

2019



01

Population

Neuchâtel 2020

Switzerland's population in 2019



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Population

01 Population

2019



8 606 033

Permanent resident population



4 337 170



4 268 863



86 172

Live births



67 780

Deaths



3.7 m

Private households

Life expectancy at birth



85.6 years



81.9 years



38 974

Marriages

674

Registered partnerships



16 885

Divorces

200

Dissolved partnerships



169 573

Immigration



126 221

Emigration

Sources: FSO – BEVNAT, SE (2018), STATPOP



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1 Population

At the end of 2019, Switzerland had a population of 8 606 033, i.e. 61 506 persons (+0.7%) more than in 2018. The permanent resident population comprises slightly more women than men (50.4% to 49.6%).

Permanent resident population

T1

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2019
Total	6 193 064	6 335 243	6 750 693	7 204 055	8 606 033
Male	3 025 330	3 081 965	3 298 312	3 519 698	4 268 863
Female	3 167 734	3 253 278	3 452 381	3 684 357	4 337 170
Nationality					
Swiss	5 191 177	5 421 746	5 623 584	5 779 685	6 430 658
Foreigners	1 001 887	913 497	1 127 109	1 424 370	2 175 375
Age group					
0–19 years	1 920 608	1 744 543	1 579 706	1 664 351	1 717 198
20–39 years	1 843 006	1 914 201	2 107 039	2 080 757	2 274 526
40–64 years	1 718 791	1 797 659	2 080 596	2 349 761	3 008 509
65–79 years	600 898	710 363	733 125	817 774	1 152 130
80 years and older	109 761	168 477	250 227	29 412	453 670
Marital status					
Single	2 836 922	2 769 522	2 838 420	3 036 992	3 843 439
Married	2 978 769	3 011 769	3 214 466	3 335 129	3 599 225
Widowed	336 366	379 512	403 841	417 341	404 591
Divorced	117 726	205 157	293 966	414 593	737 094
Unmarried	0	0	0	0	596
In a registered partnership	18 231
Partnership dissolved	2 606

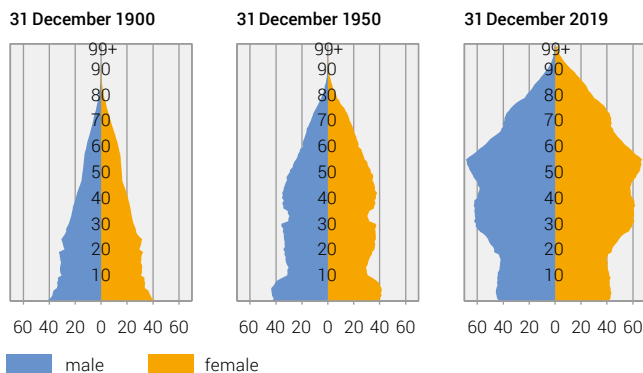
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While men are greater in number in the younger age groups, the gap between men and women narrows between the ages of 20 and 39 when they are represented in almost identical numbers. From the age of 60, there are more and more women, who have a longer life expectancy.

Population pyramid by age and sex

Number of people in 1 000

G1



Sources: FSO – FPC, STATPOP

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The population's age structure has undergone great change since 1900. The share of young people under the age of 20 has declined, whereas that of people over the age of 64 has increased. This phenomenon is a result of the extension of life expectancy and of a decline in fertility. As a consequence, the population is ageing.

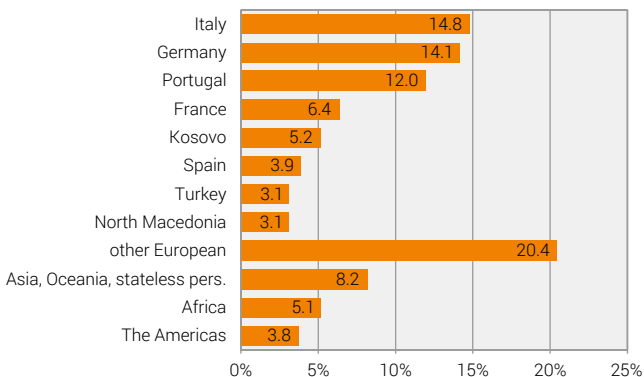
At the end of 2019, 53.2% of single people were men and 46.8% women. The distribution between the sexes of men and women among married people was equal. Women were in the majority (57.7%) among divorced people. People in a registered partnership, on the other hand, were more likely to be male (66.0%) than female (34.0%). The gender gap is considerable among widowed persons, 80.2% of whom are women. This difference can be explained by women's longer life expectancy and by the fact that men are more likely to remarry.

In 2019, more than 2.2 million foreign nationals were living in Switzerland, 19.3% of whom were born in Switzerland and 80.7% abroad. The most represented nationalities were Italian, German, Portuguese, French and Kosovar.

Permanent foreign resident population, on 31 December 2019

By citizenship

G2



Source: FSO – STATPOP

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In 1910, 14.7% of the population living in Switzerland were foreigners; this rate was not surpassed until 1967. Except for a drop in the years from 1975 to 1979 and a slight decline in 1983, the percentage of foreign nationals has continued to rise, reaching 25.3% at the end of 2019.

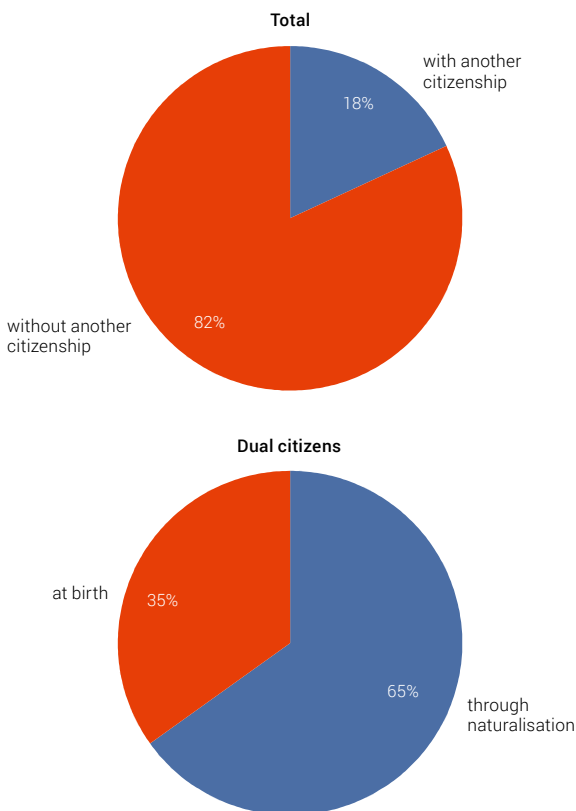
Dual citizenship

18.0% of the Swiss permanent resident population aged 15 or over have dual citizenship (967 115 people). 65.1% of them obtained Swiss nationality by naturalisation, whereas 34.9% have been Swiss nationals from birth.

Permanent Swiss resident population aged 15 or over, 2018

By dual citizenship and acquisition of Swiss citizenship

G3



Source: FSO – SE

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The most common second nationality among dual nationals is Italian (24.1%), followed by French (11.5%) and German (8.6%).

Population by canton

At the end of 2019, Zurich remained the most populated canton in Switzerland with more than 1.5 million inhabitants. Appenzell Inner-rhoden was the least populated (16 128). Almost 60% of the country's population is concentrated in six cantons: Zurich, Bern, Vaud, Aargau, Saint Gallen and Geneva.

Permanent resident population by canton, 2019 T2

	Total	Male	Female	Swiss	Foreigners
Switzerland	8 606 033	4 268 863	4 337 170	6 430 658	2 175 375
Zurich	1 539 275	766 679	772 596	1 122 495	416 780
Bern	1 039 474	510 170	529 304	867 188	172 286
Lucerne	413 120	205 976	207 144	335 508	77 612
Uri	36 703	18 739	17 964	32 084	4 619
Schwyz	160 480	82 213	78 267	125 367	35 113
Obwalden	37 930	19 158	18 772	32 361	5 569
Nidwalden	43 087	22 053	21 034	36 719	6 368
Glarus	40 590	20 546	20 044	30 765	9 825
Zug	127 642	64 594	63 048	91 475	36 167
Fribourg	321 783	161 153	160 630	248 327	73 456
Solothurn	275 247	137 659	137 588	212 104	63 143
Basel-Stadt	195 844	94 997	100 847	124 085	71 759
Basel-Landschaft	289 468	141 890	147 578	222 615	66 853
Schaffhausen	82 348	40 768	41 580	60 891	21 457
Appenzell A. Rh.	55 445	27 938	27 507	46 319	9 126
Appenzell I. Rh.	16 128	8 303	7 825	14 312	1 816
St. Gallen	510 734	256 039	254 695	385 916	124 818
Graubünden	199 021	99 707	99 314	161 639	37 382
Aargau	685 845	344 733	341 112	512 350	173 495
Thurgau	279 547	140 885	138 662	209 234	70 313
Ticino	351 491	171 141	180 350	254 633	96 858
Vaud	805 098	395 189	409 909	539 414	265 684
Valais	345 525	171 254	174 271	267 503	78 022
Neuchâtel	176 496	86 495	90 001	131 913	44 583
Geneva	504 128	244 184	259 944	302 692	201 436
Jura	73 584	36 400	37 184	62 749	10 835

Source: FSO – STATPOP

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Men and women are not equally distributed across the cantons. Women dominate in some cantons, particularly in Geneva and Basel-Stadt: in the other cantons, men dominate, in particular in Schwyz and Appenzell Innerrhoden.

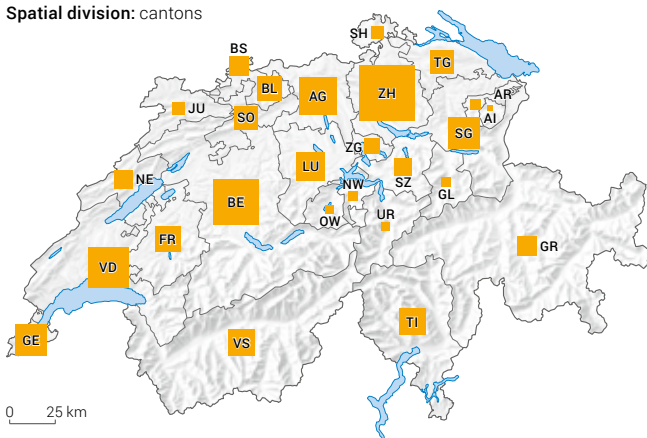
The cantons of Fribourg and Vaud have the largest percentages of young people; these two cantons show the lowest average age, i.e. just below 41. The proportion of elderly people is greatest in Basel-Landschaft and Ticino. At present, the average age in these cantons is above 44.

The cantons with the highest percentages of foreign nationals are Geneva (40%), Basel-Stadt (36.6%) and Vaud (33.0%). Appenzell Innerrhoden and Uri show the lowest proportion of foreigners (11.3% and 12.6%), followed by Obwalden, Jura and Nidwalden (less than 15% in all three cases).

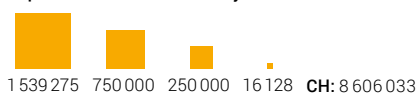
Permanent resident population, 2019

G4

Spatial division: cantons



Population at the end of the year



Source: FSO – STATPOP

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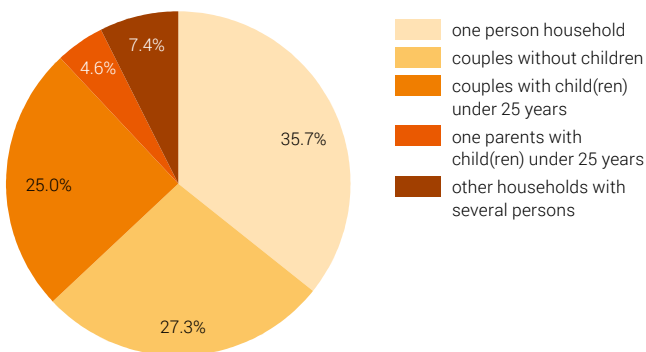
2 Private households

At the end of 2018, there were 3.7 million private households in Switzerland. 35.7% of them comprised just one person, 32.7% two and 31.6% three or more. The average household size was 2.23 persons.

Almost 30% of households are family households with at least one child under the age of 25. Among these households, 15.5% are single parent households, 6.0% reconstituted families (married or cohabiting couples) and 0.1% are same sex couples.

Private households by household type, 2018

G5



Source: FSO – SE 2018

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Since 1970, the number of single-person households has tripled whereas that of couples without children has doubled. The number of single-parent households with at least one child under the age of 25 has more than doubled. During the same period, the number of couples with at least one child under the age of 25 has remained relatively stable.

3 Births, adoptions, deaths and life expectancy

Births

In 2019, 86 172 children were born in Switzerland. Slightly more boys were born (44 123) than girls (42 049).

Live births

T3

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2019
Total	99216	73661	83939	78458	86172
Boys	51 235	37 717	42 914	40 402	44 123
Girls	47 981	35 944	41 025	38 056	42 049
Age of the mother					
under 20 years	3 562	1 746	1 007	834	277
20–24 years	29 262	16 671	12 853	8 529	4 566
25–29 years	35 565	29 333	34 261	22 861	18 817
30–34 years	19 609	19 197	26 133	30 130	33 702
35–39 years	8 569	5 660	8 393	13 798	22 803
40 years and older	2 649	1 054	1 292	2 306	6 007
Average age at birth of a child					
Mother	27,8	27,9	28,9	29,8	32,1
Father	...	...	...	...	35,1
Average number of children per					
Woman	2,10	1,55	1,59	1,50	1,48
Man	...	...	...	...	1,39

... Unknown since data has not (yet) been gathered or calculated

Sources: FSO – BEVNAT, ESPOP, STATPOP

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The majority of parents were aged between 30 and 39 when their children were born. In recent years, the percentage of mothers and fathers aged under 30 has fallen, whereas that of parents aged 30 to 40 has risen. The average age of mothers at the birth of their child was 32.1 years, that of fathers 35.1. Men and women have a different average number of children (1.39 compared with 1.48). This is because there are more men of procreative age in the population than there are women; this leads to a slightly lower male fertility rate.

Most children are born to a married couple (73.5%), but the proportion of births outside of marriage has increased in recent years, rising from 3.8% in 1970 to 26.5% in 2019. In parallel with births outside marriage, the number of paternity acknowledgements rose to 22 256 in 2019.

Multiple births

The number of multiple births has risen over the past 30 years. The proportion of twin births, for example, has almost doubled, rising from 0.9% in 1970 to 1.7% in 2019.

Multiple births

T4

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2019
Total¹	908	761	980	1 110	1 448
Twins	898	747	949	1 079	1 426
Triplets	10	14	29	31	22
Quadruplets and Quintuplets	0	0	2	0	0

¹ Incl. both live births and stillbirths

Source: FSO – BEVNAT

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Adoptions

The number of adoptions has fallen from 1583 in 1980 to 462 in 2019. The decline in the number of adoptions can be explained, amongst other things, by changes to the law with regard to child protection, by a drop in unwanted pregnancies and by a better acceptance of single mothers in society.

Adoptions

T5

Adoptions	1980	1990	2000	2019
Total	1 583	1 198	808	462
Sex of the adopted person				
Male	796	570	386	235
Female	787	628	422	227
Nationality before the adoption				
Switzerland	1 060	525	198	294
Rest of Europe	230	156	190	62
Africa	21	43	79	23
The Americas	102	257	192	19
Asia	168	216	148	57
Others	2	1	1	7
Age group				
0–9 years	852	785	516	101
10–18 years	530	304	230	132
19 years and older	201	109	62	229

Source: FSO – BEVNAT

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Deaths

In 2019, there were 67 780 deaths in Switzerland, i.e. 692 more than a year earlier (+ 1.0%).

Changes in the age distribution of deceased persons speak for themselves: The percentage of people dying before the age of 65 has declined considerably, falling from 28.3% in 1970 to 12.4% in 2019. The proportion of deaths among those aged 80 years or older has risen markedly. The percentage of people who died in this age group was 62.2% in 2019, compared with 30.3% in 1970.

Deaths

T6

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2019
Total	57 091	59 097	63 739	62 528	67 780
Male	29 954	30 847	32 492	30 400	32 755
Female	27 137	28 250	31 247	32 128	35 025
Nationality					
Swiss	53 084	55 506	59 802	58 190	60 960
Foreigners	4 007	3 591	3 937	4 338	6 820
Age group					
0 years	1 293	596	472	336	263
1–19 years	1 271	771	609	380	196
20–29 years	972	966	1 112	613	312
30–39 years	1 019	1 039	1 201	952	472
40–64 years	11 623	9 881	9 207	8 645	7 146
65–79 years	23 604	23 646	20 415	17 915	17 245
80 years and older	17 309	22 198	30 723	33 687	42 146
Infant mortality rate¹	15.1	9.1	6.8	4.9	3.3
Life expectancy at birth					
Male	70.1	72.3	74.0	76.9	81.9
Female	76.1	78.8	80.8	82.6	85.6

¹ Deaths of children in the first year of life per 1000 live births

The causes of death vary by age. Among people aged between 16 and 34, the leading causes of death are accidents and suicide. Cancer is the main cause of death from the age of 40. This is replaced by cardiovascular disease from about the age of 80.

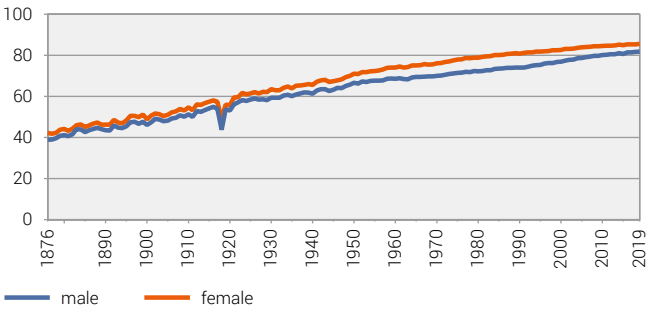
Life expectancy

Life expectancy at birth rose considerably during the last century. It has almost doubled since 1876, rising from 38.9 years to 81.9 for men and from 42.3 years to 85.6 for women. However, a gradual slowing down of this trend can be seen. The difference between the two sexes has been narrowing for some years and in 2019 was 4.0 years.

Life expectancy at birth

G6

In years



Sources: FSO – BEVNAT, ESPPOP, STATPOP

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Life expectancy at age 65 also rose in the 20th century. It rose from 9.9 years in 1900 to 20.0 in 2019 for men and from 9.8 years to 22.7 for women. Although life expectancy for women remains higher than that of men, the gap is closing. The marked decline in mortality observed among elderly people can be explained in particular by progress made in the treatment of cardiovascular disease.

4 Marriages, registered partnerships and divorces

Marriages

In 2019, 38 974 marriages were celebrated. In 72.1% of cases (28 108 marriages), both partners were getting married for the first time. 10 866 were remarriages (27.9%), i.e. at least one of the partners had already been married previously. The average age at first marriage continues to rise. From 26.5 for men and 24.1 for women in 1970, it has risen to 32.3 and 30.1 years respectively in 2019.

Marriages

T7

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2019
Total	46 693	35 721	46 603	39 758	38 974
First marriage	39 692	27 966	35 067	26 560	28 108
Remarriage	7 001	7 755	11 536	13 198	10 866
Men					
single	41 536	30 212	38 316	30 467	31 068
widowed	1 437	791	795	618	405
divorced ¹	3 720	4 718	7 492	8 673	7 501
Women					
single	42 607	31 175	39 624	31 531	31 987
widowed	950	417	436	432	295
divorced ¹	3 136	4 129	6 543	7 795	6 692
Average age at first marriage (in years)					
Men	26.5	27.4	29.1	30.3	32.3
Women	24.1	25.0	26.7	27.9	30.1

¹ Incl. other marital status

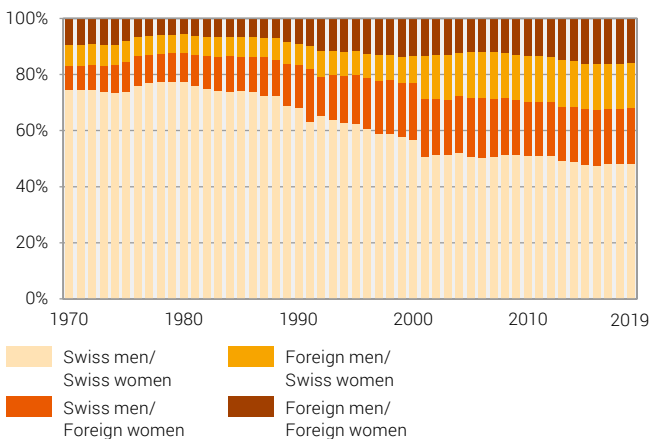
Sources: FSO – BEVNAT, ESPOP, STATPOP

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The number of marrying couples in which at least one spouse was a foreign national was 20 205 (51.8%) in 2019. Of these, 13 991 (35.9%) comprised a Swiss and a foreign national and in 6 214 marriages (15.9%) both spouses were foreign nationals.

Marriages by category of citizenship of the partners

G7



Source: FSO – BEVNAT

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Registered and dissolved partnerships

674 same-sex couples entered into a registered partnership in 2019. The number of male couples is greater than that of female couples.

Among women, most partnerships are concluded between Swiss citizens. Among men, it is mostly mixed couples, formed by a Swiss and a foreign partner, who choose this option.

Registered and dissolved partnership

T8

	2007	2010	2019
Registered	2004	720	674
Couples (Men)	1 431	499	419
Couples (Women)	573	221	255
Dissolved	1	77	200
Couples (Men)	1	49	133
Couples (Women)	0	28	67

Source: FSO – BEVNAT

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Divorces

In 2019, 16 885 divorces were declared. Most divorces take place after six or seven years of marriage. Nevertheless, the proportion of marriages that end in divorce after at least 20 years of wedlock is on the rise and was 30.7% in 2019. Because of this, the average length of marriage at the time of divorce is increasing and was 15.4 years in 2019. Should the behavior observed in 2019 continue, an estimated two out of five marriages (41.1%) could end in divorce.

Divorces

T9

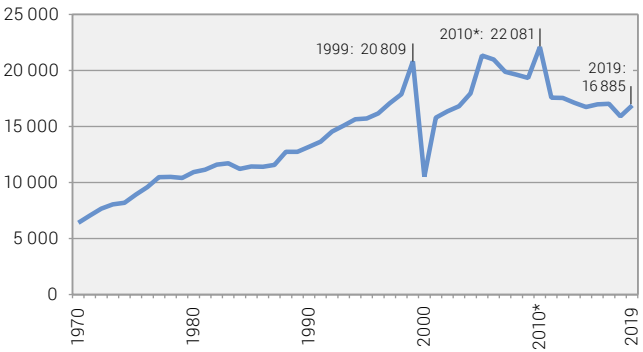
	1970	1990	2010	2019 ¹
Total	6406	13184	22081	16885
Duration of marriage²				
0–4 years	1 568	3 128	2 454	1 973
5–9 years	1 926	3 473	6 117	3 924
10–14 years	1 143	2 051	4 087	3 291
15–19 years	778	1 679	3 216	2 508
20 years and over	991	2 853	6 207	5 189
Average duration of marriage at time of divorce (in years)	11.6	11.9	14.5	15.4
Total divorce rate	15.4	33.2	54.4	41.1

¹ A change in the methodology from 2011 onwards leads to a break in the time series of divorce statistics, as it is no longer possible to collect all divorces of two foreigners.

² Calculation: year of divorce minus year of marriage

Divorces

G8



* From 2010: New definition of the permanent resident population, which also includes those in the asylum process with a total length of stay of at least 12 months.

The increases observed in 1999 and 2010 are connected to the new divorce law and to revisions that came into force on 1st January 2000 and 1st January 2011.

Source: FSO – BEVNAT

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5 Migration and acquisition of Swiss nationality

The various migration movements contribute to the population's composition but it can be affected as well by the possibility of settling in the host country.

International migration

T10

	1981	1990	2000	2010	2019
Immigration¹	121 420	154 244	110 302	161 778	169 573
Swiss	28 483	31 465	26 102	22 283	23 965
Foreigners	92 937	122 779	84 200	139 495	145 608
Emigration	97 743	97 601	90 078	96 839	126 221
Swiss	27 796	31 888	30 776	26 311	31 362
Foreigners	69 947	65 713	59 302	70 528	94 859
Net migration¹	23 677	56 643	20 224	64 939	43 352
Swiss	687	-423	-4 674	-4 028	-7 397
Foreigners	22 990	57 066	24 898	68 967	50 749

¹ Until 2010 incl. change of status and transfers from the asylum process, from 2011 incl. conversions from non permanent residence status.

Sources: FSO – ESPOP, STATPOP

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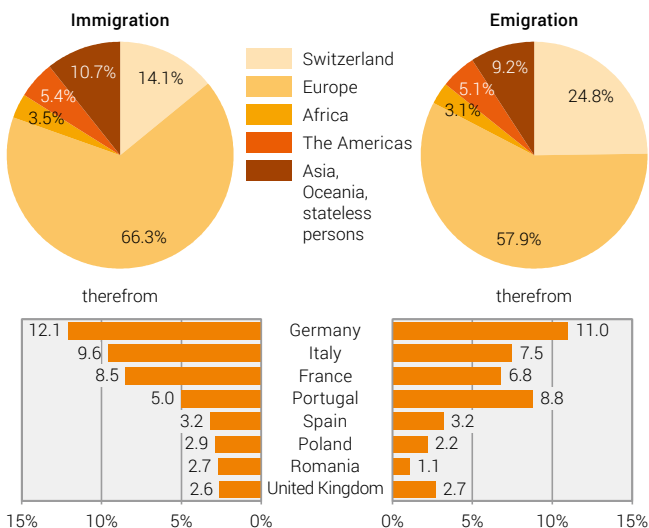
Overall, a surplus of departures can be observed among Swiss citizens and a surplus of arrivals by foreign nationals.

Since 1981, a reversal can be seen in the migration flows of Swiss nationals. At that time, the number of Swiss nationals immigrating was greater than those emigrating, which is no longer the case today. Since 1979, more foreign nationals have immigrated than emigrated. In the past forty years, net migration was at its highest in 2008 (103 363). In 2019, it was half that number at 50 749.

Immigration and emigration, 2019

By citizenship

G9



Source: FSO – STATPOP

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In 2019, almost one immigrant in seven and one emigrant in four were Swiss nationals.

More than half of the permanent resident population who immigrated or emigrated came from Europe, the majority of them from Germany, Italy, France or Portugal.

Internal migration

Internal migration is the main factor in population growth at regional level in Switzerland. In 2019, the number of internal migrations (517 734 departures and arrivals) was considerably greater than that of immigrants (169 573), emigrants (126 221), live births (86 271) and deaths (67 780). Almost three-quarters of internal migrations are from one commune to another within the same canton.

Acquisition of Swiss citizenship

An acquisition of Swiss citizenship occurs is when a foreign national obtains a Swiss passport. This person is henceforth included in the population statistics of Swiss nationals. In 2019, 41 127 people acquired Swiss citizenship, compared with 28 700 in 2000 and 8658 in 1990. 44.9% of these were under the age of 30 and most of them came from European countries (32 939).

Acquisition of Swiss citizenship

T11

	1990	2000	2010	2019
Total	8 658	28 700	39 314	41 127
Men	3 228	13 314	18 553	19 794
Women	5 430	15 386	20 761	21 333
Age group				
0–14 years	...	6 012	9 173	9 490
15–19 years	...	3 955	4 832	4 579
20–29 years	...	4 909	4 945	4 389
30–39 years	...	6 675	7 828	6 871
40–49 years	...	4 228	7 691	8 857
50 years and older	...	2 921	4 845	6 941
Nationality				
Europe	6 970	21 975	30 458	32 939
EU28/EFTA	6 198	13 386	15 673	22 759
Africa	273	1 824	2 499	2 715
The Americas	600	1 875	2 015	2 152
Asia	796	2 981	4 261	3 191
Oceania/stateless/no indication	19	45	81	30
Gross naturalisation rate	0.83	2.10	2.34	2.02

Sources: FSO – PETRA, STATPOP

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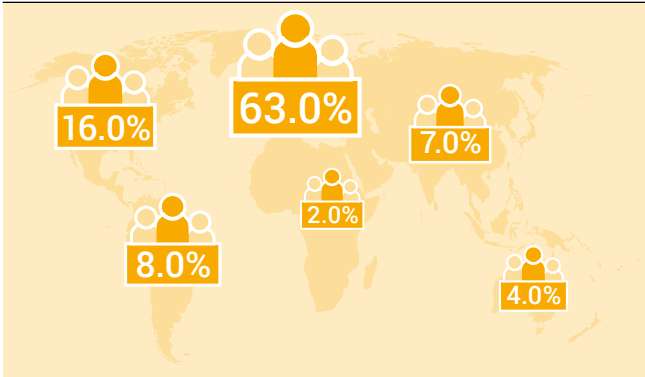
The gross naturalisation rate is the ratio between the number of Swiss citizenship acquisitions and the number of C and B permit holders in a given calendar year. This rate reflects the frequency of naturalisations within the community of foreign nationals. It was almost 1% in 1990 and is currently fluctuating at around 2%. Despite fluctuations in absolute figures, the rate remains low.

6 Swiss citizens abroad

At the end of 2019, 770 871 Swiss nationals lived abroad. A quarter of them resided in France making them the largest community of Swiss citizens abroad. This was followed by Germany, United States and Italy.

Percentage of Swiss citizens living abroad by continent of residence, 2019

G 10



Source: FSO – SE-Stat

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Swiss citizens living abroad by country of residence

T12

	1995	2000	2005	2010	2019
Total	527 795	580 396	634 216	695 123	770 871
Europe	326 193	358 786	395 336	429 498	484 257
France	137 528	151 037	169 437	181 462	199 825
Germany	65 664	67 728	71 115	77 827	92 239
Italy	36 821	41 140	46 327	49 187	49 833
United Kingdom	22 543	25 043	26 441	29 505	37 172
Africa	16 650	17 467	18 017	20 008	19 330
The Americas	143 030	154 872	163 122	174 158	180 893
USA	62 793	67 929	71 773	75 252	81 106
Canada	32 218	34 192	36 204	39 186	40 274
Argentina	14 163	14 546	14 931	15 690	15 437
Asia	19 845	24 167	30 378	41 466	53 615
Oceania	22 077	25 104	27 363	29 993	32 776

Source: FSO – SE-Stat

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7 Switzerland in international comparison

In comparison with its neighbouring countries, Switzerland mainly stands out due to large net migration and longer life expectancy among both men and women. Germany and Italy are characterised by greater population ageing than in Switzerland. France has a high fertility rate and a high proportion of young people aged 0 to 14.

Main indicators for different countries, 2019

T 13

	Switzerland	Italy	Germany	France	Austria
Population (in 1 000) ¹	8 544	60 359	83 019	67 012	8 858
Share of population under 15 years (in %) ¹	14.0	13.2	13.6	18.0 ^P	14.4
Share of population 65 or older (in %) ¹	18.7	22.8	21.5	20.1 ^P	18.8
Share of foreigners (in %) ¹	25.3	10.4	17.9	12.5 ^P	19.4
Average number of children per woman ²	1.5	1.3	1.6	1.9 ^P	1.5
Life expectancy at birth (in years) ²					
Male	81.9	81.2	78.6	79.7 ^P	79.4
Female	85.6	85.6	83.3	85.9 ^P	84.1
Net migration (per 1000 persons)	4.7	1.6 ^P	3.7 ^P	-0.8 ^P	4.6
Marriages (per 1000 persons) ²	4.5	3.2	...	...	5.3
Divorces (per 1000 persons) ²	2.0	1.5	...	...	1.8

¹ January 1, 2019

² Italy, Austria: 2018

^P provisory

Sources: Switzerland: FSO, other countries: Eurostat, on August 14, 2020

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8 Information, sources and publications

Below you can find information on data sources and on FSO publications about population statistics

The Vital Statistics (BEVNAT) provide information on births, deaths, marriages, registered partnerships, divorces, adoptions and paternity acknowledgements. More information on this subject is available on our website:

www.statistique.ch → Bases statistiques et enquêtes → Enquêtes → Statistique du mouvement naturel de la population (**BEVNAT**)

The Population and Households Statistics (**STATPOP**) forms part of the federal census system, which since 2010 has supplied data on the size, structure, growth and geographic change of the population in Switzerland's communes, districts and cantons. More information is available on our website:

www.statistique.ch → Basics and surveys → Surveys → Population and Households Statistics (**STATPOP**)

The Structural Survey completes information drawn from registers and since 2010 has provided additional data on the population, households, families, dual nationality, housing, work, commuters, education, languages and religion. More information can be found at the following address:

www.statistique.ch → Basics and Surveys → Surveys → Structural Survey (**SE**)

For more detailed information on the other data sources in the fact-sheet, please see:

www.statistique.ch → Basics and Surveys → Surveys → Theme → Population

Electronic publications

The interactive statistical databank STAT-TAB contains STATPOP and BEVNAT data cubes to create your own personalised tables:

www.pxweb.bfs.admin.ch/en → Population

Further information, texts and tables are available on our website at:

www.statistique.ch → Look for statistics → Population

www.statistique.ch → Look for statistics

→ Catalogues and Databases → Publications

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