationals (276 828 persons, 15.6 %), and Portuguese nationals (224 171 persons, 12.6 %). The largest increase compared to the previous year was registered by German nationals (+12 601), Portuguese (+11 018) and French nationals (+4 370).

² Federal Office for Migration, Foreign Population Statistics. The usual foreign resident population includes all foreign nationals who have been legally resident in Switzerland for at least one year and hold one of the following permits: short-stay permit (valid for 12 months or longer), normal residence permit, permanent residence permit.

3. Employment

Switzerland draws a distinction between two types of foreign workers when awarding residence and work permits: EU/EFTA nationals and third-state nationals. The first group enjoys all of the benefits of the Swiss-EU bilateral agreement on the free movement of persons, which authorises EU/EFTA nationals to live and work in any EU/EFTA member state. All other nationals are considered as third-state nationals, which means that they are subject to quotas on the number of residence and work permits that may be issued. Generally, only managers, specialists and qualified workers are issued such permits but only if Swiss employers are unable to find equally qualified workers in Switzerland or, by extension, any other EU/EFTA member state.

In 2011, 99 932 EU-27/EFTA³ nationals immigrated to Switzerland – around 64.6 % (64 574) of whom came for the purpose of taking up employment. EU-17/EFTA⁴ nationals who come to Switzerland by virtue of the Swiss-EU bilateral agreement on the free movement of persons mainly work in the tertiary sector (65.56 %)⁵. Nearly 20 % work in the secondary sector (industry and crafts) and 1.4 % work in the primary sector. The employment situation for EU-8⁶ nationals within the usual foreign resident population is similar. Around 69 % work in the tertiary sector and nearly 20 % work in the secondary sector (industry and crafts). Compared to EU-17/EFTA nationals, however, considerably more EU-8 nationals (around 11.6 %) work in the primary sector.

For their part, Bulgarian and Romanian nationals (EU-2 nationals) have been able to benefit from the provisions of the Swiss-EU bilateral agreement on the free movement of persons since 1 June 2009. The vast majority of EU-2 nationals (67 %) work in the tertiary sector, around 12 % work in the secondary sector (industry and trade) and 15 % in the primary sector.

Third-state nationals on the Swiss labour market

A quota of 5000 short-stay permits and 3500 normal residence permits was established for third-state nationals for 2011. For the first time, service providers from EU/EFTA member states wishing to work more than 120 days in Switzerland were no longer included in the quota calculation for third-state nationals. A separate quota of 3000 short-stay permits and 500 normal residence permits was established for service providers from EU/EFTA member states. The total quota

volume for 2011 was therefore 1000 permits higher than in the previous year. This separation of quota types was an important development. In the past, service providers from EU/EFTA member states used up a major portion of the quotas set aside for third-state nationals. The creation of two separate quotas also enables separation of different levels of authority (i.e. cantonal authorities are responsible for issuing permits to service providers from EU/EFTA member states; cantonal authorities in consultation with the Confederation are responsible for issuing permits to third-state nationals). It also ensures greater transparency between the different types of quotas (i.e. those applying to service providers from EU/EFTA member states and those applying to third-state nationals).

The running total of remaining quotas for service providers from EU/EFTA member states is updated on a quarterly basis. The 3000 short-stay permits available to service providers were all used up in 2011. Of the 500 normal residence permits available, only 58 % (288 permits) were issued. Permits for service providers were issued mainly in the tertiary sector (financial services, corporate consulting, IT) and the secondary sector (machine industry, electrical engineering, construction).

In 2011, there was a slight increase in the number of short-stay permits issued to third-state nationals. A total of 4781 short-stay permits (around 9 % more than in 2010) and 3076 normal residence permits (around 3 % more than in 2010). In Switzerland, economic growth in the first half of 2011 remained solid but gradually slowed in the second half of the year as the economic climate worsened and the Swiss franc became stronger. Economic conditions had a corresponding damping effect on the number of permits applied for. While in the first three quarters, the quota for short-stay was used up at roughly the same rate as the quota for normal residence permits, things changed in the last quarter with fewer applications for normal residence permits. By the end of 2011, 219 short-stay permits and 424 normal residence permits from the established quotas remained unused. The unused portion of the quotas will serve as a reserve for 2012.

As in 2010, most residence and work permits were issued to IT specialists (1805 permits, +6 % compared to 2010). The second largest group was comprised of highly qualified workers in the chemical and pharmaceuticals industry (641 permits, -7 %); the third largest group was comprised of workers in the food and beverage industry (473 permits, +7 %), financial

services and insurance specialists (451 permits, +4 %) and corporate consultants in areas applicable to all economic branches. Interestingly enough, the number of permits issued to highly qualified workers specialised in the export-dependent machine industry (586 permits) increased by 31 % compared to the previous year (2010: 449 permits), despite the strong Swiss franc. This contrasts sharply with the 34 % decline in the number of permits issued in 2010 with respect to 2009 (2009: 676 permits).

As far as the qualifications of third-state nationals are concerned, 80 % of all newcomers who received a permit from the Federal Office for Migration were holders of a higher education qualification. As in 2010, third-state nationals mainly came from the following countries: India (1719), USA (1572), Canada (475) and China (472).

On 23 November 2011, the Federal Council announced quotas for 2012, which remained at the same level as in 2011. In 2012, Swiss companies may hire a total of 8500 third-state nationals (5000 short-stay permits and 3500 normal residence

permits). Residence permit quotas for service providers from EU/EFTA member states remain unchanged in 2012 (3000 short-stay permits and 500 normal residence permits).

³ The current member states of the European Union are known as EU-27 member states. They are Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

The current member states of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) are Switzerland, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

⁴ EU-17/EFTA: Citizens of France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Spain, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxemburg, Greece, Cyprus, Malta, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein have full rights to freedom of movement since 1 June, 2007.

⁵ These values are based on the usual foreign resident population.

⁶ The EU-8 refers to the eight Eastern European countries that joined the European Union in 2004 at the same time as Cyprus and Malta. They are the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.



People from 50 different nations are employed in Emmi's production plant.

4. Europe

The Federal Office of Migration monitors migration policy developments within the EU and seeks to ensure that Swiss interests in the area of migration are adequately taken into account in the various EU bodies and international organisations. In this manner, Switzerland is able to actively influence EU legislative processes at an early stage.

The Federal Office of Migration is represented by a migration attaché, who works at the Swiss Embassy to the European Union in Brussels. By virtue of the Swiss-EU bilateral agreement on Schengen/Dublin cooperation, Switzerland regularly takes part in the sessions of the EU's **Justice and Home Affairs Council**. By working directly with the various ministries, the Federal Office for Migration ensures the coherence of Switzerland's positions at the EU level (for more information, see Chapter D, 8. Schengen acquis).

In relation to Schengen/Dublin acquis, Switzerland plays an active role in the following bodies:

- **External Borders Fund (EBF)**. A Schengen acquis, the EBF was created by the EU for the period running from 2007 to 2013 to enable members to split the cost of protecting the external borders of the Schengen area. The EBF should improve border control efficiency, thereby improving protection of the external borders and reducing illegal immigration (see Chapter D, 8. Schengen acquis, External Borders Fund).
- **European Asylum Support Office (EASO)**. Switzerland works with the EASO in matters of asylum. The EASO seeks to help member countries in their efforts to establish more coherent and just asylum policies by collecting and exchanging information on best practices, organising training seminars at the European level and facilitating access to meaningful information regarding countries of origin.

The Federal Office for Migration represents Swiss interests in the following multilateral institutions:

- **General Directors' Immigration Services Conference (GDISC)**. The GDISC seeks to encourage practical cooperation among immigration authorities in EU/EFTA member states and other Eastern European countries (EU candidate countries). The GDISC offers Switzerland – which is not an EU member state – the possibility of taking part in migration policy debates as an equal partner.⁷ In 2012, Switzerland became a member of the GDISC Steering Group and will organise workshops for professionals working in the field of European migration.
- **International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)**. The ICMPD is an intergovernmental organisation that seeks to harmonise European migration policies and encourage implementation of foreign migration policy. Represented by the Federal Office for Migration, Switzerland is a founding member of the ICMPD and plays an active role in the ICMPD Steering Group.⁸

⁷ <http://www.gdisc.org/>

⁸ <http://www.icmpd.org/>

5. Asylum seekers

Situation in Switzerland in 2011

In 2011, the number of asylum applications increased by around 45 % (+6984) compared to the previous year, reaching 22 551. This is the highest volume of incoming asylum applications since 2002 (26 987).

In 2011, the ten major countries of origin of asylum seekers were:

Country	Applications in 2011	Change from 2010 to 2011, in persons	Change from 2010 to 2011, in %
Eritrea	3356	+1557	+86.5 %
Tunisia	2574	+2216	+619.0 %
Nigeria	1895	-74	-3.8 %
Serbia	1217	+307	+33.7 %
Afghanistan	1052	+382	+57.0 %
Macedonia	926	+509	+122.1 %
Syria	826	+357	+76.1 %
China	696	+338	+94.4 %
Somalia	636	+299	+88.7 %
Kosovo	634	+32	+5.3 %

The top country of origin was Eritrea. The number of asylum applications from Eritrean nationals increased as a direct result of the crisis in North Africa and the migration route from Libya to the south of Italy, which opened up at the end of March. The larger number of approved entry applications abroad also contributed to the increase in the number of asylum applications. Family reunification and personal vulnerability were the main reasons for submission of these entry applications.

The second main country of origin was Tunisia. The increase was due to the toppling of the Tunisian government and corresponding opening of the migration route to Italy. Nearly 30 000 Tunisians used this route, some of whom reached Switzerland and applied for asylum here. The vast majority of these people left Tunisia to escape the bleak socioeconomic situation and had no real chances of obtaining asylum.

Nigeria was the third main country of origin. Several thousand Nigerian nationals crossed the Mediterranean Sea to Italy in the summer of 2011. Some of these nationals reached Switzerland, resulting in a sharp increase in the number of asylum applications from Nigerian nationals in Switzerland.

Serbia was the fourth main country. Since December 2009, Serbian, Macedonian and Montenegrin nationals may now travel without a visa throughout the Schengen area. As in the previous year, several thousand Serbian and Macedonian nationals, many of whom belong to the Roma minority group, took advantage of the eased travel restrictions to apply for asylum within a Schengen country in 2011. Switzerland was less affected by this development than other European countries.

The number of asylum applications from Sri Lankan nationals decreased by over 100 to 470 applications (-469 applications, -49.9 %), from Georgian nationals to 371 (-271, -42.2 %) and from Iraqi nationals to 504 applications (-155, -23.5 %).

Cases handled in first instance	2011	Change from 2010-2011	Change from 2010-2011 in %
Asylum granted	3711	+262	+7.6 %
Recognition rate	21 %	+3.3 %	+18.6 %
Applications dismissed	9699	+222	+2.3 %
of which related to Dublin	7099	+706	+11.0 %
Asylum denied	4281	-2260	-34.6 %
Application cancelled	1787	+553	+44.8 %
Total cases handled	19 467	-1223	-5.9 %
Applications pending in first instance	13 694	+4669	+1.7 %

Dublin-related cases accounted for 36.5 % of all cases handled in 2011 (more information about Dublin procedure can be found in Chapter D, 2 Dublin Association Agreement).

European trends

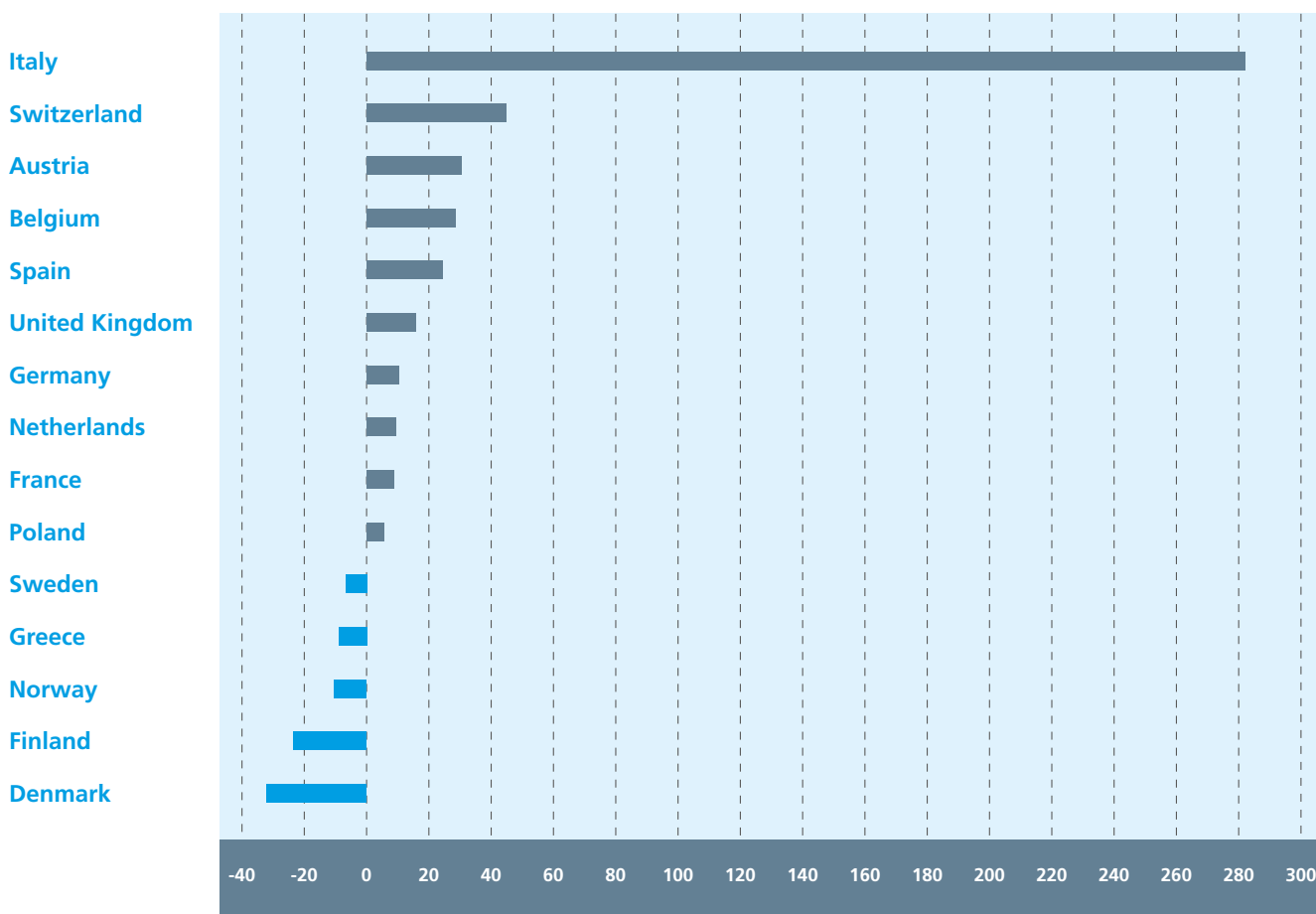
In 2011, around 314 000 asylum applications were submitted to EU and EFTA member states (incl. Switzerland). This represents an increase of around 18 % compared to 2010. After decreasing slightly in 2010, the number of asylum applications has once again increased across Europe. Approximately 7.2 % of the asylum applications filed in Europe in 2011 were received by Switzerland (2010: 5.8 %).

Main European destination countries

Main destination countries for asylum seekers in 2011:⁹

- France (57 100 applications)
- Germany (45 700)
- Sweden (29 600)
- Italy (28 100)
- Belgium (25 500)
- United Kingdom (25 500)
- Switzerland (22 551)
- Netherlands (14 600)
- Austria (14 400)
- Greece (9 300)
- Norway (9 100)

Asylum applications in the main European destination countries (in %)



Developments in individual countries of destination varied. Italy received nearly three times more asylum seekers in 2011 than in 2010. This was mainly due to the use of the migration route across the Mediterranean Sea. In Belgium, Austria and Switzerland, the number of asylum applications rose sharply (between 25 % and 45 %). The increase in Switzerland was mainly due to the Mediterranean Sea route; the increase in Austria was due to the Balkan route for migrants from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Somalia; the increase in Belgium was a general increase from numerous countries of origin. Germany, France, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands all reported a moderate increase (between 5 % and 15 %).¹⁰

The increase in Germany was mainly due to a larger number of asylum seekers from Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and Syria. The increases in the other countries cannot be attributed to any single country or group of countries of origin.

Sweden, Greece, Norway, Finland and Denmark all experienced a decrease in the number of asylum applications in 2011. In Greece, this was mainly due to the economic crisis. The decrease in Sweden was mainly due to the smaller number of asylum seekers from the Serbian Roma community, which fell from 6300 to 2700. The decrease in other Scandinavian countries cannot be explained by any single factor. Given the geographically remote location of northern European countries, the asylum application trends were felt later than in southern and central European countries. Moreover, greater efficiency in the processing of asylum applications has also contributed to the decrease in the number of asylum applications in these countries.

Asylum applications in Europe by country of origin¹¹

	Asylum applications in Europe in 2011	Difference compared to 2010	Asylum applications in Switzerland in 2011	Proportion of asylum applications in Switzerland with respect to total
Afghanistan	29 000	+7500	1052	3.6 %
Russia	17 500	-500	254	1.5 %
Pakistan	15 300	+6500	107	0.7 %

⁹ The figures are partly based on provisional data or estimates taken from websites of the various migration authorities, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Intergovernmental Consultations (IGC).

¹⁰ There are several official figures reported for the Netherlands, which provide a different result depending on whether multiple applications from the same asylum seeker are counted or not. The figure reported here was posted on the IGC website on 21 February 2012.

¹¹ The figures are partly based on provisional data or estimates taken from websites of the various migration authorities, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Intergovernmental Consultations (IGC).



About 25 % of the permanent foreign population has been born in Switzerland.
More than 50 % has lived in Switzerland for at least 10 years.

6. Hardship cases

The Asylum Act (SR 142.31) and the Foreign Nationals Act (SR 142.20) recognise three types of hardship cases for which asylum seekers may obtain a residence permit from a canton, subject to FOM approval:

Under the Asylum Act, asylum seekers must have lived in Switzerland for at least five years (their place of residence known by the Swiss authorities at all times) and experience personal hardship following intensive efforts to integrate in Switzerland. In 2011, 202 asylum seekers received residence permits under these conditions (2010: 286).

Under the Foreign Nationals Act, persons admitted on a temporary basis must have lived in Switzerland for at least five years, and in-depth verification must be carried out to determine whether or not personal hardship is present. In 2011, 1866 persons admitted on a temporary basis were granted a residence permit (2010: 2656).

Finally, the Foreign Nationals Act enables a residence permit to be granted in the event of serious personal hardship. In 2011, 163 illegal immigrants living in Switzerland were granted residence permits (2010: 129). There is also a special rule whereby a residence permit may be revoked if a person becomes divorced under particular circumstances (e.g. domestic violence).

7. Relations with countries of origin and third states

Relations with countries of origin and third states are much less contractually formalised and institutionalised than with EU member states. In its migration policy, Switzerland pursues the following objectives:

- ensure that immigration serves Swiss socioeconomic interests;
- ensure that protection is afforded to refugees and vulnerable migrants;
- prevent irregular migration;
- encourage and help migrants to return to their home countries;
- use migration as a means of furthering sustainable development in countries of origin and transit.

Various instruments have been developed to reach these objectives: migration partnerships, programmes to prevent illegal migration, return assistance and structural projects in the country of origin.

The basic principle underlying these instruments is that advancement of Swiss interests does not start at the Swiss border. Sustainable solutions are not possible if the interests of partner countries are not adequately taken into account. The migration partnership concept enables Switzerland to do just that. Depending on the needs of the partner country, a migration partnership may include the above-mentioned instruments or other aspects where action may be taken. Migration partnerships may therefore also serve as a framework for projects that use migration to drive development in the partner country.

These instruments are coordinated among all of the federal agencies involved – particularly the Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP), the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) and the Federal Department of Economic Affairs (FDEA). The main protagonist is the Federal Office for Migration (FOM), which plays the leading role in Swiss migration policy.

8. Integration

Integration mainly occurs in daily life – at school, at work, in our leisure time. Special support measures can be taken to overcome obstacles that stand in the way of successful integration. Some of these measures are intended only for foreign nationals (e.g. programmes to encourage occupational integration of refugees). Other measures are available to all, regardless of their nationality (e.g. programmes to encourage the linguistic and physical development of small children in nurseries and day care facilities). These special support measures are taken by the cantons and cofunded by the Confederation, which drafts annual reports on the impact of measures and corresponding expenditure.¹²

Language skills and education are the main priorities. The cantons are gradually expanding the various courses on offer: practical language courses are being developed in partnership with employers; increasingly, young mothers are able to attend courses at locations that also offer childcare services; intermunicipal courses are offered so that lessons can be adapted according to the language skills of participants.

The Confederation also provides support to 30 competence centres for integration throughout the country. Together with integration delegates, these competence centres are the main contact point for migrants as well as for government agencies, specialised offices and organisations. In addition, the Confederation coordinates integration activities and works with employers, associations that help foreigners, non-governmental organisations and other partners.

The third priority of the development of pilot projects to help children to develop their language skills so that their enrolment in kindergarten will be assured and they will not be at a disadvantage in school. Measures to prevent forced marriage have been intensified, mainly thanks to targeted information to young people, parents and specialists. In response to a motion¹³ submitted to the Swiss Parliament, the Federal Council will draft a report on this theme in 2012, presenting subsequent measures to be taken.

Muslim dialogue completed

In response to voter approval of the “Minaret ban initiative” (November 2009), a platform for dialogue between the federal authorities and Muslims in Switzerland was established. In 2011, the final report on this dialogue platform was drafted.¹⁴ This dialogue served to build trust and identify areas where action needed to be taken at federal level. In 2012, a joint meeting will be held in which representatives of the cantons and communes will also take part. The aim is to take the needs of Muslims into account and show them which government agencies should be contacted, and at what level, when they wish to express their concerns.

¹² “Integrationsförderung des Bundes und ihre Auswirkungen in den Kantonen, Jahresbericht 2010”, September 2011. <http://www.bfm.admin.ch/content/dam/data/migration/integration/berichte/ber-integrfoerd-2010-d.pdf>. The next annual report will be released in the autumn of 2012.

¹³ http://www.parlament.ch/dlsuchelseiten/geschaeft.aspx?gesch_id=20094229

¹⁴ www.bfm.admin.ch/content/dam/data/migration/berichte/ber-muslimdialog-2010-d.pdf

9. Naturalisations

Starting point / developments

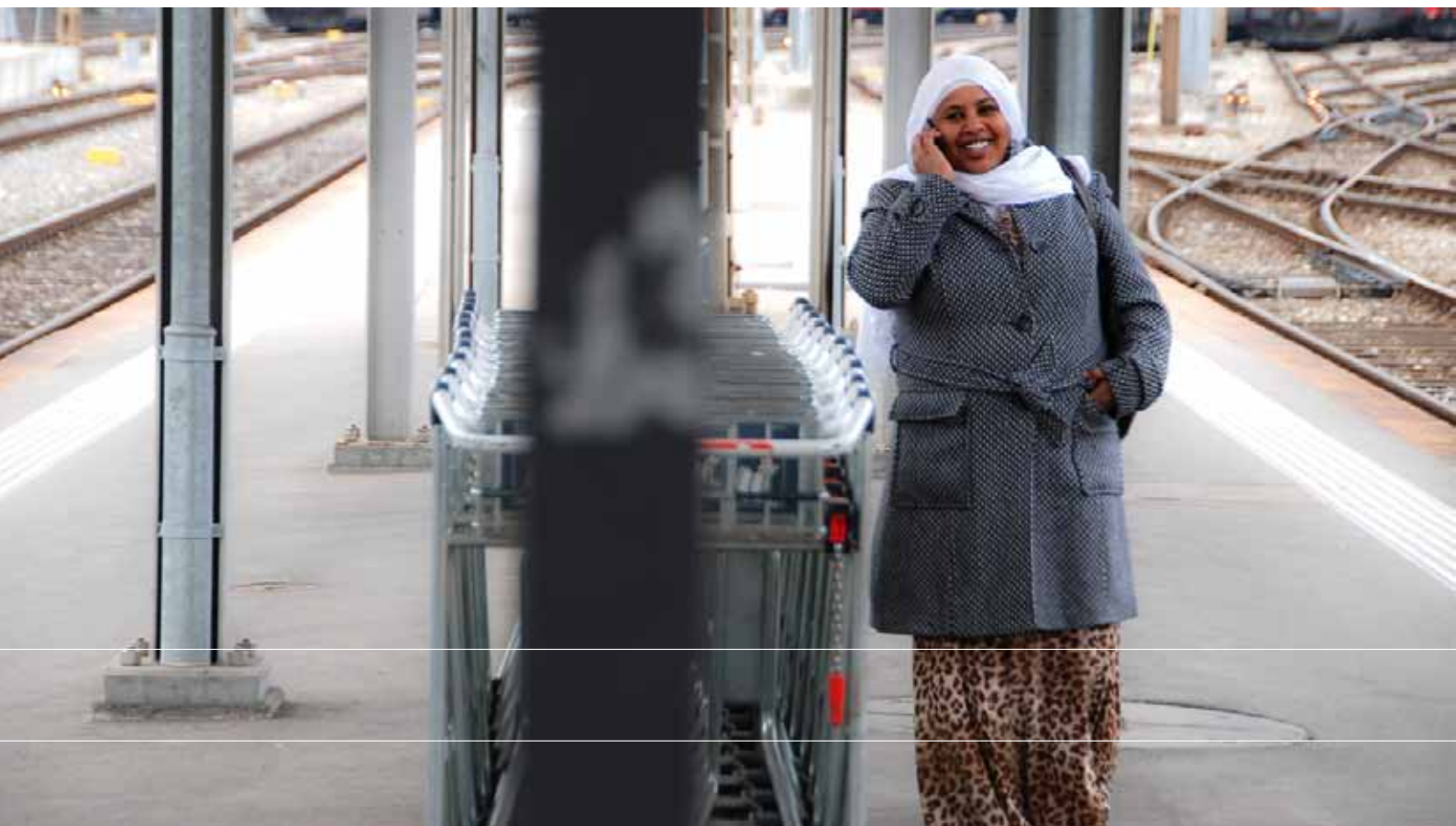
The number of naturalisation applications has increased substantially over the past few years: in 1999, 19 887 applications were filed nationally. This figure surpassed 30 000 applications (32 318) for the first time in 2004. In 2008, 34 965 applications were filed, setting a new record in the number of naturalisation applications. In 2009, the FOM received 30 046 applications. In 2010, there were 26 554 applications. In 2011, the Federal Office for Migration received 26 102 naturalisation applications, which constitutes a slight decrease with respect to 2010. The decrease was mainly observed in relation to the standard nationalisation procedure. This was mainly caused by the fact that several cantons raised their integration requirements (e.g. mandatory language courses). There was no decrease in naturalisation applications relating to the fast-track naturalisation procedure.

In 2011, 37 893 persons were granted Swiss citizenship. This corresponds to a decrease of around 6 % with respect to the previous year (40 403 persons). 28 003 persons acquired Swiss

citizenship through the standard naturalisation procedure; 9 777 persons acquired Swiss citizenship through the fast-track naturalisation procedure; and 113 persons were renaturalised.

As in recent years, the applicants came predominantly from Serbia, Italy and Germany. In 2011, 4 353 Serbian nationals applied for Swiss citizenship, 36 % fewer than in 2010. The number of Italians applying for Swiss citizenship remained relatively constant with respect to the previous year at 4 255 persons. The number of German nationals obtaining Swiss citizenship remained static at 3 686. There was a 57 % increase – to 2 522 people – in the number of Kosovo nationals granted citizenship.¹⁵ The number of Portuguese nationals obtaining citizenship remained virtually unchanged at 2 291, whilst the number of naturalised Turkish nationals fell in comparison to 2010 by around 10 %, to 1 895.

¹⁵ Republic of Kosovo nationals have been listed separately in the statistics since 2008.



Somalian diplomat waiting for a train at the Bernese railway station.

10. Return

Return assistance

In 2011, a total of 2771 persons left Switzerland to return to their country of origin, either voluntarily or independently, under one of the return assistance programmes:

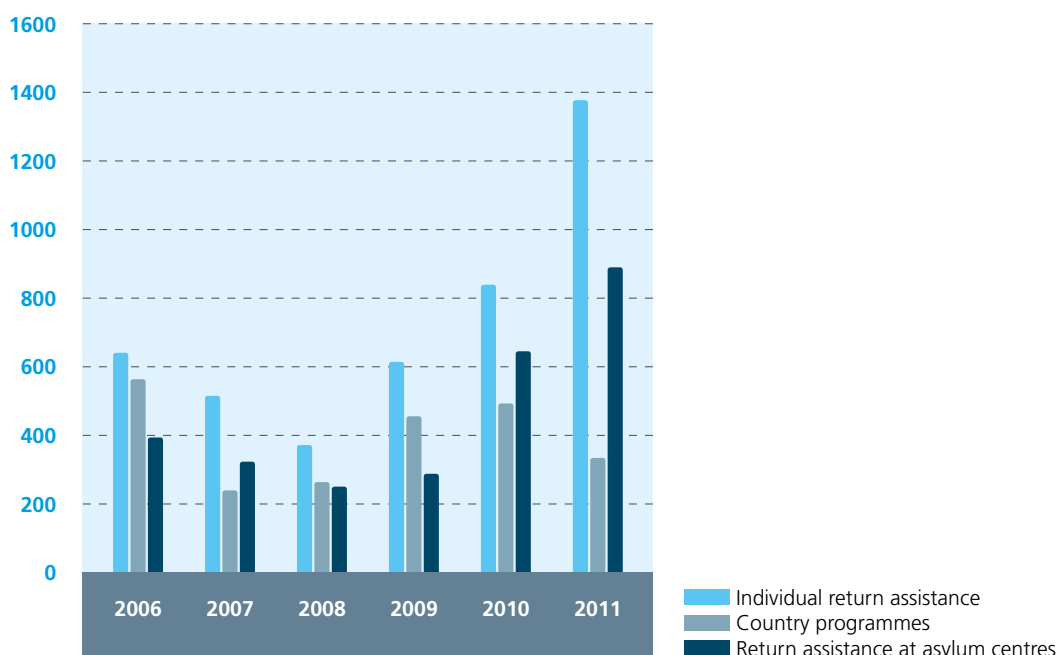
- 890 persons left directly from a reception and processing centre (32 %), cash contribution
- 333 people left under a country programme (12 %), cash contribution and microproject
- 1377 people left with individual return assistance (50 %), cash contribution and microproject
- 171 people left after consultation (6 %)

All asylum seekers may request return assistance at the local return counselling office in their canton of residence, at a reception and processing centre and at airport transit areas.

The worldwide offer of individual return assistance includes start-up funding as well as an individual reintegration project. In 2011, the FOM organised special country programmes with its partners in Nigeria, Guinea, Georgia and Iraq.

Since entry into force of the Foreign Nationals Act (SR 142.20) on 1 January 2008, certain groups of persons falling within the scope of the Foreign Nationals Act have received return assistance. The current project in this sector is intended to help the victims of human smuggling as well as cabaret dancers in situations of exploitation. In 2011, 20 people have benefitted from this return assistance.

**Table showing number of departures
by type of return assistance programme, 2006–2011**



Source: FOM



Afternoon snack for children in the Reception and Procedure Centre Basel.

Detention

Individuals do not always return to their country of origin on a voluntary basis. Asylum seekers whose application has been turned down must leave Switzerland after the deadline for departure. Other foreign nationals residing illegally in Switzerland may be issued a removal order. If the individuals in question do not leave Switzerland, detention may be used as a means of enforcement.

Swiss legislation provides for three main types of detention orders, detention in preparation for departure (*Vorbereitungshaft*), detention pending deportation (*Ausschaffungshaft*), and coercive detention (*Durchsetzungshaft*). The detention trends observed over the past three years remained unchanged in 2011. In 2011, detention pending deportation¹⁶ was ordered in 94 % of the cases, coercive detention¹⁷ in 2 % of the cases and detention in preparation for departure¹⁸ in 4 % of the cases. The average duration of detention pending deportation was 26 days (2010: 24 days); the average duration for detention in preparation for departure was 33 days (2010: 32 days). In both cases, the difference with respect to the previous year was minor. In contrast, the average duration of coercive detention was 162 days, which is slightly higher (2010: 155 days). In 87 % of the cases of detention pending deportation from January 2008 to December 2011, the individual returned to the country of origin. The percentage has therefore remained constant. In the case of coercive detention, the corresponding percentage stands at 26 % (2010: 30 %).

As in the previous year, Nigeria, Tunisia and Serbia were the three main countries of origin of foreign nationals held in detention pending deportation in 2011. For coercive detention, 43 % of the total of 56 detention orders applied to Iraqi nationals. 92 % of the 7540 detention orders involved men.

Removal by air

In 2011, the Swiss authorities ensured the removal by air of 9461 persons. Compared to the previous year, this corresponds to an increase of 17 % (2010: 8059 departures). This increase in the number of departures is partly due to the larger number of voluntary departures and partly due to a greater number of persons transferred to another Dublin country where the asylum application was first submitted (Dublin out procedure).

Of the total of 9461 departures, 70.5 % fell under the scope of the Asylum Act (SR 142.31) and 29.5 % under the scope of the Foreign Nationals Act (SR 142.20). Owing to the high number of Dublin deportations (Dublin out procedure), the proportion of departures falling under the scope of the Asylum Act predominates, which was also the case in the previous year. In 2011, 3325 persons were transferred by air from Switzerland to the corresponding Dublin countries. This constitutes an increase of 22 % compared to the previous year (2010: 2722 persons were transferred under the Dublin out procedure).

In 2011, the proportion of voluntary departures increased with respect to cases where return was enforced through detention. 32 % (2010: 25 %) of those ordered to depart Switzerland left voluntarily. Like last year, many persons failed to comply with removal or expulsion orders; choosing instead to go underground or refusing to leave. Most of the 6439 persons in question were returned after enforcement level 1.¹⁹ Only 298 persons (4.6 %) were accompanied by specially trained security officials to their destination country on standard flights and 165 on special deportation flights.

¹⁶ Detention pending deportation (*Ausschaffungshaft*) is a preventive measure taken to enforce an expulsion or removal order. The duration of detention may not exceed 18 months. The general conditions applying to detention are set forth in Art. 76 of the Foreign Nationals Act (SR 142.20).

¹⁷ According to Art. 78 of the Foreign Nationals Act (SR 142.20), coercive detention (*Durchsetzungshaft*) is intended to force a hitherto non-compliant individual to leave Switzerland. Non-compliant individuals may be detained for no longer than 18 months if detention pending deportation is not an option and other more lenient measures are ineffective. Coercive detention is initially ordered for a period of one month, and may be extended at two-month intervals.

¹⁸ Detention in preparation for departure (*Vorbereitungshaft*) is intended to enforce removal proceedings. The maximum duration of detention is six months and this measure is subject to the general conditions set forth in Art. 75 of the Foreign Nationals Act (SR 142.20).

¹⁹ The person to be returned is accompanied to the airport by police officers; the person then leaves Switzerland on the departure flight without police escort.

11. Procedures to remove and keep people away

The Foreign Nationals Act (SR 142.20) provides for a range of measures designed for categories of foreign nationals whom Switzerland wishes to send back and/or deny entry for a limited or unlimited duration. These categories include foreign nationals who have seriously and/or repeatedly undermined Switzerland's security and public order or who constitute a serious threat to Switzerland's internal or external security. These measures include, in particular, removal orders (*Wegweisung*), expulsion orders (*Ausweisung*) and bans on entry (*Einreiseverbot*).

Bans on entry and expulsions are aimed at preventing the uncontrolled entry to Switzerland of undesirable foreign nationals. Both measures are preventive rather than penal nature. As long as they remain in force, the foreign national may not enter our country without obtaining the explicit authorisation of the competent authority. In the case of EU nationals, the conditions are more restrictive. Indeed, for a ban on entry to be ordered, the person in question must represent a real, current and sufficiently serious threat to security and public order. In 2011, 8382 bans on entry were issued (2010: 8176 bans on entry).

Since the Swiss-EU bilateral agreement on Schengen/Dublin cooperation came into effect, all bans on entry ordered by our country are entered into the Schengen Information System (SIS). This enables undesirable foreign nationals to be barred from entry to the Schengen area.



In 2011, about 140 000 people migrated to Switzerland and about 65 000 people left the country.



Nearly 65 % of EU/EFTA nationals who entered Switzerland came to take up employment.

Highlights in 2011

1. Impact of North African crises on migration to Switzerland

In 2011, after several decades of apparent stability, Arab countries set a transformation process in motion for which the development and outcome remain uncertain. 2011 was a year of civil protest movements against the previously inviolable authority of the political elite. The aim of the protest movements was to fight for human dignity, greater freedom and social justice. This gave rise to a new geography of Arab protest movements, bringing with it change and hope as well as violence, repression and new uncertainties. In Tunisia and Egypt, rioting brought down the regimes in 2011; in Libya, civil war and subsequent international military intervention toppled the Libyan government; in Yemen, violent clashes prompted moves to change the government; in Bahrain, social unrest has created instability; in Syria, civil war has broken out. In contrast, relatively peaceful demonstrations to bring about reform have been held in Morocco, Algeria, Jordan and Kuwait.

It was the Libyan crisis that created the most serious humanitarian and security problem for neighbouring countries in Northern Africa, and by extension for Sub-Saharan Africa and Europe. From a humanitarian standpoint, the violence resulting from the insurrection in Libya not only created massive internal displacements of the population but also an unprecedented regional exodus. According to the latest estimate (end of November 2011) from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), nearly 780 000 migrants have left Libya. Around 463 000 of these migrants crossed the border to neighbouring countries and around 317 000 travelled to more distant countries (around 41 %). Some 208 000 Sub-Saharan nationals in this group of migrants returned home by the end of November 2011: around 95 600 nationals were from Niger, 82 300 were from Chad, 11 300 from Ghana, 11 200 from Mali and 3050 from Nigeria.

From the standpoint of migration to Europe, the collapse of the Tunisian and Libyan regimes created a security vacuum that made it easier for human traffickers and migrants to cross borders into Europe until mid-September 2011. The main route taken was through the centre of the Mediterranean Sea to the Italian coast, including Lampedusa. From mid-September onwards, migration flows shifted to the east to travel via Balkan countries.

Despite this, the migration flows resulting from the popular uprisings in North Africa had only a minor impact on the volume of migrants to Europe compared to the volume of migrants within the region in 2011. The political and social effects were nevertheless considerable in the host countries. According to statistical estimates, nearly 63 000 irregular migrants reached the coasts of Italy and later the coasts of Malta. Over 53 300 of these irregular migrants arrived in Lampedusa from mid-February 2011 onwards. It should be mentioned that these statistics do not take into account the number of persons who drowned or disappeared. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that over 1500 people perished in their attempts to cross the Mediterranean Sea to Europe in 2011.

These migrants included nearly 30 000 Tunisians and nearly 1600 non-Tunisian North Africans. The remaining migrants came mostly from Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2011, Italy therefore became a geographical and political focal point for North Africans wishing to enter Europe illegally. Asylum applications in some European countries increased by nearly 20 % during this period. Various factors such as the presence of diaspora or the image of socioeconomic prosperity played a role in cross-border migration from Italy to France, Germany and Switzerland.

In 2011, Switzerland had to contend with an increasing flow of migrants from North Africa. Specifically, asylum applications from North Africans, mainly Tunisians, accounted for around 18 % of the total volume of asylum applications received in 2011 (22 551). Major logistical challenges resulted from this sudden and unexpected influx, especially in terms of housing at reception and processing centres and in the cantons. In addition, the arrival of North African migrants, some of who showed uncivil, criminal and in some cases even violent behaviour, created major tensions within the host cantons and among local populations. This also sparked major controversy at the national level.

In response to these migration challenges, the Swiss authorities acted quickly and pragmatically. From the start of the crisis in February 2011, emergency humanitarian measures were taken to ease the situation on the ground. An overall strategy of coherent, long-term measures was also adopted in March 2011 to respond to the transition processes taking place in North Africa. This strategy is intended to optimise institutional

and operational coherence among Swiss agencies, namely with regards to management of host infrastructures. At the same time, efforts will be made to intensify cooperation at the bilateral and multilateral levels, not only with the European Union but also with all partners affected by migration issues. From this perspective, factors influencing migration flows from Northern Africa to Europe and Switzerland may change in any number of ways. While the political and socioeconomic situation of the countries in this region in transition has not yet stabilised, the transformation process nevertheless seems irreversible.



More than 40 % of employees in the catering industry are not Swiss nationals.

2. Dublin Association Agreement

The Dublin Association Agreement (DAA) came into force on 12 December 2008. The Dublin Area is currently comprised of 31 countries, namely the EU-27 member states and the four associate states of Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and the Principality of Liechtenstein (which joined on 19 December 2011). The aim of the Dublin system is not to standardise asylum and removal proceedings in the Dublin Area, but rather to simply determine which Dublin country has jurisdiction over a given asylum application. Once jurisdiction has been determined, the asylum application is subject to the national law of that Dublin country.

Entry into force of the Dublin Association Agreement has no bearing on the right of asylum seekers to submit their application in any Dublin country. With the Dublin system, however, it may be that another Dublin country has jurisdiction over the asylum application regardless of where the asylum application has been submitted. In such cases, the Dublin country with jurisdiction will ultimately decide the outcome of the asylum application. The Dublin Agreement is intended to ensure that only one Dublin country has jurisdiction over a particular asylum application. This should prevent asylum seekers from submitting multiple asylum applications in various countries.

A Dublin country is generally considered to have responsibility for asylum and removal proceedings if any of the following conditions are met:

- if the asylum seeker submitted his/her first asylum application in that country;
- if a close relative of the asylum seeker has already submitted an asylum application on his/her behalf in that country, either because the close relative is a legal resident there or because the close relative has refugee status within the meaning of the Geneva Convention;
- if the Dublin country has granted the asylum seeker a visa or residence permit or if an asylum seeker has resided illegally in that Dublin country for a relatively long period of time.

Between the date when the Swiss-EU bilateral agreement on Schengen/Dublin cooperation became operational (i.e. 12 December 2008) and 31 December 2011, Switzerland requested that 21 382 (2011: 9347) asylum seekers be transferred to another Dublin country. These transfer requests were made under the Swiss assumption that another Dublin country was responsible for processing the asylum application. In 16 699 cases (2011: 7014), the Dublin country concerned confirmed that it was responsible for processing the asylum application and that it was therefore willing to take over the case. In 3305 cases (2011: 1587), the Dublin country denied Switzerland's transfer request. In 1378 cases, Switzerland received no reply. A total of 8246 asylum seekers (2011: 3620) were effectively transferred to another Dublin country.

Over the same period, Switzerland received 3543 (2011: 1611) transfer requests from other Dublin countries. In the case of 2156 persons (2011: 907), Switzerland confirmed that it was responsible for processing the asylum application and stated its willingness to have the asylum seekers transferred to Switzerland. In 1320 cases (2011: 673), Switzerland denied the transfer request. In 67 cases, Switzerland had not yet replied. 1158 (2011: 482) asylum seekers were transferred to Switzerland.

Experiences with the Dublin Association Agreement have been positive. Cooperation with Dublin countries has been smooth. Thanks to the DAA, Switzerland has been able to transfer more asylum seekers to other Dublin countries than vice versa. The only problems have related to acceptance of asylum seekers from Greece. On 19 February 2009, the Federal Office for Migration decided to reject all Dublin procedure requests from Greece for particularly vulnerable asylum applicants because Greece failed to take suitable steps to identify particularly vulnerable asylum applicants and provide them with the necessary guidance, support and accommodation beforehand. Given the unsatisfactory situation in Greece, the Federal Office for Migration decided that starting from 26 January 2011, Switzerland would not process any Dublin procedure requests involving Greece.

3. Revision Ordinance of 20 January 2010 on the Issue of Travel Documents for Foreign Nationals (SR 143.5)

Since 1 March 2010, restrictions on persons temporarily admitted to Switzerland for asylum from travelling outside of Switzerland were lifted. This measure was taken to encourage greater integration of these persons. The complete lack of travel restrictions was criticised by cantonal migration offices and foreign consulates as in several parliamentary motions. On 5 March 2012, the Flückiger-Bäni motion “No holiday trips for persons temporarily admitted for asylum” was approved in the Council of States. It was also discovered that holders of Swiss F permits were increasingly travelling to their home countries. Isolated cases of abuse were discovered as well.

The FOM established a working group to carefully review SR 143.5. This working group, which also included representatives of the cantons, came to the conclusion that temporarily admitted persons should only be permitted to travel under specific circumstances.

In addition, holders of Swiss N or F permits, who lacked travel documents from their home countries, should be issued a biometric passport for foreigners. However, this would only apply if the FOM authorised the trip. This measure would ensure that only persons with a travel authorisation issued from Switzerland would be allowed to leave and return to Switzerland.

In addition, a proposal was made to introduce a new fee that could apply whenever an application to obtain travel documents was turned down.

Cantonal migration offices, interested parties and political groups were given the opportunity to take a stance on the draft revision from 11 January 2012 to 12 March 2012.

Barring any significant changes to scheduled parliamentary business, the revised ordinance should normally go into effect on 1 July 2012.

4. Integration plan

The Federal Council has consolidated its position on subsequent development of the integration policy that it presented in 2010 (report on Schiesser motion)²⁰. The basic parameters of a four-part integration plan were established in March 2011. The various phases of the plan were then cleared for implementation over the course of the year.

1. Revision of Foreign Nationals Act (SR 142.20). The principle of “expectation and encouragement” will be made a legal requirement. Immigrants should take greater personal responsibility and actively work to achieve their own integration. At the same time, the Confederation and the cantons will establish the conditions needed to facilitate integration. The draft revision was submitted for consultation at the end of November 2011. It lists integration criteria and

establishes the requirements for family reunification. It also involves employers in the process of integrating their foreign workers. Finally, it includes incentives for rapid integration and the possibility of applying penalties for inadequate integration.

2. Revision of special legislation to include provisions on integration. This will be done to encourage equal opportunities. As a case in point, the Federal Vocational and Professional Education and Training Act (SR 412.10) will be revised so that, in addition to fostering gender equality and preventing discrimination against persons with disabilities, it encourages the integration of foreigners. These changes were also submitted for consultation in November 2011.

3. Specific measures to encourage integration. Such measures will be expanded on the basis of objectives and principles shared by the Confederation, cantons and communes.²¹ At the same time, the Confederation and the cantons will decide on matters relating to implementation and funding. The cantons will formulate multi-year integration programmes that will serve as the basis for programme agreements with the Confederation. These integration programmes will also be provided with strategic objectives, indicators and funding. The Confederation will increase its funding contribution for measures to encourage integration under the condition that the cantons also increase their funding levels. In addition, the cantons will receive a lump sum payment for each new recognised refugee or temporarily admitted person. This lump sum payment will be used for the purpose of offering courses in the national language and facilitating occupational integration.

4. Integration dialogue. The Tripartite Agglomeration Conference (TAK), comprised of representatives from the Confederation, the cantons, towns and communes, will be responsible for intensifying integration dialogue.²² In 2011, TAK prepared a multi-year programme to encourage integration dialogue, which will take place in two stages: first of all, dialogue between state and non-state actors involved in integration activities will exchange information, identify areas in need of improvement and develop solutions; secondly, state actors will share knowledge and experience with one another and intensify their cooperation.

²⁰ http://www.bfm.admin.ch/content/bfm/de/home/dokumentation/medienmitteilungen/2010/ref_2010-03-052.html

²¹ <http://www.bfm.admin.ch/content/bfm/de/home/dokumentation/medienmitteilungen/2011/2011-05-12.html>

²² <http://www.tak-cta.ch>



Betsaida A. from El Salvador is a carer in the retirement and nursing home Seneca in Bümpliz.

5. Integrated border management strategy

With the Schengen Association Agreements, the manner in which people are checked at the border has fundamentally changed: while border checks between associated countries are no longer authorised, border checks on the external borders of the Schengen Area have intensified. This change of system requires the Schengen-wide coordination of measures to counter illegal migration and cross-border crime. At the national level, steps must be taken to ensure closer cooperation between border management bodies and greater coordination of measures.

On 2 February 2011, the Federal Council therefore established an interdepartmental strategy group comprised of representatives of the Confederation and the cantons. The strategy group is responsible for preparing Switzerland's integrated border management strategy. This is a follow-up to a recommendation made upon completion of an evaluation of Switzerland's external borders, which had been commissioned immediately after the Schengen Association Agreement entered the operational implementation phase.

An integrated border management strategy brings Switzerland – and by extension the Schengen Area – the following benefits:

- greater domestic security;
- smooth border crossing for legal travellers;
- simplification and harmonisation of procedures, and hence more efficient use of resources;
- faster response times thanks to better cooperation;
- more targeted use of limited resources through improved national risk analysis;
- long-term, strategic focus shared by all authorities involved in border management.

The approach developed by the strategy group is mainly intended to provide all federal and cantonal authorities with a single contact point to achieve the following:

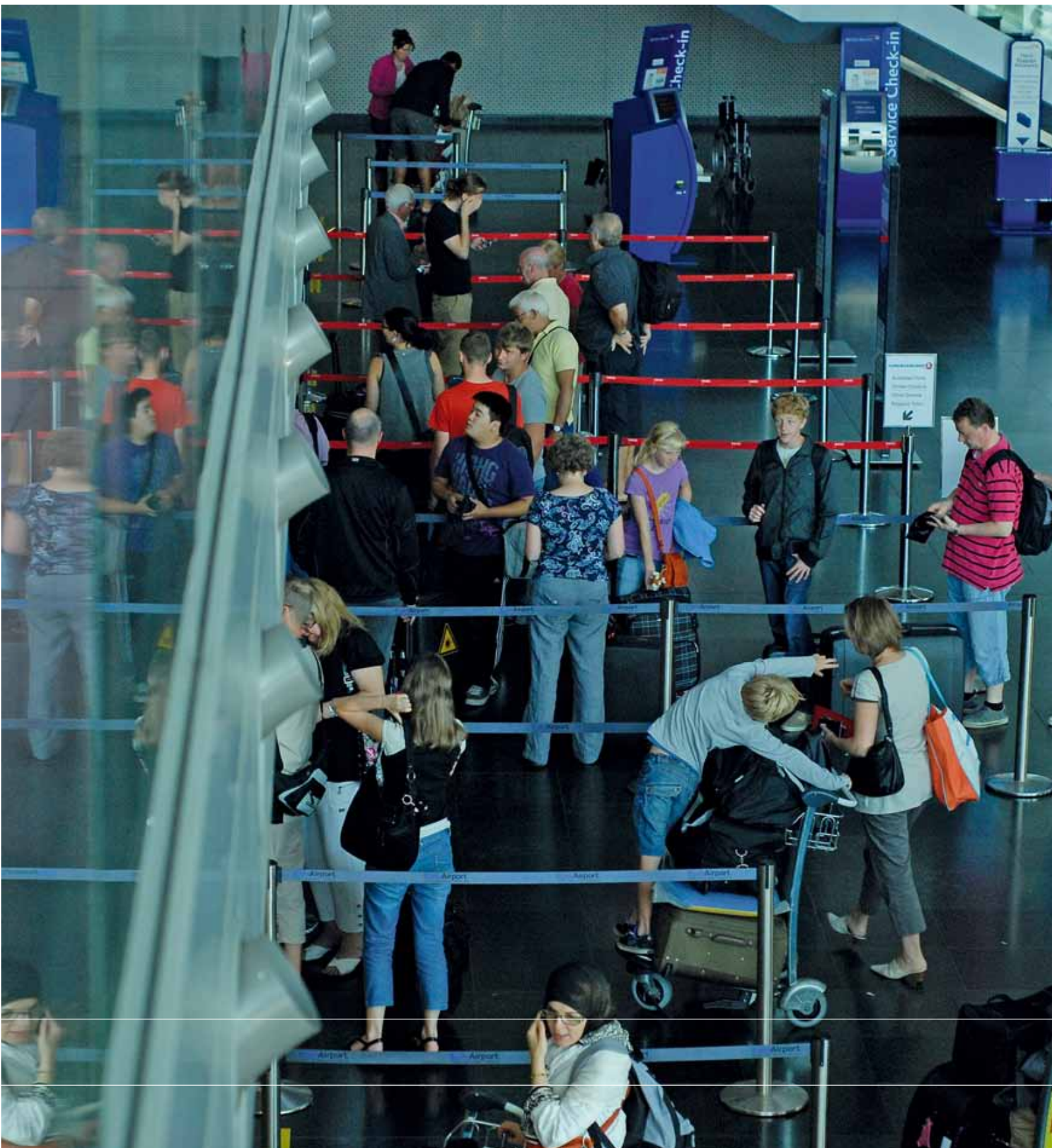
- fight illegal migration in an efficient and coordinated manner, particularly in relation to human smuggling activities;
- crack down on cross-border crime;
- simplify legal migration and
- manage borders in compliance with legislation and human rights.

An assessment of the status quo was needed before objectives could be formulated. Together with the main objectives mentioned earlier and the ten strategic guidelines, this assessment serves as the basis for 49 partial objectives in the following areas:

- strengthening of national perspective;
- optimisation and harmonisation of training, equipment, infrastructures and procedures;
- improvement of cooperation at the international level and with non-state actors.

The strategy also establishes a mechanism that enables the strategy to be periodically reviewed and adjusted as needed.

The Federal Council is expected to submit the strategy paper for approval by May 2012. Afterwards, specific measures will be decided so that objectives can be reached and the strategy implemented.



Switzerland generates up to CHF 15.6 billion through tourism each year (including short-term residents such as seasonal workers).

6. FDJP report on measures to accelerate processing of asylum applications

Background

On 23 November 2010, the Political Institutions Committee of the Council of States (PIC-S) decided to examine the draft revision of the Asylum Act (SR 142.31). The PIC-S welcomed the main purpose of the revision, which is to simplify and accelerate processing of asylum applications. The FDJP was also instructed to submit a report on additional measures that could be taken to considerably reduce processing times.

The FDJP report on measures to accelerate processing of asylum applications was submitted in March 2011. It presents the various ways in which this objective can be achieved. The report devotes considerable attention to option 1, which could be implemented in the near future. Option 1 would enable the vast majority of asylum applications to be handled at federal asylum centres.

The PIC-S unanimously agreed to pursue option 1 (federal asylum centres) and to include option 3 (short-term measures) in the current revision of the Asylum Act.

In order to implement option 3, the Federal Council commissioned the FDJP to prepare an Additional Dispatch relating to the original Federal Council Dispatch on the Asylum Act. For option 1 (federal asylum centres), the FDJP was asked to carefully examine the financial, organisational, legal and political ramifications. A corresponding consultation draft of the revised Asylum Act should normally be submitted to the Federal Council by the end of 2012.

Main content of FDJP report on measures to accelerate processing of asylum applications

The report confirms the hypothesis that too much time elapses between the moment when an asylum seeker arrives in Switzerland and the moment when a decision is made to grant asylum, temporarily admit the person for asylum or enforce

removal. Comparison with asylum systems in the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom shows that these countries adopt clear, streamlined procedures and apply tight mandatory deadlines for individual phases in the process. A key feature of these systems is also the close geographical proximity and cooperative interaction of all persons involved in the processing of asylum applications. Asylum seekers also receive professional guidance and support.

Three possible options were highlighted in the report:

Option 1: Restructure the asylum system through the creation of federal asylum centres

The vast majority of asylum applications should be processed in a matter of days through a clearly structured process. Asylum seekers would be housed in federal asylum centres pending the processing of their applications. In a preparatory phase, all necessary clarifications can be carried out immediately after the asylum application has been filed. Asylum seekers should also receive comprehensive and cost-free legal protection. After an asylum application has been rejected, the asylum seekers housed at the federal asylum centres should intensively be prepared for voluntary return to their home countries. Tight mandatory deadlines should be applied for each of the processing phases. If additional clarifications are needed, an extended procedure should be initiated.

Option 2: Confederation assumes full responsibility for asylum

In addition to option 1, the Confederation should be made fully responsible for providing asylum seekers with housing if an extended procedure is initiated. The Confederation should also be made fully responsible for enforcement of removal after an asylum application has been rejected.

Option 3: short-term measures

The existing structures and competences will be maintained. In individual areas, adjustments should be made to accelerate processing. Corresponding proposals were already made to the Swiss Parliament in 2011 as part of the ongoing revision of the Asylum Act.

7. Free movement of persons

The Foreign Nationals Act (SR 142.20) was approved by Swiss voters (68 % majority) and all Swiss cantons on 24 September 2006. This Act authorises the Federal Council to establish quotas on the issuance of initial short-stay permits and normal residence permits for third-state nationals wishing to work in Switzerland. In contrast, no such quotas apply to family members of immigrants who work in Switzerland, regardless of their citizenship. The same rule applies to the family members of students or recognised refugees. Apart from transitional quotas established for nationals of EU-2 member states (Bulgaria and Romania), there are no longer any quotas on the issuance of permits to EU/EFTA nationals wishing to work in Switzerland.

As far as Bulgaria and Romania are concerned, Switzerland will continue to apply restrictions (separate quota, priority given to Swiss nationals and other EU/EFTA nationals already in Switzerland, verification of salary and working conditions) until 2016.

Since the Swiss-EU bilateral agreement on the free movement of persons came into effect in 2002, most foreign workers have come from EU/EFTA member states. On 1 June 2007, transitional quotas were lifted for nationals of EU-17/EFTA member states. This lifting of quotas made it easier for such workers, regardless of their education level, to gain access to the Swiss labour market. As a result, the number of usual foreign residents from EU-17 member states in Switzerland increased from 816 300 in 2002 to 1 095 925 in 2011 (+34 %).

On 1 May 2011, quotas were lifted for EU-8 member countries (Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Slovakia, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia). As a result, immigration from Eastern European countries increased considerably from 1 May 2011 to 31 December 2011. Demand has mainly been for qualified workers in construction, hotel/restaurant/catering (HORECA) and agriculture, but less qualified workers have also immigrated to Switzerland. Most of the newcomers from EU-8 member states have come from Poland, followed by Hungary and Slovakia. So far, experiences with migration from EU-8 member states have been positive for the most part. In 2011, the total number of EU-8 nationals living in Switzerland stood at 40 722 persons; the total number of EU-2 nationals was 10 538 persons.

A look at the balance of migration (ratio of immigration to emigration) for nationals of EU-17/EFTA member states within the usual foreign resident population shows that the lifting of quotas in migration policy has had an impact on migration flows but so too has the economic situation and the resulting demand for foreign labour. As a result, the balance of migration increased from +16 923 persons in 2002 to +68 417 persons in 2008. The balance of migration has been decreasing since then but is still positive (2010: +37 072 persons). In 2011, the balance of migration for nationals of EU-27/EFTA member states was +52 145 persons.

8. Schengen acquis

New biometric work/residence permits for foreigners

On 21 May 2008, Switzerland received notification of enactment of EC Council Regulation No. 380/2008,²³ which seeks to introduce the use of biometric data in a uniform ID card that Switzerland has been issuing to foreigners since 12 December 2008. This ID card is issued to all nationals who do not come from EU/EFTA member states.

The Swiss Parliament adopted the new legal provisions in a final vote held on 18 June 2010. These legal provisions and the revised Ordinances went into effect on 24 January 2011. The technical work to produce the biometric ID card for third-state nationals was also completed on 24 January 2011.

Visa Information System (VIS)

On 16 July 2008, Switzerland was notified of enactment of EC Regulation No. 767/2008²⁴ as a Schengen acquis. This regulation allocates roles and responsibilities for the new system. It also describes the various procedures for the exchange of visa information between Schengen countries. Biometric data (photograph and fingerprints of all ten fingers) are included in the system to ensure reliable identification of the visa applicant. This Schengen acquis was implemented on 11 October 2011. Regional roll-out of the VIS will take place in stages over a two-year period. So far, all Schengen state consulates in North Africa have been connected to the VIS (Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Egypt, Mauritania).



A Sunday walk along the river Aare offers the opportunity of meeting people.

External Borders Fund (EBF)

The External Borders Fund²⁵ is a solidarity fund intended to provide funding to Schengen countries with extensive land and coastal borders to help cover the costs of protecting the external borders of the Schengen area.²⁶ The EBF should lead to more efficient border controls and hence more effective protection of the external borders, which should reduce illegal entry.

A total of EUR 1.82 billion has been set aside for the EBF for a limited period (2007–2013). Switzerland has been contributing retroactively to this fund since 2009 and pays an annual amount of CHF 13 to 15 million. In exchange for this contribution, Switzerland receives CHF 3 to 5 million in return. Switzerland is able to use these funds, for instance, to fund projects at airports, Swiss consular offices or IT projects. In order to ensure the proper management of the funds coming from Brussels, Switzerland had to set up a management and control system.

Schengen associated countries (Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) were required to sign an additional agreement outlining their participation rights and obligations. This additional agreement covers such things as financial contributions that Schengen associated countries must make to the EBF as well as the funds that they receive in exchange.

The Swiss Parliament approved the legal basis for the External Borders Fund in its final vote on 1 October 2010.²⁷ The 20 January 2011 deadline for a referendum expired unused. The three exchanges of notes on acceptance of the EBF were adopted on 9 February 2011, and the additional agreement came into effect on 1 April 2011.

Including appropriations for 2009, a total of around EUR 4.7 million was allocated to Switzerland for the 2010 programme year. Just under EUR 3.05 million was allocated to Switzerland for 2011. This amount corresponds to 1.28 % of total funding allocated to Schengen states for 2011 (EUR 268 762 000.00). Switzerland used the 2010 programme funding to support introduction of the N-VIS (project leader: FOM), develop software for data queries relating to documents with biometric content (Swiss Border Guard) and to provide training to users of the N-VIS (FOM).

The European Commission approved Switzerland's multi-year programme for 2010–2013 and its annual programme for 2010 on 14 March 2011.²⁸ For 2010, Switzerland was granted a co-funding contribution of EUR 4 660 754.²⁹ The European Commission released 50 % of this amount (EUR 2 330 377) to Switzerland in 2011 as preliminary financing. Switzerland will normally receive the remaining 50 % in 2013, after the final report on implementation of the annual programme for 2010 has been approved. On 16 August 2011, the European Commission granted Switzerland a total of EUR 3 053 097 in funding for the annual programme for 2011.³⁰ The European Commission released 50 % of this amount to Switzerland on 19 September 2011 as preliminary financing. Switzerland will normally receive the remaining 50 % in 2014, after the final report on implementation of the annual programme for 2011 has been approved. This funding will be used to support introduction of the N-VIS (continuation of activities undertaken in 2010; project leader: FOM) and to enable the Swiss Border Guard to purchase mobile equipment to query the database and verify documents. With the European Commission's Decision, notified under document No. C(2011) 9883, definitive version, Switzerland will receive a total of EUR 4.3 million for the programme year 2012. This amount (EUR 4 299 029) corresponds to 1.34 % of total funding allocated to Schengen states for 2012 (EUR 321 910 920).

Additional Schengen acquis

By the end of December 2011, Switzerland had received notification of 131 additional Schengen acquis from the EU. In 2011, 11 Schengen acquis fell under the remit of the Federal Office for Migration. All eleven were adopted by the Federal Council.

Most of the Schengen acquis related to Schengen visas and the External Borders Fund (EBF), particularly the allocation of co-funding contributions (Schengen acquis no. 129).

Regulation (EU) No. 493/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 amending Council Regulation (EC) No. 377/2004 on the creation of an immigration liaison officers network – Schengen acquis no. 117 – is intended to make the existing immigration liaison officers network more effective.



Many migrant children learn to read and write their native language in special native language courses.

The European Commission's Decision, notified by document No. C(2011) 5500, final version – Schengen acquis no. 121 – specifies the documents that visa applicants in China (in Peking, Guangzhou, Chengdu, Shanghai and Wuhan), Saudi Arabia, Indonesia and Vietnam (in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City) are required to present. Despite harmonisation, Art. 14, para. 6 of the Visa Code³¹ authorises consulates to waive requirements for one or more of the documents listed in the case of a visa applicant known to them for his/her integrity and reliability. Art. 21 para. 8 of the Visa Code authorises consulates to request additional documents if necessary during examination of an application.

The European Commission's Decision, notified by document No. C(2011) 7192, definitive version, specifies the documents that visa applicants in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sri Lanka and Turkey are required to present. Switzerland was also notified of changes made to the Handbook for the processing of visa applications and the modification of issued visas.

With Decision No. 1105/2011/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council – Schengen acquis no. 127 – the existing Manual of travel documents entitling the holder to cross the external borders³² will be revised.

With the European Commission's Decision, notified by document No. C(2011) 9771, final version – Schengen acquis no. 130 – guidelines will be established for all four funds in the EU's Framework programme on solidarity and management of migration flows for the period 2007–2013. These guidelines will establish the principles, criteria and target rates for these financial corrections. For Switzerland, these guidelines will only apply in relation to the External Borders Fund since Switzerland is not a participant in the other three funds (European Refugee Fund, European Return Fund and the European Integration Fund). These guidelines should enable the European Commission to apply specific uniform guidelines to determine whether co-funding contributions can be legally granted on the basis of the information provided. The European Commission recommends that the corresponding national offices (responsible for verifying information and issuing visas) apply the same criteria and target values. According to the guidelines, financial corrections should always be made when irregularities in a given case are discovered or when serious shortcomings in the administration and control system exist that could lead to systemic irregularities. The amount of the financial correction should be based on the extent and type of irregularities³³ as well as on the financial impact that the shortcoming has on the specific annual programme.

²³ Council Regulation (EC) No. 380/2008 of 18 April 2008 amending Regulation (EC) No. 1030/2002 laying down a uniform format for residence permits for third-country nationals, ABl. L 115 of 29 April 2008, pg. 1.

²⁴ Council Regulation (EC) No. 767/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 July 2008 concerning the Visa Information System (VIS) and the exchange of data between Member States on short-stay visas, ABl. L 218 of 13 August 2008, pg. 60.

²⁵ Decision No. 574/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 May 2007 establishing the External Borders Fund for the period 2007 to 2013 as part of the general programme "Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows", ABl. L 144 of 6 June 2007, pg. 22.

²⁶ See Chapter C, 4. europe.

²⁷ Federal Decree BBl 2010 6617

²⁸ European Commission Decision, notified under document No. C(2011) 1579, definitive version.

²⁹ This is the amount allocated for 2010 (EUR 2 378 642) as well as special payments for 2009. These amounts are established in Art. 11 of the additional agreement (SR 0.362.312). See 2.2.1.

³⁰ European Commission Decision, notified under document No. C(2011) 5910, definitive version.

³¹ Regulation (EC) No. 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 establishing a Community Code on Visas (Visa Code).

³² This is based on the following Decisions of the Executive Committee: SCH/Com-ex (98)56 and SCH/Com-ex (99)14 (see Appendix A, part 3, SAA), which were revoked by the present Decision.

³³ Defined in Art. 2 of 2008/456/EC: Commission Decision of 5 March 2008 laying down rules for the implementation of Decision No. 574/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the External Borders Fund for the period 2007 to 2013 as part of the general programme "Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows" as regards Member States' management and control systems, the rules for administrative and financial management and the eligibility of expenditure on projects co-financed by the Fund (notified under document number C[2008] 789).



The Federal Office for Migration has 742 staff.

General information about FOM

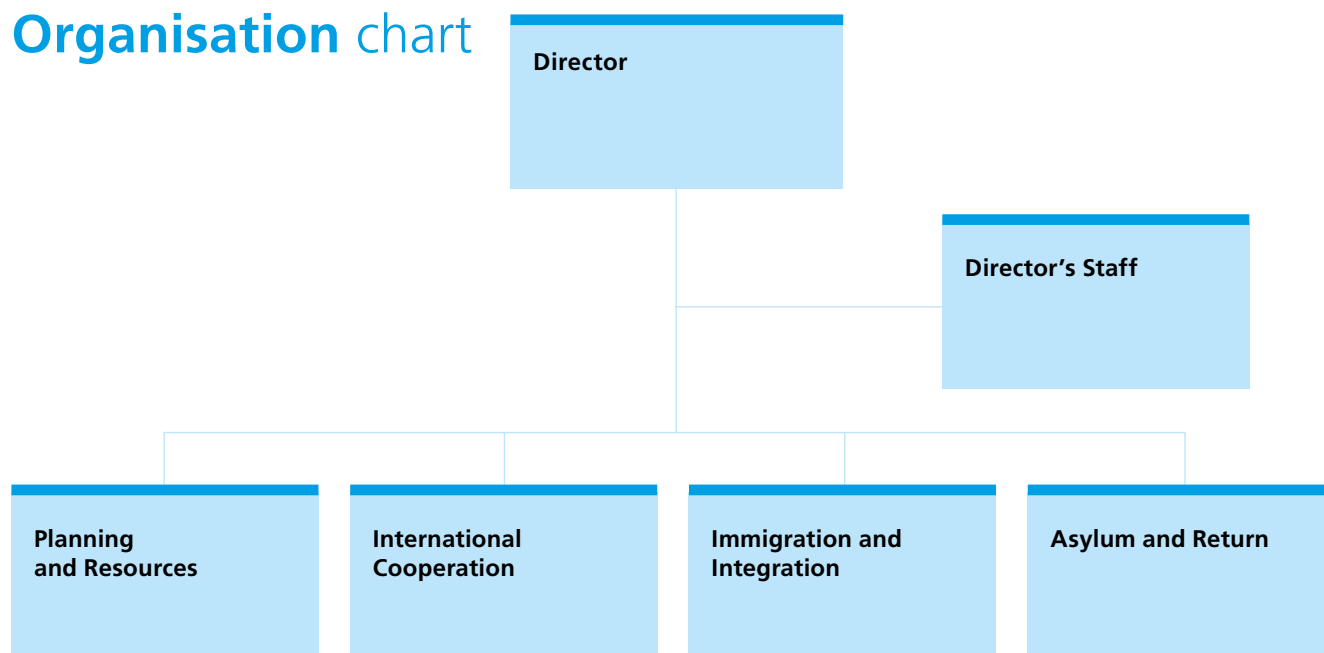
The Federal Office for Migration (FOM) was created on 1 January 2005 from the merger of the Federal Office for Refugees (FOR) and the Federal Office of Immigration, Integration and Emigration (IMES). The FOM establishes the conditions whereby a person may enter, live and work in Switzerland and it decides who receives protection from persecution in Switzerland. The FOM coordinates migration activities at the federal, cantonal and communal levels and is responsible for naturalisations at the federal level. In all areas of migration policy, the FOM actively fosters international dialogue with countries of origin, transit countries, other destination countries and international organisations.

FOM expenditure

The FOM's expenditure can be broken down into four categories:

- Transfer services: approximately 80 % of total expenditure relates to support services for asylum seekers; persons admitted on a temporary basis and refugees; costs associated with enforcement of removal orders; costs associated with providing return assistance; costs associated with integration measures for foreign nationals; and costs associated with international cooperation in the area of migration.
- Payroll: approximately 13 % of the total expenditure relates to payroll (including social insurance contributions for all categories of staff) and other associated costs such as basic and continuing education and training.
- Operations: approximately 6 % of the total expenditure relates to running reception and processing centres; maintaining and developing IT infrastructure; consultancy; and other operating costs.
- Development projects: around 1 % of the total expenditure relates to developing and introducing specialised software applications.

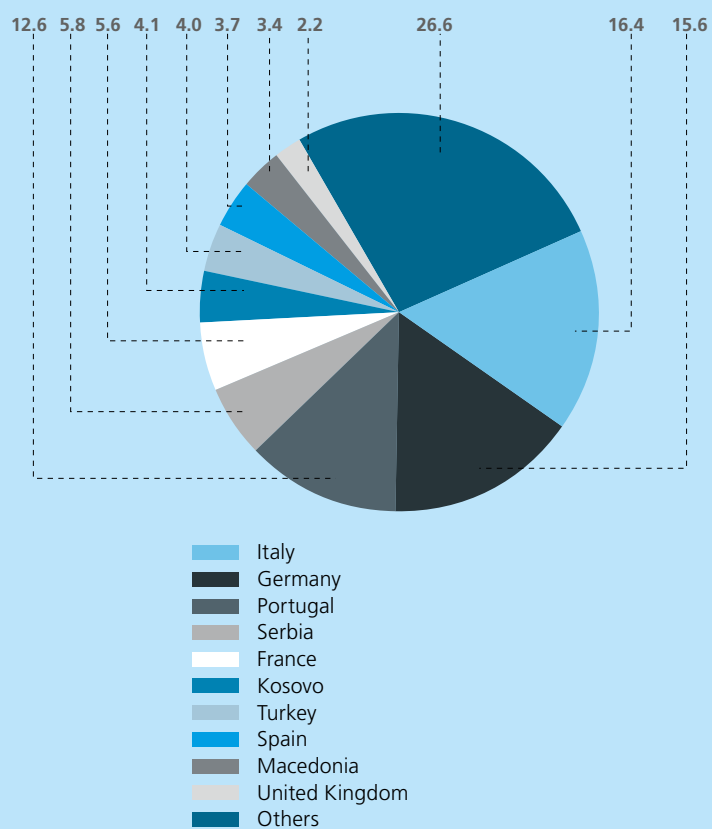
Organisation chart



Appendix

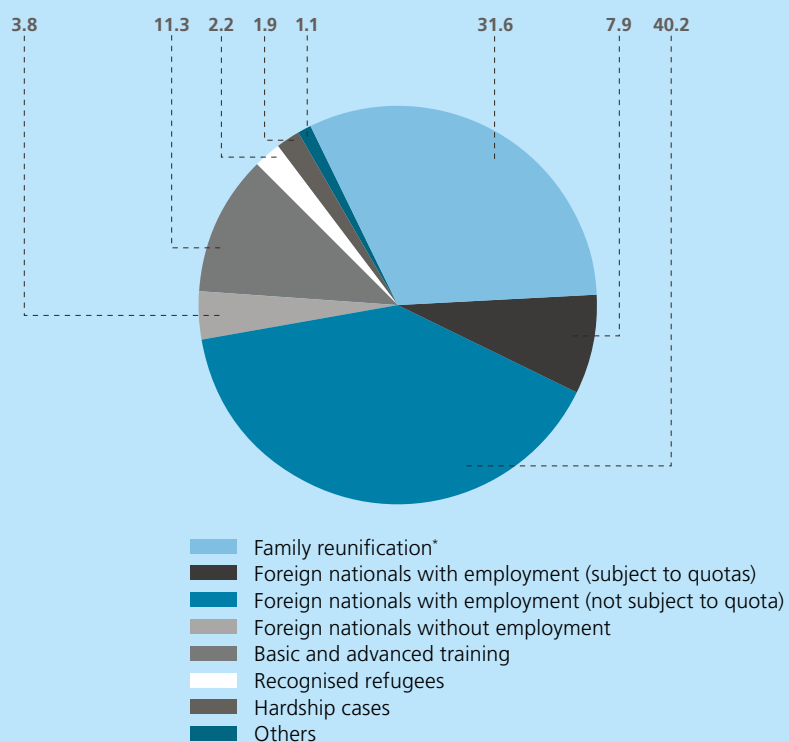
Top ten by nationality

(in %, figures as per 31 December 2011)



Entry by immigration grounds

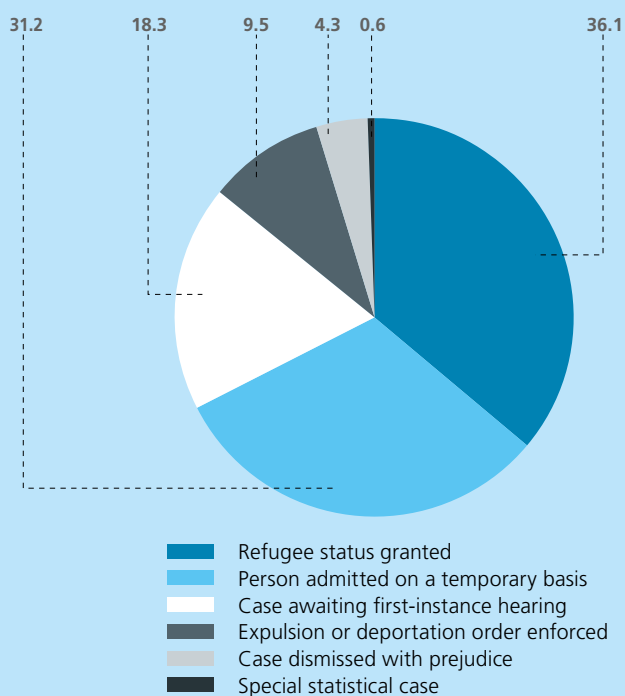
(in %, figures as per 31 December 2011)



* Of which 9,028 foreign nationals married to Swiss spouses.

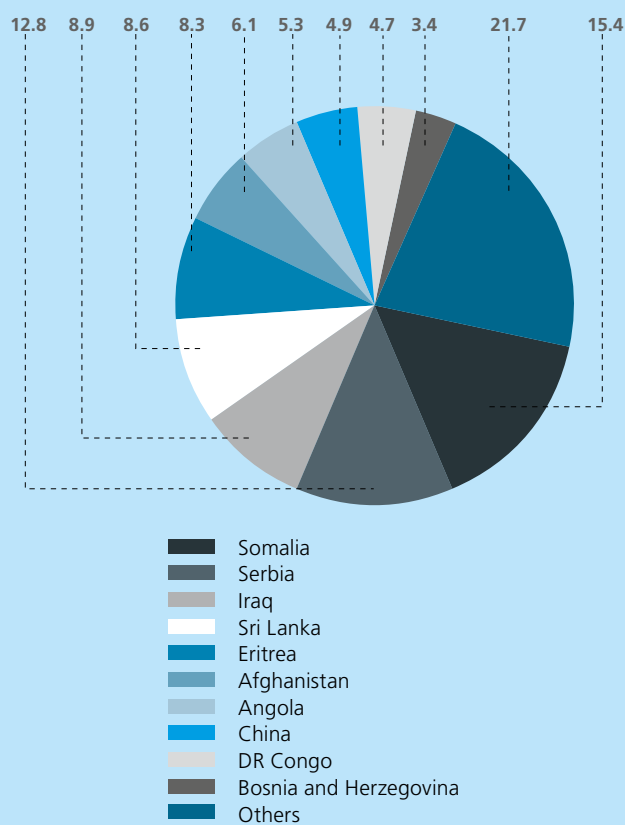
Persons in the asylum sector status

(in %, figures as per 31 December 2011)



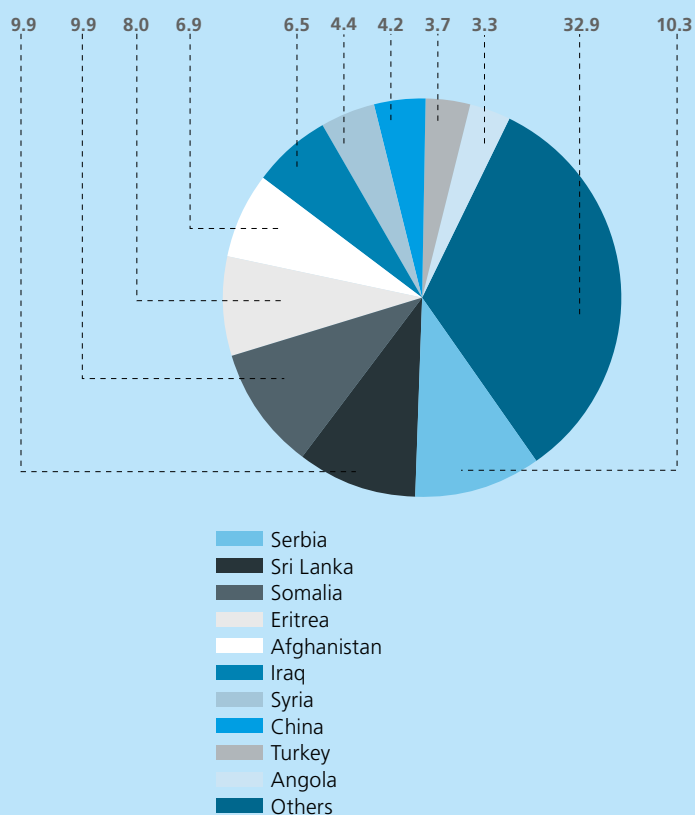
Temporarily admitted persons by country

(in %, figures as per 31 December 2011)



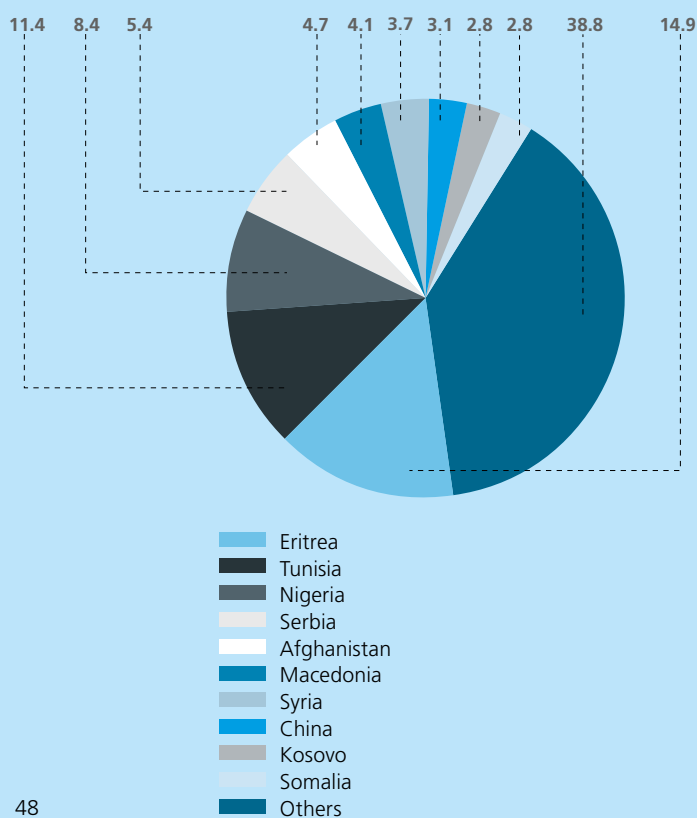
Persons in the asylum process by country

(in %, figures as per 31 December 2011)

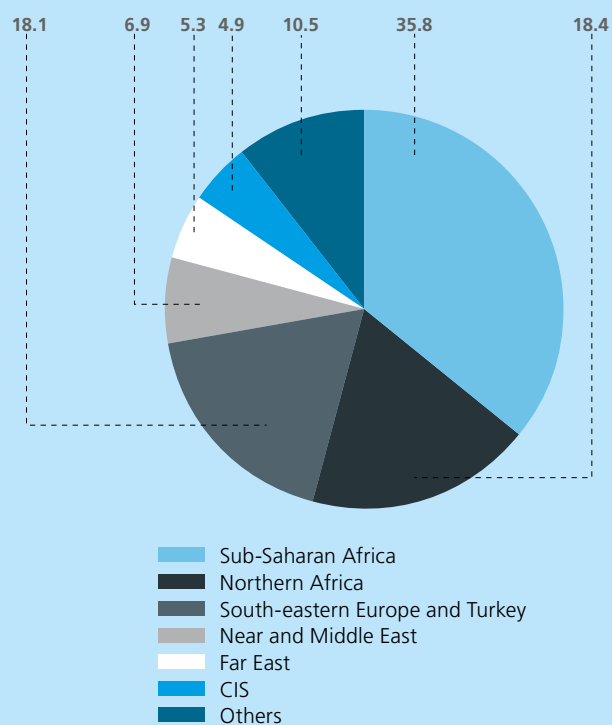


Asylum applications by country

(in %, figures as per 31 December 2011)



Applications processed by region (excl. temporarily admitted)
(in %, figures as per 31 December 2011)



Asylum applications per year

