



Press release

Embargo: 30.3.2021, 8:30

01 Population

Swiss citizens abroad in 2020

Europe was the main continent of residence for Swiss citizens abroad in 2020

At the end of 2020, more than one in ten Swiss citizens lived abroad. Almost two thirds lived in Europe, notably in France. Their number increased by 0.7% compared with 2019. The increase in the number of persons aged 65 and over was the most marked (+2.8%). Overall, the share of women remained greater than that of men, according to the results of the statistics on the Swiss abroad from the Federal Statistical Office (FSO).

In 2020, 776 300 Swiss citizens were registered with a Swiss diplomatic representation abroad, an increase of 0.7% compared with 2019. However, this growth was nonetheless less substantial than those registered in 2019 and 2018 (+1.4% and +1.1% respectively).

More numerous in Europe

Compared with 2019, numbers increased in Europe (+1.4%) and in Oceania (+0.7%), while they fell in the Americas (-0.2%), in Asia (-1.0%) and in Africa (-2.9%).

Of 490 800 Swiss citizens living in Europe (63%), 200 900 lived in France and its overseas departments, making them the largest community of Swiss citizens abroad in 2020. This was followed by Germany (94 600 persons), Italy (50 200), the United Kingdom (37 700) and Spain (24 500). The number of Swiss citizens increased in all of these countries; the greatest increase was registered in Germany (+2.5%) and the lowest in France (+0.5%).

285 500 Swiss citizens lived on other continents, i.e. 24% in the Americas, 7% in Asia, 4% in Oceania and 2% in Africa. The largest communities outside Europe were in the United States which registered 81 300 people, ahead of Canada (40 600), Australia (25 700) and Israel (21 400). An increase was seen in all of these countries but the greatest was observed in Israel with 2.6% more than in 2019.

Older population on the increase

At the end of 2020, 21.1% of Swiss citizens abroad were minors under the age of 18 (163 800 persons). This number remained more or less stable compared with the previous year. There were 440 000 persons aged 18-64 years (56.7%) and 172 500 persons aged 65 and over (22.2%). The increase was particularly marked among the latter: +2.8% compared with the previous year, and only 0.2% among those aged 18-64. Furthermore, 662 centenarians were registered which represents a

ratio of 9 centenarians per 10 000 Swiss citizens abroad. Within our borders, this ratio is only 2 per 10 000 for Swiss citizens.

A majority of women

Across the continents, more women than men lived abroad, 54% and 46% respectively in 2020. This was the case for those living in Europe, the Americas, Africa, and Oceania with percentages ranging from 52% in Africa to 56% in Europe. In contrast, more men than women were recorded in Asia at 55%.

Statistics on the Swiss abroad

Every year, the statistics record Swiss citizens residing outside Switzerland who are registered with a Swiss diplomatic representation abroad (embassies, general consulates). The data are collected by the consular network in accordance with the ordinance on the E-VERA information system (register of Swiss citizens abroad) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA): <https://www.fedlex.admin.ch/eli/cc/2016/487/fr>. The Federal Statistical Office (FSO) took over the production of statistics on the Swiss abroad in 2018.

Information

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Access to results

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The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) and the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) received this press release two working days before its release with restricted and supervised access subject to embargo.