



01

Population

1155-1600

Switzerland's population 2016



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
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Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA
Federal Statistical Office FSO

Neuchâtel 2017

Facts and Figures 2016



Permanent resident population

8 419 550



Live births

87 883



Deaths

64 964



Family households with child(ren) aged under 25

1 079 584



Marriages

41 646

Registered partnerships

729



Divorces

17 028

Dissolved partnerships

176



Life expectancy at 65

22.6 years



Life expectancy at 65

19.8 years



Belief in a single god is most widespread

46.0%



Most commonly spoken non-national languages

English and Portuguese

Published by:	Federal Statistical Office (FSO)
Information:	Federal Statistical Office (FSO), Demography and migration, info.dem@bfs.admin.ch, tel. +41 58 463 67 11
Editors:	Jacqueline Kucera, FSO; Athena Krummenacher, FSO
Contents:	Demography and migration section DEM
Series:	Swiss Statistics
Topic:	01 Population
Original text:	German
Translation:	FSO language services
Layout:	DIAM Section, Prepress/Print
Graphics:	DIAM Section, Prepress/Print
Front page:	FSO; Concept: Netthoevel & Gaberthüel, Biel; Photograph: © Federal Chancellery – Béatrice Devènes, Dominic Büttner
Pictures:	© flaticon – freepik.com
Printed:	In Switzerland
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Print format orders:	Federal Statistical Office, CH-2010 Neuchâtel, tel. +41 58 463 60 60, fax +41 58 463 60 61, order@bfs.admin.ch
Price:	Free of charge
Downloads:	www.statistics.admin.ch (free of charge)
FSO number:	1155-1600



Rules of gender designations

For reasons of readability only the male form is used in this publication. However, the text includes women and men equally.

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1 Population

The demographic picture of Switzerland varies depending on the region. There are variations in population size, the growth rate as well as the proportion of foreigners in the population.

Permanent resident population

T1

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2016
Total	6 193 064	6 335 243	6 750 693	7 204 055	8 419 550
Swiss	5 191 177	5 421 746	5 623 584	5 779 685	6 318 404
Foreigners	1 001 887	913 497	1 127 109	1 424 370	2 101 146
Men	3 025 330	3 081 965	3 298 312	3 519 698	4 173 437
Women	3 167 734	3 253 278	3 452 381	3 684 357	4 246 113

Sources: FSO – ESPOP, STATPOP

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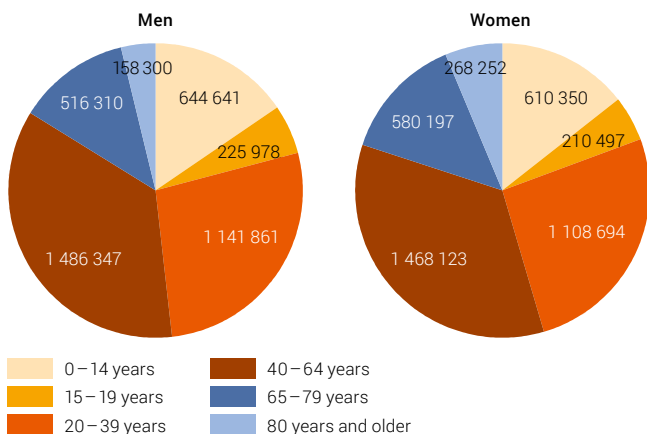
Population structure

Switzerland's population doubled in size between 1936 and 2016, rising from 4.2 million to 8.4 million.

Graphic G1 shows that in 2016, the permanent resident population comprised 4.25 million women and 4.17 million men. The number of boys and men aged under 20 is greater than that of girls and women. Between the ages of 20 and 39, the gender ratio evens out, with 1.1 million men and women respectively. This is also true of 40 to 64 year-olds, with an equal number of both men and women (1.5 million). Among the 65- to 79-year-olds (women: 580 197, men: 516 310) and the 80-year-olds and older (women: 268 252, men: 158 000), the women are predominant.

Permanent resident population by age group and sex, 2016

G1



Source: FSO – STATPOP

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Zurich (1.5 million) and Bern (1.0 million) are Switzerland's most populous cantons. They are followed by Vaud with 784 822 and Aargau with 663 462 inhabitants. All cantons recorded population growth in 2016. The greatest increases were observed in the cantons of Aargau, Zug and Zurich, with +1.5%. The smallest increase was recorded by the canton of Appenzell Innerrhoden with +0.2%. Population growth nationwide was 1.1%.

In the following cantons, there are more men than women: Uri (men: 18 427, women: 17 718), Schwyz (men: 79 852, women: 76 011) and Graubünden (men: 98 853, women: 98 697). And in these cantons, the women form the majority of the population: Bern (women: 522 724, men: 503 789), Vaud (women: 399 433, men: 385 389) and Ticino (women: 181 498, men: 172 877).

The cantons with the highest proportion of foreign inhabitants are Geneva (40%), Basel-Stadt (36%) and Vaud (34%). With 11% and 12%, Appenzell I.Rh. and Uri have the smallest proportion of foreign nationals, followed by the canton of Nidwalden with 14% and the cantons of Obwalden and Jura with 15% each.

Permanent resident population by canton, 2016

T2

	Total	Men	Women	Swiss	Foreigners
Swiss	8 419 550	4 173 437	4 246 113	6 318 404	2 101 146
Zurich	1 487 969	739 814	748 155	1 092 631	395 338
Bern	1 026 513	503 789	522 724	861 614	164 899
Lucerne	403 397	200 897	202 500	329 264	74 133
Uri	36 145	18 427	17 718	31 850	4 295
Schwyz	155 863	79 852	76 011	123 597	32 266
Obwalden	37 378	18 965	18 413	31 892	5 486
Nidwalden	42 556	21 795	20 761	36 521	6 035
Glarus	40 147	20 329	19 818	30 650	9 497
Zug	123 948	62 684	61 264	89 809	34 139
Fribourg	311 914	156 334	155 580	242 087	69 827
Solothurn	269 441	134 300	135 141	210 240	59 201
Basel-Stadt	193 070	93 212	99 858	124 026	69 044
Basel-Land- schaft	285 624	140 142	145 482	221 990	63 634
Schaffhausen	80 769	40 020	40 749	59 889	20 880
Appenzell A.Rh.	54 954	27 778	27 176	46 044	8 910
Appenzell I.Rh.	16 003	8 237	7 766	14 230	1 773
St. Gallen	502 552	251 526	251 026	382 829	119 723
Graubünden	197 550	98 853	98 697	160 932	36 618
Aargau	663 462	333 364	330 098	499 712	163 750
Thurgau	270 709	136 199	134 510	204 378	66 331
Ticino	354 375	172 877	181 498	254 828	99 547
Vaud	784 822	385 389	399 433	520 957	263 865
Valais	339 176	168 072	171 104	260 444	78 732
Neuchâtel	178 567	87 312	91 255	132 878	45 689
Geneva	489 524	237 112	252 412	292 641	196 883
Jura	73 122	36 158	36 964	62 471	10 651

Source: FSO – STATPOP

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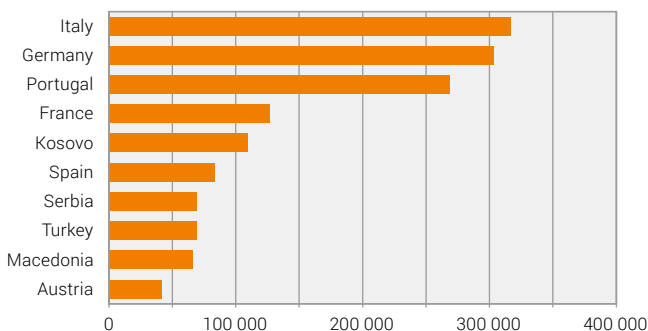
The 10 most common nationalities in the permanent foreign resident population

At the end of 2016, 2.1 million foreign nationals lived in Switzerland. Their share in the permanent resident population was 25%. Of these, 403 622 were born in Switzerland and 1.7 million abroad. Two-thirds of people born abroad come from an EU28/EFTA member state. The permanent foreign resident population registered an increase of roughly 3% on the previous year.

The 10 most common nationalities in the permanent foreign resident population are Italian (316 525), German (303 525), Portuguese (268 660), French (126 970), Kosovar (109 352), Spanish (83 337), Serbian (68 767), Turkish (68 744), Macedonian (65 486) and Austrian (41 855).

Foreign permanent resident population, 2016

G2



Source: FSO – STATPOP

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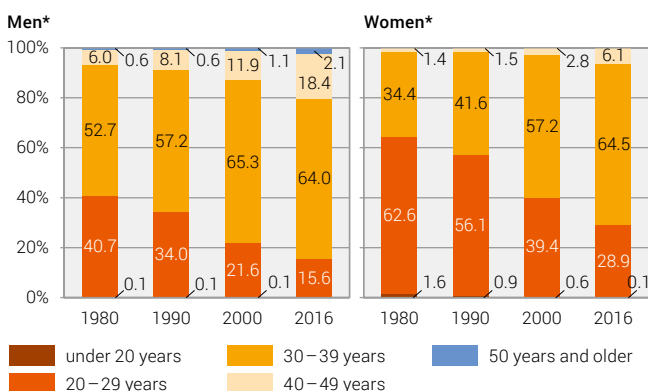
Driven by the economic and political situation, the number of foreign nationals was subject to major fluctuations in the 20th century. In 1910, the proportion of foreign nationals in Switzerland already represented 14.7% – a figure that was not exceeded until 1967. With the exception of the years 1975 –1979 and another slight decline in 1983, the proportion of foreigners continued to rise and in 2016 was roughly 25%.

2 Birth, adoption and death

Live births and deaths have an impact on population size and for this reason are described as population change.

Married women and men are having children at an increasingly older age. In particular, the number of young mothers and fathers under 20 has declined considerably. In 1980, 99 fathers were under 20 compared with 8 in 2016, and 1155 mothers compared with 95 in 2016. Currently around 64% of live births are to 30 to 39 year-olds. The number of parents aged over 40 has more than tripled since 1980.

Age groups of parents at birth

G3


* only married fathers and mothers

Source: FSO – BEVNAT

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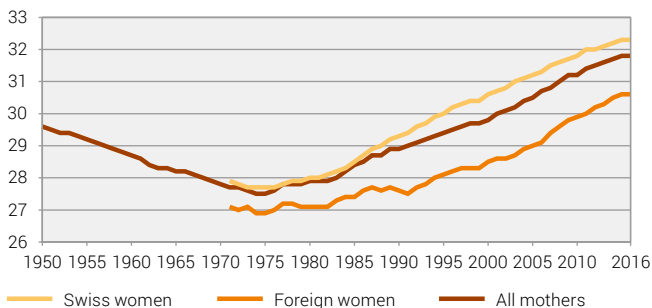
Average age of mothers at maternity

Today the average age of mothers at maternity is 31.8 (2016). In 1980 the average age of mothers was 27.9. The rise in the average age of mothers can be explained by two different trends: the decline in the number of women under 30 having children and the rise in the number of mothers aged 35 and over.

More time spent in education and training, later entry into the world of work and changing lifestyles and behaviour can all explain this “postponement” of childbearing to later in life. Currently, the average age of foreign mothers (30.6) is lower than that of Swiss mothers (32.3).

Average age at maternity

G4



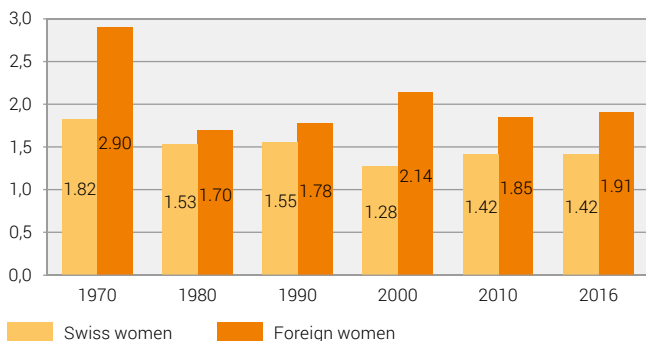
Sources: FSO – ESPOP, BEVNAT, PETRA, STATPOP

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The average number of children per woman remained stable in 2016. With 1.91 children, the fertility rate of foreign women is higher than that of Swiss women (1.42).

Average number of children per woman

G5



Sources: FSO – BEVNAT, ESPOP, STATPOP

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20 390 paternity acknowledgements

If a father is not married to the mother of his child, the father-child relationship is usually acknowledged officially. The majority of children are born to married mothers (75.8%). The percentage of births outside marriage rose from 3.8% in 1970 to 24.2% in 2016.

Deliveries

Each delivery is counted as one event, regardless of the number of children born (live or stillborn).

The number of multiple births has risen in the last 30 years. For example, twin births have almost doubled from 1.0% of deliveries in 1970 to 1.9% in 2016.

Deliveries

T3

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2016
Total¹	99 184	73 247	83 316	77 600	86 505
Single	98 276	72 486	82 336	76 490	84 797
Multiple	908	761	980	1 110	1 708
Twins	898	747	949	1 079	1 668
Others	10	14	31	31	40

¹ incl. both live births and stillbirths

Source: FSO – BEVNAT

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Childlessness

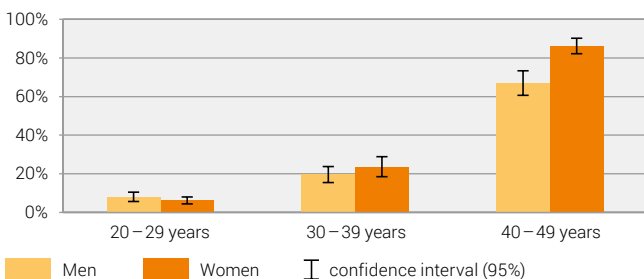
Childlessness is a relatively widespread phenomenon in Switzerland: 19% of women and 21% of men aged between 50 and 80 have no biological or adopted children.

Only around six in ten people living in Switzerland (59% of men and 65% of women) aged between 20 and 80 are parents of one or more biological children.

Besides women and men who choose not to have children, there are also people who are childless due to external circumstances, such as the lack of a suitable partner, difficulties combining a family and career, illness or infertility.

Proportion of childless people who do not want children, by sex and age group

G6



Source: FSO – SFG 2013

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Adoptions

In the period from 1980 to 2016, the number of adoptions fell from 1583 to 363 per year.

Our statistics distinguish between four different types of adoption. These include national adoptions of children born in Switzerland and international adoptions of children born abroad by parents living in Switzerland. Further adoptions are those of stepchildren and adults.

Adoptions by sex and nationality¹

T4

Adoptions	1980	1990	2000	2016
Total	1583	1198	808	363
By sex of the adopted person				
Men	796	570	386	188
Women	787	628	422	175
Nationality before the adoption				
Switzerland	1060	525	198	163
Rest of Europe	230	156	190	62
Africa	21	43	79	58
America	102	257	192	26
Asia	168	216	148	50
Oceania	2	0	1	0
Stateless, unknown nationality (or not stated)	0	1	0	4

¹ nationality before the adoption

Source: FSO – BEVNAT

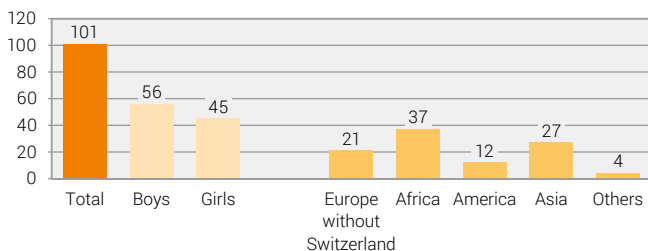
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The drop in the number of adoptions within and outside the family could be explained by a number of hypotheses, including changes in child protection law¹, the decline in unwanted pregnancies and better acceptance of single mothers in today's society.

¹ Hague Convention: www.bj.admin.ch/bj/en/home.html → Society → International Adoption

International adoptions¹, 2016

G7A



¹ Nationality before the adoption

Source: FSO – BEVNAT

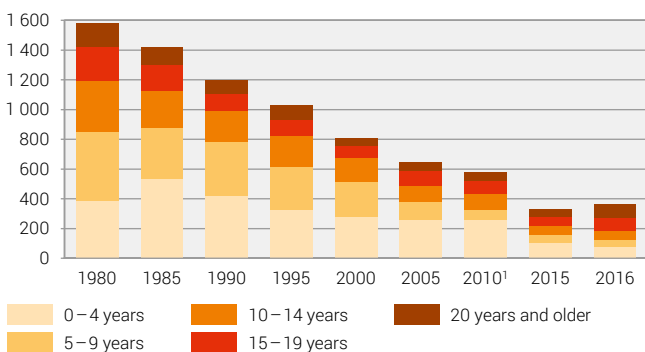
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The Statistics of International Adoptions show the number of children whose place of birth is abroad, who were foreign nationals before the adoption and whose adoptive parents' residence is in Switzerland. Not included in these statistics are adoptions of stepchildren and adults.

In 2016, more boys than girls were adopted from a foreign country. The graph G7A shows that 37 children are from Africa, 27 from Asia, 12 from America and 25 from Europe or other countries.

Adoptions by age of the adopted person

G7B



¹ From 2010: New definition of the permanent resident population including people in the asylum procedure with a stay of at least 12 months.

Source: FSO – BEVNAT

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Adoptions usually occur when children are young. The graphic G7B shows that the majority of adopted children are aged 0 to 9. In principle, however, adults can also be adopted.

Deaths

The death of a person is an unavoidable fact. However, the causes and time of death are strongly dependent on medical progress and the relative importance of causes of death varies by age.

Between 16 and about 34, accidents and suicides are predominant. Cancer is the most frequent cause of death from the age of about 40. It is replaced by cardiovascular diseases² after the age of about 80. Infant mortality has been greatly reduced in Switzerland since 1970.

Deaths

T5

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2016
Total	57 091	59 097	63 739	62 528	64 964
Men	29 954	30 847	32 492	30 400	31 283
Women	27 137	28 250	31 247	32 128	33 681
Swiss	53 084	55 506	59 802	58 190	58 711
Foreigners	4 007	3 591	3 937	4 338	6 253
Died in their first year	1 494	667	574	386	316
Infant mortality rate ¹	15.1	9.1	6.8	4.9	3.6
Deaths from age 65 on					
Men	19 501	22 104	24 056	23 352	25 872
Women	21 412	23 740	27 082	28 250	30 369

¹ deaths of children in the first year of life per 1 000 live births

Source: FSO – BEVNAT

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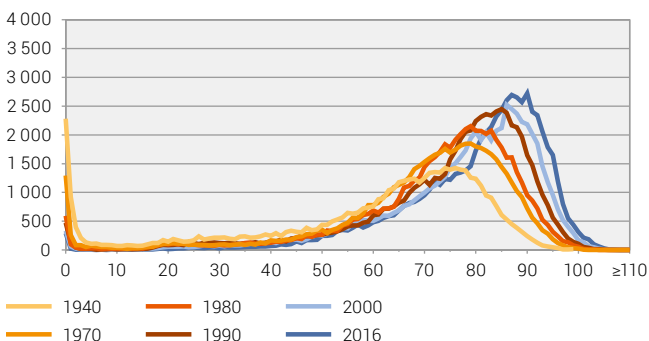
² www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/en/home/statistics/health/state-health/mortality-causes-death/specific.html

Deaths by age

The share of deaths that occurred before the age of 65 fell markedly and amounted to just 13.4% in 2016, compared with 28.3% in 1970. By contrast, the proportion of deaths over the age of 75 sharply increased. The increase is particularly marked in the over 84 category: In 2016, 46.0% of the deceased were 85 or older, while in 1970 that figure was 15.4%.

Deaths by age

G8



From 2001, only persons of reference with permanent residence in Switzerland are counted.
From 2010: New definition of the permanent resident population including people in the asylum procedure with a stay of at least 12 months.

Source: FSO – BEVNAT

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3 Ageing of the population

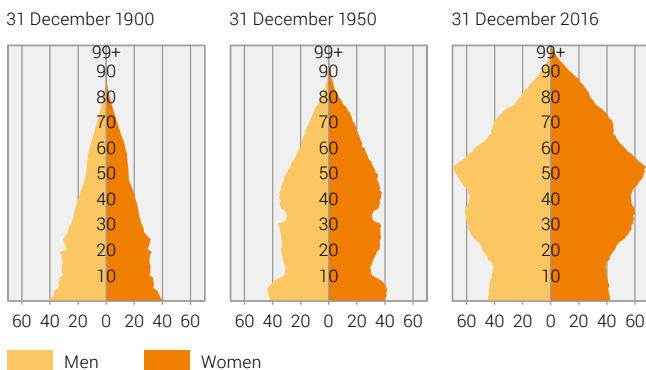
The ageing of the population and population growth are central to demographic and societal trends. The transformation of the age structure due to the increasing size of the older population compared with younger generations will present Switzerland with major challenges in the coming decades.

Population ageing means that the proportion of older generations (65 years and over) rises and that of younger people (0–19 years) in a population declines.

Age structure of the population

Number of people in 1000

G9



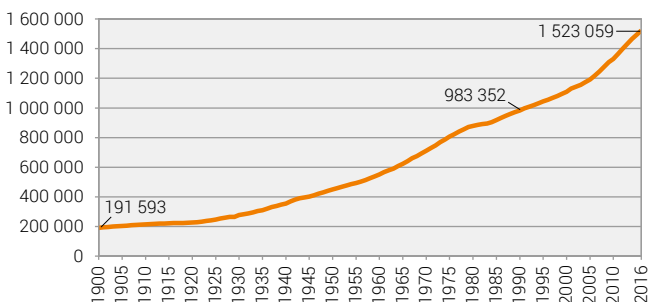
Sources: FSO – STATPOP, FPC

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The top of the age pyramid is expected to widen as the baby boom generations enter the older age groups. The base of the age pyramid, however, may either get wider – if there are more births – or become smaller if the birth rate declines.

The population aged 65 and more increased from 191 593 persons in 1900 to 983 352 in 1990 and stood at 1.52 million in 2016. This population group will grow strongly in the coming years.

Permanent resident population aged 65 and older G10



Sources: FSO – BEVNAT, ESPOP, STATPOP

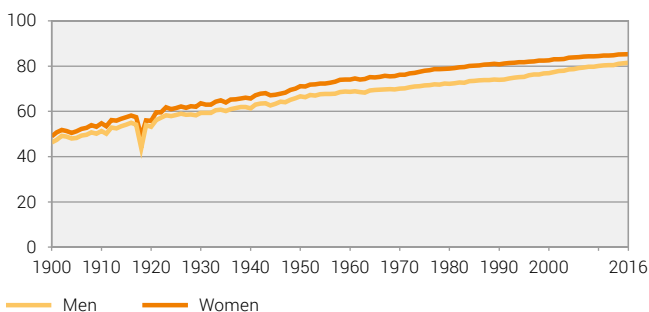
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Life expectancy at birth

Life expectancy at birth, i.e. the average number of years a person can expect to live, has risen from 76.2 in 1970 to 85.3 (women) and from 70.1 to 81.5 (men).

Life expectancy at birth

G11



Sources: FSO – BEVNAT, ESPOP, STATPOP

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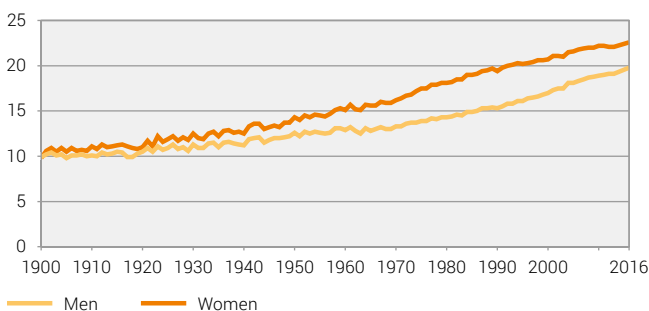
Life expectancy at birth is the average number of years that a newborn can expect to live on condition that the age-specific mortality rate of a given calendar year remains constant throughout their life.

Life expectancy at 65

Life expectancy at the age of 65 rose during the 20th century (G12). Since 1900 it has risen from 9.9 to 19.8 years for men and from 9.7 to 22.6 for women. Although women continue to have a higher life expectancy than men, the gender gap is closing. One reason for the marked decline in mortality in old age is the successful treatment of cardiovascular disease.

Life expectancy at 65

G12



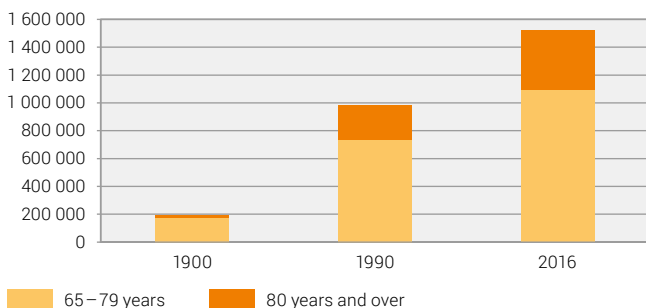
Sources: FSO – ESPOP, STATPOP

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In 2016, 1.5 million people aged 65 and over (18.0%) were living in Switzerland. 10% of the population were women aged over 65, 8.0% were men. Due to the higher mortality rate of men, the proportion of women rises with increasing age.

Permanent resident population at the age of 65–79 years and 80 years and over

G13



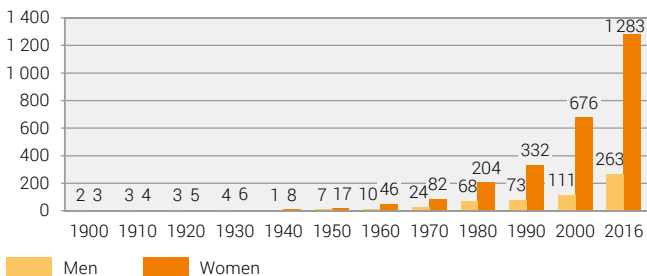
Source: FSO – STATPOP

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Centenarians in Switzerland

The number of centenarians is steadily rising, among both Swiss and foreign nationals (G15). At the end of 2016, 1 546 centenarians were living in Switzerland, the majority of them women.

Number of centenarians

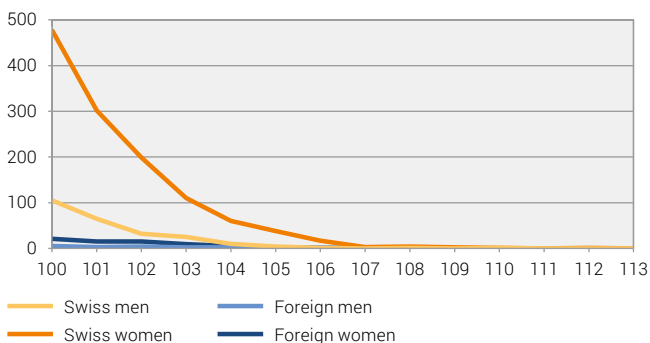
G14


Sources: FSO – ESPOP, STATPOP

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At 5.6%, the share of foreign nationals in this age group is considerably lower than that of Swiss nationals (94.4%). This under-representation can be explained by the fact that some foreign nationals become naturalised as Swiss citizens or that some return to their country of origin.

Centenarians by nationality, 2016

G15


Source: FSO – STATPOP

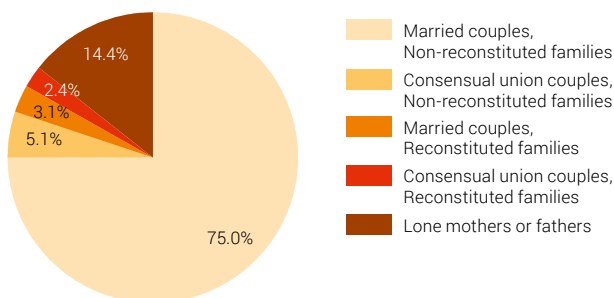
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4 Households

In the period from 2013 to 2015 there were some 3.5 million private households in Switzerland, roughly one million of which were households with at least one child under the age of 25. Living in the majority of these households (75.0%) were couples with only their biological or adopted children, known as non-reconstituted families.

14.4% of households were lone-parent households, which for the most part were lone mothers (82.7%). A relatively small percentage (5.5%) were patchwork families, i.e. households where at least one parent has brought a child from a previous relationship to the new family.

Family households with at least one child under 25 years according to type of household G16



Source: FSO – SS 2013–2015 cumulated

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5 Marital status, marriage, registered partnership and divorce

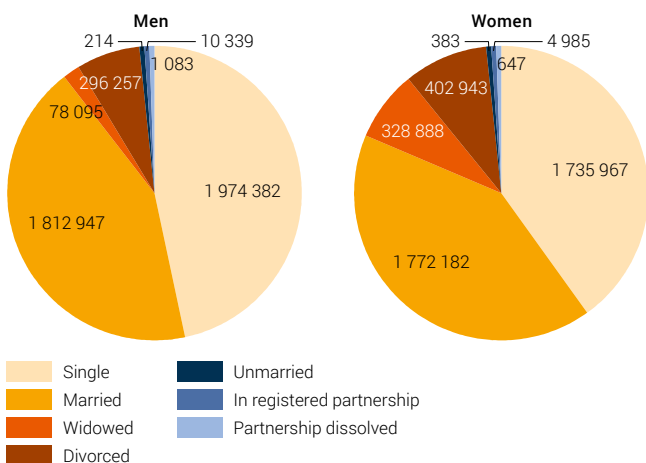
The population statistics distinguishes between seven types of marital status: single, married, divorced, unmarried³, in a registered partnership and dissolved partnership.

At the end of 2016 there were 53.2% and 46.8% single men and women. Married persons were more or less equally distributed between both sexes (Men 50.6%, Women 49.4%).

At 57.6%, women are over-represented among divorced people. In contrast, differences can be seen in registered partnerships: Men continue to enter a registered partnership more often than women (67% compared with 33%).

Permanent resident population by marital status and sex, 2016

G17



Source: FSO – STATPOP

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With regard to widowed persons, a big difference can be observed: 81.0% are women. The reasons for this are the higher life expectancy of women and the greater propensity of men to remarry. The percentage of divorced people in the population as a whole rose from 1.9% (1970) to 8.3%.

³ The marital status “unmarried” is the result of a declaration of nullity of marriage or the declaration of the most recent spouse as missing.

Marriages

In 2016, 41 646 couples tied the knot. 71.0% of these (29 575) were first-time marriages. In 12 071 marriages, at least one person was not single. The average age at first marriage continues to rise. Whereas in 1970 men were aged 26.5 and women 24.1, on average men and women today get married at the ages of 32 and 30 respectively.

When considering marriages by marital status, it can be seen that the number of divorced people has risen.

Marriages

T6

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2016
Total	46 693	35 721	46 603	39 758	41 646
Men					
single	41 536	30 212	38 316	30 467	32 864
widowed	1 437	791	795	618	487
divorced ¹	3 720	4 718	7 492	8 673	8 295
Women					
single	42 607	31 175	39 624	31 531	33 997
widowed	950	417	436	432	304
divorced ¹	3 136	4 129	6 543	7 795	7 345
Average age at first marriage (in years)					
Men	26.5	27.4	29.1	30.3	32.0
Women	24.1	25.0	26.7	27.9	29.8

¹ incl. other marital status

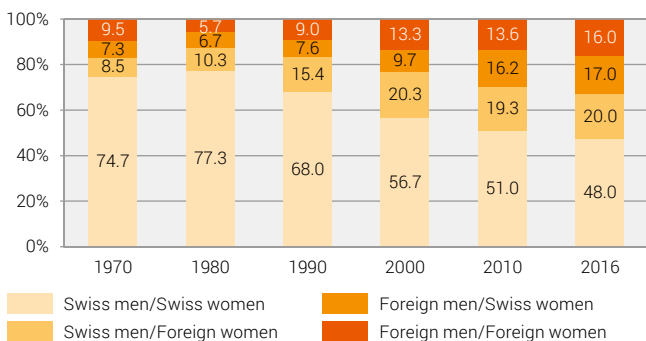
Source: FSO – BEVNAT

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Since the middle of the 1980s, an increase in marriages with at least one foreign partner has been observed. In 2016, this was the case for 21 825 marriages, of which 15 118 were between a Swiss and a foreign national.

Marriages by citizenship

G18



Source: FSO – BEVNAT

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Registered and dissolved partnership

Since the coming into force of the Federal Act on the Registered Partnership (SSPA) of 1 January 2007, same-sex partners can register their partnership at a registry office.

Registered and dissolved partnership

T7

	2007	2010	2016
Registered			
Total	2004	720	729
Couples (Men)	1 431	499	502
Couples (Women)	573	221	227
Dissolved			
Total	1	77	176
Couples (Men)	1	49	110
Couples (Women)	0	28	66

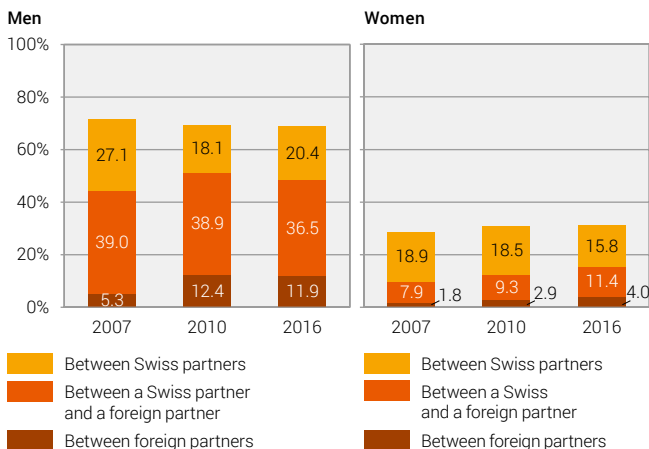
Source: FSO – BEVNAT

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In the first year of the introduction, 2004 couples have been registered. Thereafter, the number of registered partnerships stabilised at around 700 couples. In 2016, 729 partnerships were registered.

Registered partnerships

G19



Source: FSO – BEVNAT

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Women registering partnerships tend to be Swiss nationals, whereas men are more likely to register partnerships with different nationalities.

Divorces

In 2016, 17 028 divorces were recorded. The most marriages ending in divorce were of persons aged between 41 and 52. In 2016 the sixth year of marriage seemed to be particularly prone to dissolution (5.4%), but marriages that have lasted 20 years or more are also ending in divorce more frequently (29.5%).

Divorces

T8

	1970	1990	2010	2016 ¹
Total	6 406	13 184	22 081	17 028
Duration of marriage ²				
0 – 4 years	1 568	3 128	2 454	2 020
5 – 9 years	1 926	3 473	6 117	4 183
10 – 14 years	1 143	2 051	4 087	3 356
15 – 19 years	778	1 679	3 216	2 439
20 years and over	991	2 853	6 207	5 030
Average duration of marriage at time of divorce (in years)	11.6	11.9	14.5	15.0
Total divorce rate	15.4	33.2	54.4	41.5

¹ Since 2011, a change in source results in a series break in the divorce statistics. The information on divorces involving two spouses of foreign nationality is no longer entirely available in the divorces statistics.

² Calculation: year of the divorce minus year of the marriage

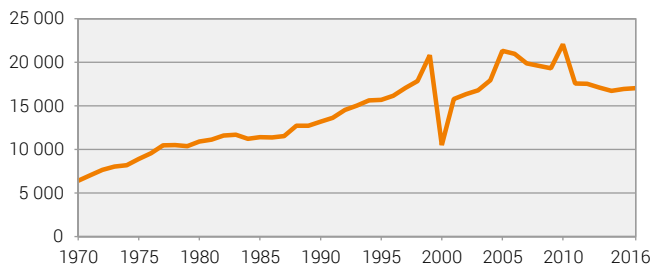
Source: FSO – BEVNAT

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The divorce curve shows that divorces rose from 1970 onwards. The increases in the years 1990 and 2010 are related to the new divorce law and revisions, which came into force on 1 January 2000 and on 1 January 2011.

Divorces

G20



* 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.

Source: FSO – BEVNAT

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6 Migration and acquisition of Swiss citizenship

The number of inhabitants rose by 71 030 persons due to migration. This net migration declined in comparison with the previous year by –1.2%, as immigration fell and emigration rose as it had in 2015.

Migration describes the permanent change of a person's place of residence, either within a State or across national borders. In addition to fertility and mortality, migration is the third demographic component driving population change.

A distinction is made between international and internal migration when considering migration movements. The first concerns migration from abroad to Switzerland (immigration) and from Switzerland to a destination abroad (emigration). The second involves changes of residence within Switzerland, either from one commune to another in the same canton (intra-cantonal) or from one canton to another in a different canton (inter-cantonal).

International migrations

When comparing immigration and emigration, major differences can be seen between the different nationality groups. There is a significant emigration surplus for Swiss citizens (immigration: 24 276, emigration: 30 565) (T9).

Graph G21 shows that in 2016 two-thirds of the in- and outflow of the permanent foreign resident population came from Europe. Above all, immigrants and emigrants are nationals of Germany, France, Italy and Portugal.

International migration

T9

	1990	2000	2010	2016
Immigration¹	154 244	110 302	161 778	191 683
Swiss	31 465	26 102	22 283	24 276
Foreigners	122 779	84 200	139 495	167 407
Emigration	97 601	90 078	96 839	120 653
Swiss	31 888	30 776	26 311	30 565
Foreigners	65 713	59 302	70 528	90 088
Net migration¹	56 643	20 224	64 939	71 030
Swiss	- 423	- 4 674	- 4 028	- 6 289
Foreigners	57 066	24 898	68 967	77 319

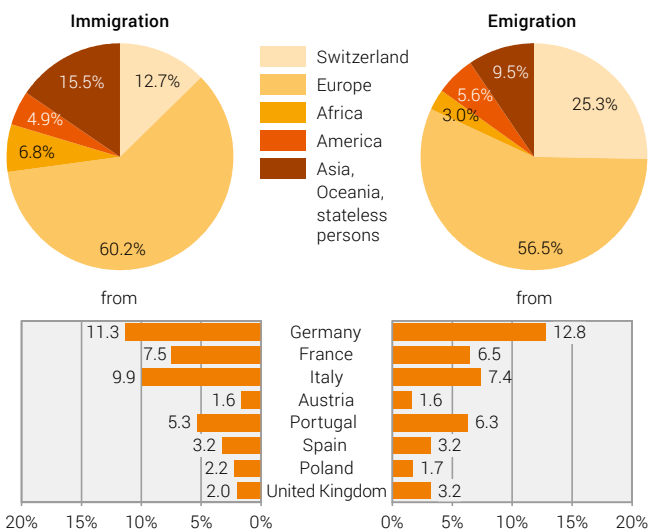
¹ Until 2010 incl. change of status and transfers from the asylum process, from 2011 incl. conversions from non permanent residence status.

Sources: FSO – ESPOP, STATPOP

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Immigration and emigration by nationality, 2016

G21



Source: FSO – STATPOP

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Population by migration status

In 2015 2.5 million people had a migration background. The population without a migration background is comprised of mainly Swiss-born Swiss nationals (4.4 million), but also includes naturalised Swiss nationals (17 000) as well as foreign nationals from the third or later generations (4000).

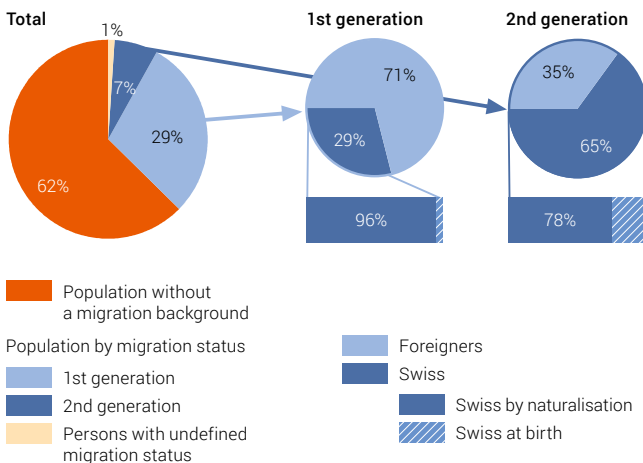
The population group of the **1st generation** comprises all persons born abroad: foreign nationals (2.0 million), Swiss-born⁴ (25 000) and naturalised Swiss nationals (545 000).

The **2nd generation** is the population with a migration background born in Switzerland (489 000). It comprises naturalised Swiss nationals and foreign nationals with at least one parent born abroad (231 000 resp. 185 000) as well as Swiss-born nationals, both of whose parents were born abroad (73 000).

Population by migration status, 2015

G22

Permanent resident population aged 15 or over



Source: FSO – SLFS

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⁴ excl. persons with at least one parent born in Switzerland

Acquisition of Swiss citizenship

In 1990, 8658 foreign nationals were naturalised, in 2006 this number was 46 711 and in 2016 42 937 people obtained the Swiss passport. 44% of naturalised persons were under the age of 30.

The **acquisition of Swiss citizenship** has an impact on the distribution of nationalities in the permanent resident population and on the proportion of foreigners in the population.

People can apply for Swiss citizenship after they have resided in Switzerland for 12 years or for a total of 5 years if they are married to a Swiss national.

Acquisition of Swiss citizenship

T 10

	1990	2000	2010	2016
Total	8 658	28 700	39 314	42 937
Men	3 228	13 314	18 553	20 449
Women	5 430	15 386	20 761	22 488
From				
Europe	6 970	21 975	30 458	33 524
from: EU28/EFTA	6 198	13 386	15 673	23 186
Africa	273	1 824	2 499	3 057
America	600	1 875	2 015	2 514
Asia	796	2 981	4 261	3 691
Oceania/stateless/no indication	19	45	81	48

Sources: FSO – PETRA, STATPOP

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7 Language and religion

Switzerland has four language regions: German-speaking, French-speaking, Italian-speaking and Romansh-speaking Switzerland. Multilingualism is a fundamental feature of life in Switzerland.

Switzerland's **religious landscape** is diverse and nowadays a large number of old and new religions and religious movements can be found here. Migration and social change have brought more languages and religious and spiritual beliefs.

Switzerland's **linguistic landscape** has changed in the past four decades, influencing the distribution of the national languages.

Permanent resident population by main language(s), in %

T11

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2015 ¹
Total population	6011 469	6160950	6640937	7100302	8131 033
German / Swiss German	66.1	65.5	64.6	64.1	63.0
French	18.4	18.6	19.5	20.4	22.7
Italian and Ticino/ Italien dialect of Graubünden	11.0	9.6	7.7	6.5	8.1
Rhaeto-Romansch	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.5
Other languages	3.7	5.5	7.7	8.5	21.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	115.9²

¹ The confidence intervals are below 0.2%.

² As respondents were allowed to indicate several languages in the survey, the total may exceed 100%.

Sources: FSO – FPC 1970–2000, SS 2015

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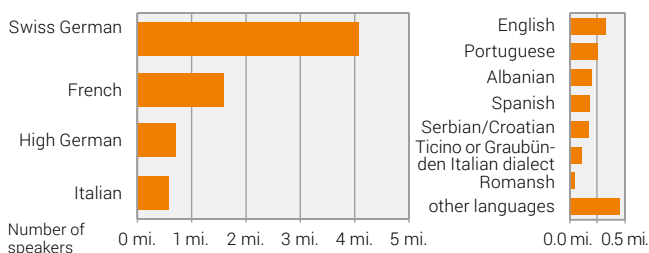
The proportions of German, Italian and Romansh as main language(s) have decreased, while those of French and non-national languages have increased. The rise in non-national languages can be explained by the fact that since 2010, it has been possible to indicate several main languages.

The most frequently mentioned non-national languages are English and Portuguese.

Languages spoken at home

At home or at with relatives, 60% of the permanent resident population aged 15 and over usually speak Swiss German, 23% French, 10% High German, 8% Italian and 5% English.

Languages usually spoken at home, 2013–2015 G23



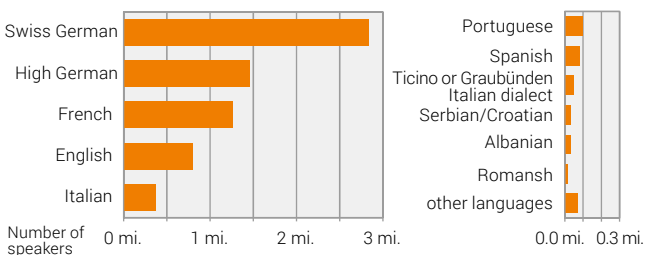
Permanent resident population 15 years or over. Persons interviewed could indicate more than one language. Confidence intervals are less than 0.2% and are therefore not shown graphically.

Source: FSO – SS 2013–2015 cumulated

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When asked which were the main languages spoken at home, at work or at the place of education, 39% of people said that they usually speak more than one language. The most frequently mentioned non-national languages are English and Portuguese.

Languages usually spoken at work, cumulated 2013–2015 G24



Permanent resident population 15 years or over. Persons interviewed could indicate more than one language. Confidence intervals are less than 0.2% and are therefore not shown graphically.

Source: FSO – SS 2013–2015 cumulated

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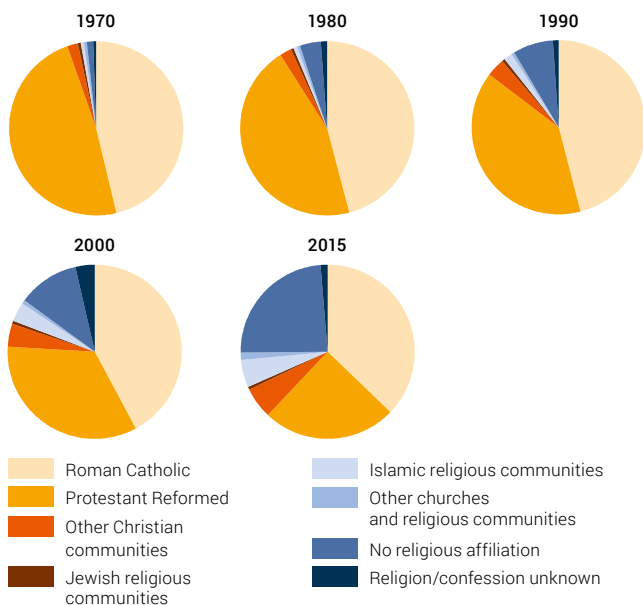
In the permanent resident population aged 15 and over, at work or at their place of education, 66% of people usually spoke Swiss German, followed by High German (34%), French (29%), English (19%) and Italian (9%).

Religion

Switzerland's religious landscape has changed considerably over the past 40 years. The share of the Roman Catholic Church has remained relatively stable and that of the Protestant Church has declined sharply. In contrast, the share of people with no religious affiliation has increased greatly.

Evolution of religious landscape

G25



Sources: FSO – FPC (1970–2000), Structural Survey (2010–2015)

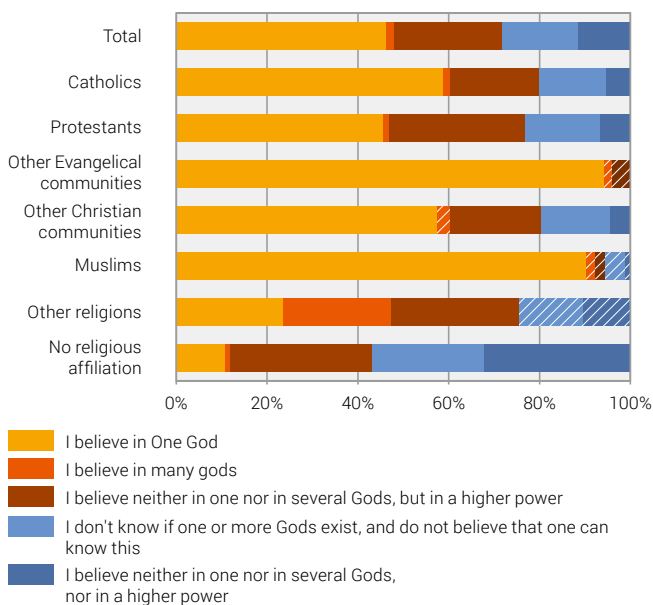
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Almost one in two persons believes in a single god and one in four in a higher power

In the permanent resident population aged 15 and over, belief in a single God is the most common (46%). Just under a quarter of the population (24%) do not believe in a single nor in several gods but they do believe in a higher power.

Belief in God or a higher power, by religious affiliation

G26



The categories marked by shading should be treated with caution as they contain fewer than 30 observations and are, therefore not statistically reliable.

Source: FSO – SLRC 2014

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8 Switzerland in international comparison

A comparison with the populations of our neighbouring countries shows that Switzerland has a higher percentage of foreign nationals. The proportion of older people is greater in Germany and Italy than in Switzerland. France stands out due to its higher fertility rate.

Main indicators for different countries, 2016

T 12

	Switzerland	Italy	Germany	France	Austria
Population (in 1000) ¹	8 419	60 665	82 175	66 759	8 690
Share of population under 15 years (in %) ¹	14.9	13.7	13.2	18.5	14.3
Share of population 65 or older (in %) ¹	18.0	22.0	21.1	18.8	18.5
Share of foreigners (in %) ¹	24.9	9.7	13.3	11.8	18.2
Average number of children per woman ²	1.5	1.4	1.5	2.0	1.5
Life expectancy at birth (in years) ²					
Men	81.5	80.3	78.3	79.2	78.8
Women	85.3	84.9	83.1	85.5	83.7
Net migration (per 1 000 persons) ²	8.5	1.1	9.4	1.0	8.7
Marriages (per 1 000 persons) ²	5.0	3.2	4.9
Divorces (per 1 000 persons) ²	2.0	1.4	2.0	1.9	1.9

¹ January 1, 2017

² Germany, France, Italy, Austria: 2015

Sources: Switzerland: FSO, other countries: Eurostat, on August 22, 2017

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9 Swiss citizens abroad

The number of Swiss citizens living abroad increases from year to year.

In 2016, 774 923 Swiss nationals lived abroad. This is roughly equivalent to the population of the canton of Vaud.

Swiss citizens living abroad by country of residence

T13

	1995	2000	2005	2010	2016
Total	527 795	580 396	634 216	695 123	774 923
Europe	326 193	358 786	395 336	429 498	481 421
France	137 528	151 037	169 437	181 462	200 730
Germany	65 664	67 728	71 115	77 827	89 390
Italy	36 821	41 140	46 327	49 187	51 895
United Kingdom	22 543	25 043	26 441	29 505	34 971
Africa	16 650	17 467	18 017	20 008	21 585
America	143 030	154 872	163 122	174 158	185 275
USA	62 793	67 929	71 773	75 252	81 075
Canada	32 218	34 192	36 204	39 186	40 280
Argentina	14 163	14 546	14 931	15 690	15 816
Asia	19 845	24 167	30 378	41 466	53 814
Oceania	22 077	25 104	27 363	29 993	32 828

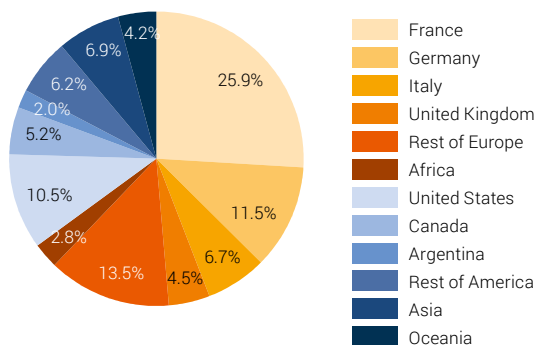
Source: FDFA – Relations with the Swiss abroad

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Three-fifths of Swiss citizens living abroad live in Europe – most of them in France, Germany and Italy. A quarter of them live on the American continent, mainly in the United States and Canada.

Swiss citizens living abroad by country of residence, 2016

G27



Source: FDFA – Relations with the Swiss abroad

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10 Information, sources and publications

Here you will find a selection of information about the data source and FSO population statistics publications:

BEVNAT (Vital Statistics) provides data on births, deaths, marriages, registered partnerships, divorces, adoptions and acknowledgements of paternity. Further information can be found here: www.statistik.ch → Basics and survey → Surveys → Vital statistics (BEVNAT)

SFG (The survey on families and generations) takes stock of the different types and situations of families in Switzerland as well as the relationships between generations. Further information can be found here: www.statistik.ch → Basics and survey → Surveys → Survey on families and generations (EFG)

STATPOP (Household and Population statistics) forms part of the new census system and since 2010 has been providing information on the size, structure as well as the natural and spatial changes in the resident population in Switzerland's communes, cantons and districts. Further information can be found here: www.statistik.ch → Basics and survey → Surveys → Household and Population Survey (STATPOP)

Information on the other data sources can be found in the fact sheets: www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/en/home/basics/surveys.html?dyn_pageIndex=0 → Topic Population

Electronic publications

Create your own tailor-made tables using STATPOP and BEVNAT data cubes in STAT-TAB, the interactive statistics database. www.pxweb.bfs.admin.ch → Population

Additional information, texts and tables are published on our website: www.statistik.ch → Look for statistics → Population

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