

Press release

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01 Population

Swiss citizens abroad in 2021

75% of Swiss citizens living abroad have more than one nationality

At the end of 2021, more than one in ten Swiss citizens lived abroad. This was a 1.5% increase compared with 2020. Most of these citizens lived in Europe. Regardless of the continent in which they lived, the majority were aged between 18 and 64. Reflecting Switzerland's multicultural nature, many of them also had more than one nationality, according to the results of the statistics on the Swiss abroad from the Federal Statistical Office (FSO).

In 2021, 788 000 Swiss citizens were registered with a Swiss diplomatic representation abroad, i.e. 1.5% more than in 2020. This increase is similar to the one recorded in 2019 (+1.4%).

64% of Swiss citizens abroad in Europe

Compared with 2020, numbers increased in Europe (+2.2%) in Asia (+0.7%), in Oceania (+0.6%), and in the Americas (+0.2%), while in Africa they fell (-0.6%).

The majority of Swiss citizens abroad lived on the European continent (501 600 people, 64%). The largest community resided in France (203 900). This was followed by Germany (96 600 persons), Italy (50 500), the United Kingdom (38 900) and Spain (25 100). The number of Swiss citizens grew in all of these countries, with the greatest increase in the United Kingdom (+3.0%) and the lowest in Italy (+0.8%). Portugal had only a small number of Swiss citizens (5400), but the growth recorded in 2021 was one of the highest among European countries (+14.1%).

The Americas lead the remaining continents

286 300 Swiss citizens lived on other continents, i.e. 23.0% in the Americas, 6.8% in Asia, 4.2% in Oceania and 2.4% in Africa. The largest communities outside Europe were in the United States, which registered 81 800 people, ahead of Canada (40 800), Australia (25 800) and Israel (22 100). An increase was seen in all of these countries but the greatest was observed in Israel with 3.0% more than in 2020.

Across all continents, 21.1% of Swiss abroad were under 18 years of age, 56.4% are aged 18 to 64 and 22.5% are 65 years or older. Compared with 2020, their number rose in all age groups by +1.4%, +1.1% and +2.7% respectively. As was the case in 2020, this increase was most pronounced in the over-64s.

Increase in persons with more than one nationality

Three-quarters of Swiss citizens abroad, i.e. 590 500, had at least one other nationality.

The highest percentage of Swiss citizens with more than one nationality was found on the American continent (80.0%). In over half of the American countries in which they lived, the percentage was 75% or more. The highest percentages were seen in South America, particularly in Chile and Argentina, where they were 91.3% and 94.2% respectively.

The lowest percentage of Swiss citizens abroad with more than one nationality was found in Asia (63.1%). In many Asian countries, Swiss citizens did not have another nationality. Some countries, however, stood out due to their high percentage of Swiss citizens with more than one nationality. Israel is a case in point (85.0%).

Since 2017, the number of Swiss citizens with more than one nationality rose by 5.3% across the continents. In fact, growth was positive in Asia (+6.7%), in Europe (+6.5%), in Oceania (+4.8%) and in the Americas (+2.9%). In the same period, however, the number of Swiss citizens with more than one nationality fell by 2.8% in Africa.

More emigration and less immigration

Since 1992, the net migration of Swiss citizens has been negative, i.e. their emigration has been greater than their immigration. In 2020, due to the particular situation worldwide, Swiss departures fell, while arrivals in Switzerland rose, reducing net migration to –279 persons.

In 2021, emigrations rose again while immigrations once again declined at +11.5% and –12.5% respectively, according to provisional figures from the Population and Household Statistics. In 2021, 28 700 persons left Switzerland and 22 300 arrived. Net migration was –6431 person (–7397 in 2019).

Statistics on the Swiss abroad

Every year, the statistics record Swiss citizens residing outside Switzerland who are registered with a Swiss diplomatic representation abroad (embassy, 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.admin.ch/opc/fr/classified-compilation/20160173/index.html>. In 2018, the FSO took over the production of the statistics on the Swiss abroad.

Population and Household statistics

The Population and Household statistics form part of the annual population census system. They are based on the official registers of persons and provide information on the size and structure of the resident population at the end of the year. They also provide information on the movements of the permanent resident population during the current year.

Information

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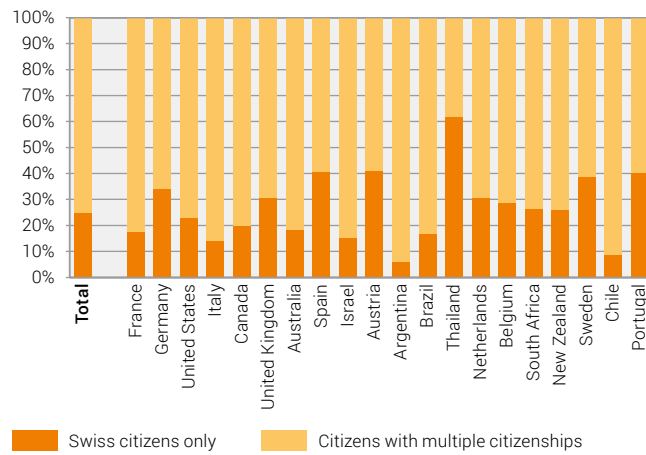
FSO website: www.statistics.admin.ch

Access to results

This press release has been established on the basis of the European Statistics Code of Practice, which ensures the independence, integrity and accountability of national and community statistical offices. Privileged access is supervised and under embargo.

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.

Swiss citizens living abroad by country of residence¹ and multiple citizenship, 2021



■ Swiss citizens only
 ■ Citizens with multiple citizenships

¹ from left to right: the 20 countries of residence with the largest Swiss communities (descending order)