

Le News

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SWISS returns to Geneva

Cointrin to regain its status as an international hub

In response to increasing international air traffic, Swiss International Air Lines decided this month to further expand its presence in Suisse Romande by hiring more French-speaking employees and creating a new unit with 160 cabin crew and 90 pilots.

SWISS Chief Executive Harry Hohmeister said the carrier "wants to be the airline for the whole of Switzerland, not just Zurich". He added that SWISS wants "to stress our ongoing commitment to our Geneva base".

The news will likely be greeted favourably by expats and Swiss living in French Switzerland who for years were forced to go through Zurich when travelling internationally.

Geneva management will have greater autonomy to adapt services in flight and on the ground. For example, onboard catering will focus on products and specialities of the region. In an apparent reference to competition from easyJet, which has increased its flight destinations from Geneva, Hohmeister said SWISS "has no intention of launching a price war".

Geneva civil servants on strike

In protest at planned cuts in 2013, around 1,000 civil servants took to the streets of Geneva on Thursday.



Amy Macdonald concert illness

Amy Macdonald's concert planned for next week in Geneva is in doubt after the Scottish singer suffered a seizure.

Avalanche danger rises

135cm of snow fell last week and police warn that a further 20-30cm is expected. "Ski on the piste. The avalanche risk is too high to go off piste."



Jean Rodin
The soul of sculpture

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This Week in Switzerland

Health insurance premiums are to rise by 1.5 percent on average next year – the second-lowest increase since 1996. Although children's premiums will fall by 1.4 percent, those for young adults will rise by an average 2.9 percent. Health Minister **Alain Berset** regretted the increase but said families would benefit from the lower children's premiums.



Swiss President **Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf** has attended the 67th United Nations General Assembly where she called on the Security Council to refer the situation in **Syria** to the International Criminal Court.

According to the **Swiss Economic Institute (KOF)**, the outlook for the Swiss economy remains positive. The KOF economic barometer reached 1.67 points in September, continuing the positive trend of recent months, albeit with decelerating pace.



Three members of a Swiss family have been sentenced for breaking the law on war materiel. **Friedrich Tinner** and his sons Urs and Marco were involved in a **nuclear smuggling** ring, illegally supplying centrifuge components to the Libyans. All three received conditional jail terms. The men, who admitted their guilt, had struck a deal with the Office of the Attorney General, thereby shortening the legal process.

Pharma group **Merck Serono** has found a solution for 500 of its employees in Geneva, where it is cutting 1,250 jobs. A further 750 employees are still looking for work.

Some 50,000 signatures each have been collected for referendums against the **government's tax accords** with Germany, the United Kingdom and Austria. If there are enough valid signatures, referendums on the tax agreements will be held. The campaign was launched by a cross-party group including the Young Socialists and the Young Swiss People's Party.

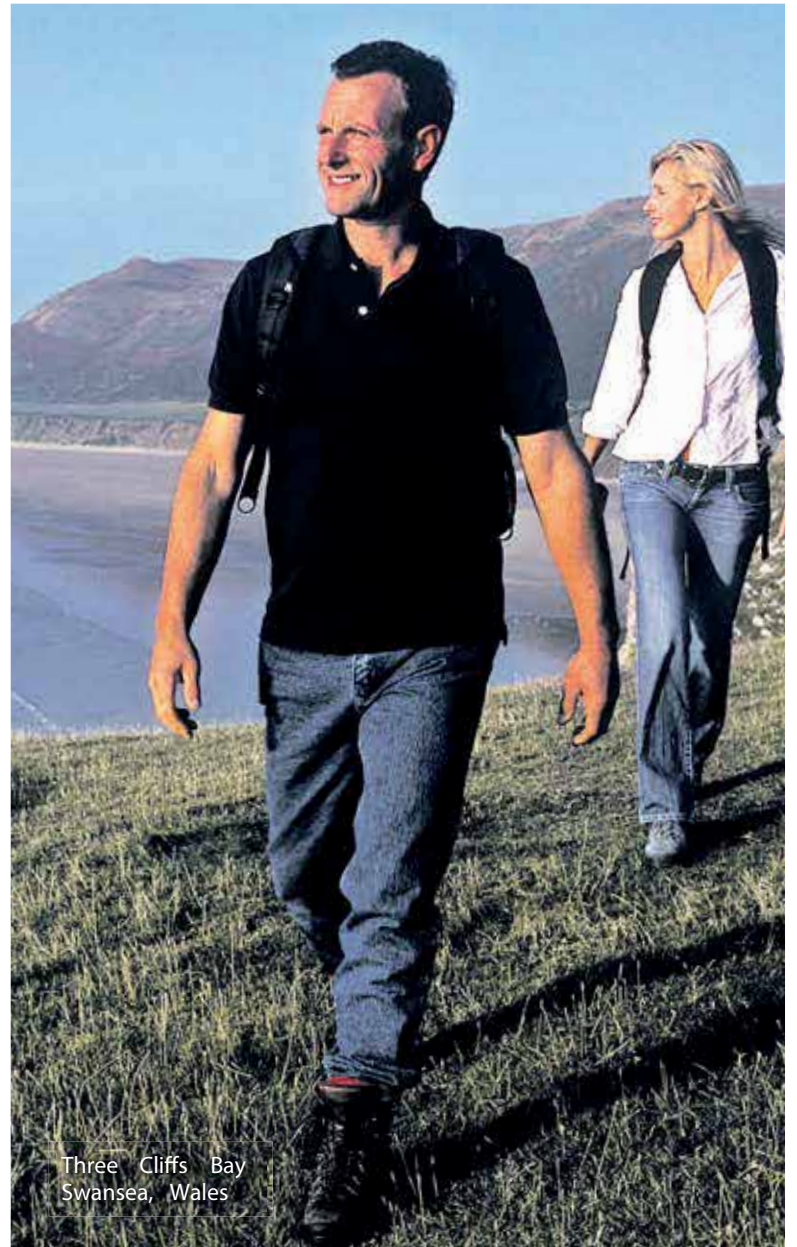


A worker who allegedly stole data from the Federal Intelligence Service apparently wanted to sell it abroad, the Office of the Attorney General said, referring to "a serious case of **economic espionage**". Federal Prosecutor **Michael Lauber** said the data leak had possibly endangered **Switzerland's security**.

The number of foreign workers in Switzerland rose in the second quarter of the year to 1.36 million. The number of Swiss employed persons was constant at 3.40 million. At the end of November there were 170,000 people without a **job in Switzerland** – 8,000 more than in the same period last year.



A work said to be an earlier version of the **Mona Lisa** painting by Leonardo da Vinci has been unveiled in Geneva. The Mona Lisa Foundation said 35 years of research had proved the work's authenticity. The painting shows La Joconde looking visibly younger than in the masterpiece which hangs in the Louvre.



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Regional

le News

Editor's comment

Restricting lobbyists' rights

When the cabinet announced on Friday that it had adopted an ordinance restricting the rights of lobbyists, many Swiss just shrugged their shoulders in mild accord or lack of interest. However, this belies the seriousness of debate in the corridors of the Federal Palace.

The Cabinet's decision that only journalists working for mainstream or general media organisations can have access to the Federal Palace Media Centre is sensible given that lobbying under the pretence of being a journalist is just one subterfuge that some lobbyists have repeatedly employed to allow them to meet politicians. Lobbyists will now have to be accredited to access the centre.

There is a role for lobbyists in the Swiss legislative system as they tend to focus on complex issues and frequently are masters of their subject. However, their access to parliamentarians should be carefully regulated and transparent to avoid them having disproportionate and unaccountable influence. This is what the cabinet's decision seeks to achieve, however, there are profound aspects to this issue which remain to be addressed.

The Swiss parliament, like some other parliaments, relies upon part-time politicians to serve as the people's representatives. Defenders of these civic minded folk assert that they remain in touch with the electorate and bring to their work a broad range of expertise and experience that is vital to the democratic process. This may indeed be so, and we only need to look at countries where a degree in law or politics is viewed as a tacit prerequisite for political success to see how dislocated legislatures can become from societies. But how does a part-time politician who spends months every year running a business or holding down a job stay abreast of fluid economic, social, military, diplomatic, commercial and technological developments? Lobbyists here have argued (with disarming candour) that they are able to brief and indeed educate parliamentarians better than the political parties and the civil service. If this is the case then the pro-lobbying lobbyists must, clearly and openly demonstrate that the briefings and information they give to parliamentarians are objective and accurate. If lobbyists cannot demonstrate this, then they are in effect arguing that they should still be able to work even if they are briefing and influencing politicians inaccurately and/or subjectively. And neither of these is acceptable. Unchecked, lobbying can become a conduit for political, social and commercial extremism. More worryingly perhaps, it can cement vested interests into the legislative process in a manner that undermines democracy. All lobbying activity in Switzerland should be recorded for the public record. If lobbyists seek to influence parliamentarians then they seek to sway representatives elected by the people. The people therefore have the right to know how and on what grounds their representatives are being influenced.

easyJet continues upwards

GENEVA Despite Europe's economic crisis, easyJet is maintaining its growth course, bringing jobs and investment to the region.

Low cost airline easyJet has announced the arrival of its 13th aircraft in Geneva, the launch of its 58th route and increased flight frequency for 20 destinations. According to the economic institute BAK-BASEL, the company generates CHF 1.4 billion a year in economic benefits for the Lake Geneva region. It has also generated 1,800 direct and indirect jobs in Geneva, Vaud, and neighbouring France.

Also operating out of Basel and Zurich, easyJet is the second largest airline in Switzerland. This year the company has really taken off, with a ten percent increase in passenger numbers, which equates to 5.5 million in Geneva alone.



The new A320 represents a potential of 250,000 extra passengers and some 35 direct jobs.

easyJet's target for 2013 is to sell 60 million seats on flights to and from Switzerland. According to easyJet's North European sales manager, Thomas Haagen, "The prospects are positive and we still have a strong growth potential in Switzerland."

Such confidence is reflected in the airline's total investment

in the region. With the new A320 operational from December, easyJet's investment in Geneva totals CHF 650 million. Placing Geneva firmly on the European map, the carrier has increased access to the city by 30 percent in 15 years. Today accessibility equals that of large cities such as London and Brussels.

Geneva to re-submit 2013 budget

GENEVA Having had its first draft budget rejected, the city of Geneva has submitted a new budget proposal for 2013 to the Geneva cantonal parliament. This sees the deficit reduced to CHF 191 million from CHF 278 million, thanks to a CHF 99 million improvement in tax income. The budget also envisages CHF 25 million in savings, with cuts hitting mainly the health and social services sectors.

ATS

Place your bets

NEUCHÂTEL A new casino in Neuchâtel has opened after several months of renovation. It is expected to attract around 430 visitors a day, with annual revenue reaching CHF 22.5 million. Owners Kongress + Kursaal Bern AG say that it will be donating a portion of the profits to a foundation which supports cultural, sporting, social and tourist events. Support will also be given to Neuchâtel's Passage Theatre and the canton's tourism association.

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Regional

Guilty verdict in massage murder case

LAUSANNE A 20-year-old man has been sentenced to 18 years for killing a prostitute in Lausanne last year.

The court in Yverdon-les-Bains heard how the man had gone to a massage parlour one night in April 2011 with the intention of robbing a 45-year-old prostitute. As he had no money to pay, she refused to have sex with him. Humiliated, he strangled the victim, trussed her up and hit her several times before stabbing her twice in the nape of the neck. He then sexually abused her when she was probably already dead. After searching the apartment, the man stole CHF 2,000. Found guilty of murder, the apprentice mechanic was also found guilty of theft and of disturbing the peace of the dead.

The man has been ordered to pay CHF 100,000 to the victim's husband and two children. After the sentence had been delivered, the guilty man's legal team said they were "relieved" at the clemency of the sentence.

"Prosecutor may appeal decision"

However, the public prosecutor, who had demanded lifelong imprisonment, may appeal against the decision claiming that the defendant's cooperation and remorse during the investigation, which the judge commented "had appeared entirely genuine", had clearly influenced the court's decision.

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Record prices at diamond auctions

GENEVA Two separate jewel auctions saw record prices set last week.

On Tuesday at Christie's the 76-carat Archduke Joseph Diamond fetched almost \$21.5 million, a record price per carat for a crystal clear colourless diamond. On Wednesday a 10.48-carat teardrop-shaped deep blue diamond went under Sotheby's hammer for \$10.86 million, setting another record price per carat for a deep blue diamond.

The blue stone is likely to be recut by its new owner, luxury jeweller Laurence Graf, to showcase its splendour. Jeweller Mark Emanuel told Reuters: "It is an extremely rare ten-carat deep blue briolette that can be recut to a seven-carat vivid blue." The Archduke Joseph Diamond, on the other hand, is to be donated by the anonymous new owner to the state museum in New Delhi in northern India.



CFF delivers big improvement

BERNE The Swiss Federal Railways' new "Horaire Romandie 2013" will make thousands of commuters happy as more seats and faster long-distance services came into effect on 9 December.

A new half-hourly service between Geneva and Lausanne will see 13 new double-decker trains introduced on this route, increasing seats by one-third. Passengers will also benefit from a saving of 11 minutes on the journey between Valais and Geneva.

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Rain – insurance claims pour in

LAUSANNE In just one weekend, 114 claims totalling over CHF 1 million were made for rain damage. Amadio Santa Croce of the Vaud cantonal insurance office, ECA, told Le News: "Most of the claims were related to flooded cellars, car parks and basements."

Last Saturday, the fire services were called out no fewer than 350 times across the canton of Vaud.

SWISSINFO

Dolls to charm at the Musée d'Art Brut

LAUSANNE An exhibition at the Musée d'Art Brut sheds light on the private life of American artist Morton Bartlett. A photographer and graphic designer, Bartlett secretly created plaster dolls and their clothing. Explaining Bartlett's odd pastime, New York gallery owner Marion Harris told Le News: "The body of work served as his surrogate family, making up for a lack of real relatives." Wrapped in boxes along with 200 photographs of the dolls striking

different poses, all 15 uncannily lifelike dolls were found only after the artist died aged 83. The unusual exhibition in Lausanne runs from 23 November to 14 April 2013.



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Swiss Society

Olympic bid endangered?

A vote to reject a tourism tax in canton Grisons could impact Switzerland's bid to host the 2022 Winter Olympics in St. Moritz.

A vote to reject a tourism tax in canton Grisons could impact Switzerland's bid to host the 2022 Winter Olympics in St. Moritz.

The proposed cantonal levy to finance tourism was defeated in a plebiscite by over 31,000 votes, with just 16,000 approving it. The tax was expected to bring in more than CHF 60 million a year from the communes that depend most heavily on tourism. In other words, the more a firm benefited from tourism, the higher its tax bill would have been.

The organisers decided during a session in December 2011 to go forward with "St. Moritz 2022" as the official corporate name of the bid.

There will be a cantonal referendum

in March 2013 when voters will have their say on whether the bid should go ahead. The cost of staging the event is estimated at CHF 4.5 billion, while costs associated with putting together the bid are expected to amount to CHF 60 million.

The Swiss bid provides for all events to take place in the area of Davos and St. Moritz with "ice events" in Davos and "snow events" in St. Moritz. As Davos has a strong tradition in cross-country skiing and snowboard, it could also be the venue for those competitions.

Switzerland faces stiff competition in its bid to host the games from France, Germany, Norway, Romania, Spain and Ukraine.

SWISSINFO

Swiss say no to EU

Twelve years ago 33% of Swiss voters approved joining the EU. Now research shows only one in nine do. Even in Romandie, joining has dropped out of favour. It is not just about cost, the coolness is also due to the drastic democratic reform in Switzerland that will be needed to comply with EU rules.

SWISSINFO

Better conditions for asylum seekers

A review into speeding up asylum procedures concluded that more space and coordination is needed. "Accommodation was adequate" but the National Commission for the Prevention of Torture said it was "very concerned" about facilities at Geneva airport where "conditions resembled a prison".

ATS

Women to work one more year?

The government has launched another attempt to reform the country's old-age pension scheme and has proposed delaying the age of women's retirement from 64 to 65. Another proposal to ensure the integrity of the state pension is to use an increase in value-added tax. Interior Minister Alain Berset claimed, "There are no plans to lower pension payments..." adding that "...reform is crucial for citizens to know that the state pension system is solid."

The draft bill will not be debated until 2014, after which the constitutional amendment will be voted on. If successful, reforms would only come into force by 2020. The old age pension scheme, funded jointly by employers, employees and taxes, was launched in 1948. Since then it has undergone at least ten reforms.

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AIDA AGIC NOEL

Sprint down the aisle before New Year

A new law will stop future married couples opting for a double-barrelled surname. As a result, registry offices can't cope with the number of people wanting to say "I do" before 2013.

In Switzerland, Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie would not be free to legally call themselves "Pitt Jolie" or "Jolie Pitt" after 1 January 2013 when a new law banning double names will enter into force. Left-wing parties in parliament proposed the new law last year, arguing it was a step further towards gender equality.

Why? "It is most often considered discriminatory by women that both partners cannot keep their own name," says Green Party parliamentarian Antonio Hodgers. "This new law allows each person to keep his or her name, or to change it."

Far from finding this progressive, many couples are trying to get married before the law changes. "I find it absurd," says Clea Bouchat Schumacher, a young lawyer and a newly-wed. "It's one thing to be able to both keep our names, but it's another to have a different one than our children, as then we will have to choose one for them!"

As a consequence of this legal change some couples have decided to move their wedding date, originally scheduled for 2013, to 2012. "We are finding it hard to cope. It is very important for a couple to have a

common name, just as much as to be able to keep their unmarried name," says Christian Zeller from the Geneva Registry Office.

Symbolically, family unity is weaker, according to Sylvie Mermod, a psychologist in Lausanne who deals with family planning. What will happen in the future? "Although it is hard to predict, I don't think men are ready to give up their names. Women will therefore choose their husbands', just like before," adds the psychologist.

In Anglo-American law there is freedom of choice and the majority of European countries allow the use of the double name. Indeed in Britain there is not a law governing names. People are able to choose whatever they wish to be called. They need to register a name change by deed poll but that's the only limitation. Has Switzerland taken a step backwards? Not according to Antonio Hodgers, as the new law will still allow couples to choose to double their names separated by a hyphen in daily use.

Although Switzerland is far from having its Brangelinas, it can still have its Eveline Widmer-Schlumpfs or Micheline Calmy-Reys.

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Swiss Society

Vote on street begging

After the success of an initiative to stamp out street begging, Lausanne wants to define begging areas and help children return to school in their own country.

"Put an end to professional begging," was the title of the people's initiative submitted by the Liberal-Radical party this year. The text that Lausanne will vote on next week aims to ban professional begging. "Begging is a professional, organised activity. People position themselves in strategic locations and their occupation is to beg on behalf of a third party," says Mathieu Blanc, president of the Initiative Committee. "We want to end this."

There are about 50 beggars in Lausanne, according to the police. "They are not criminals and our duty is to find a solution," says Oscar Tosato, director of Social Cohesion Issues in Lausanne. His department launched a counter-project in June to tighten the rules governing begging: it is forbidden to beg with children, youngsters under 18 are to be off the streets and beggars must not ask for money in areas such as near cash machines or post offices. "They are mostly from Romania and of Roma origin. We want to finance projects for their children in Romania, enrol them in schools and help their families by providing micro-credits," adds the socialist councillor.

"The Roma's poverty and the discrimination against them is terrible. I cannot blame them for moving here," Tosato adds. "What we



Children begging in the streets of Suisse romande are of Roma origin.

FRANÇOIS STRUZIK

suggest is a sustainable alternative. I don't think turning beggars into outlaws will solve anything."

"They are not all part of a network"

For the Liberal-Radical party, the counter-project will not end the organised crime. The City Council will

have the final word – next Friday.

"Behind many of the beggars in the region are Romanian traffickers pulling strings," says Christophe Suret of the Lausanne police.

Families wanting to migrate often pay a third party and then find themselves tied with a rising debt. To pay back what they owe, they send children to beg or steal, as was the case with the Roma mafia network

that was closed down earlier this year in Annemasse.

However, Geneva-based Meserom, an organisation that defends Roma rights, warns people not to generalise: "Not all Roma people are linked to the mafia," says Dina Bazarbachi, its president. We know these people and we must not despise them just because of what they are going through."

this week in...

1624	Gaspard Bauhin, the Swiss botanist who invented the system to classify plants, dies.	1941	The Japanese attack Pearl Harbour.
1805	Napoleon is victorious at Austerlitz against the Austrian-Russian coalition.	1955	Rosa Louise McCauley Parks is arrested for civil disobedience when she refuses to give up her bus seat to a white passenger in Alabama.
1835	Mark Twain, American author and philosopher, is born.	1967	In South Africa, Professor Christiaan Barnard performs the first human heart transplant.
1874	Winston Churchill, British prime minister, statesman and Nobel prize winner, is born.	1970	Nina Ricci, the celebrated French designer, dies.
1900	Oscar Wilde, Irish author, playwright and wit, is born.	1975	Dahomey adopts the name République populaire du Bénin.
1931	Canada gains its legislative independence from the UK (Statute of Westminster).	1988	Benazir Bhutto is named prime minister of Pakistan.

Swiss Business & Economy

UBS lowers Swiss growth forecast again to 0.9%

The country's biggest bank has cut its growth forecast for next year from 1.4 to 0.9 percent, citing a "gloomier" economic outlook.

Lowering its forecast to 1.1 percent for 2012 from its September estimate of 1.3 percent, UBS now expects inflation in 2013 to be 0.6 percent, half its previous estimate.

The UBS forecast is among the most pessimistic. The SNB, the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, KOF, Credit Suisse and BAKBASEL all predict growth of 1.2 to 1.5 percent.

Richemont sales growth slows to 7%

Luxury goods group Richemont said sales growth slowed to seven percent in December from 12 percent in the first half of the year due to a drop in revenue in its Asian markets.

Strong sales growth over the summer and favourable exchange rates helped net profit soar 52 percent to €1.08 billion, the company said. Sales rose by 21 percent to €5.1 billion.

Richemont has named Cartier chief, Bernard Fornas, as CEO from next April, to steer the company through a dip in the luxury goods market.

French fashion house Lacoste bought by Maus Frères

Maus Frères, the Swiss family-held group, has bought Lacoste in a deal which values the sportswear firm at €1 billion.

The acquisition, which follows a Lacoste family feud, aims to ensure the longevity of the Lacoste brand.



Swiss housing market back in "risk zone" after 20 years

The UBS Swiss Real Estate Bubble Index has entered the "risk zone" for the first time since 1991, putting pressure on the Swiss National Bank (SNB) to take measures to halt the country's property boom.

The index rose to 1.02 points in the three months to September from 0.82 points in the previous quarter, UBS said in a statement. A reading above 1.0 indicates risk. SNB Vice Chairman Jean-Pierre Danthine said last month that he was "uneasy" about the Swiss property market.

Geneva, Lausanne and Zurich along with low-tax locations like Zug and Davos remain at most risk from a residential property bubble as a drop in vacancies is pushing rent levels higher in these areas, UBS said. About 50,000 people a year migrate to Switzerland, where unemployment is lower and income higher than in most of Europe.

"Although population growth continues to favour price increases, the high price level is increasingly dependent on demand for property as an investment, and low interest rates," UBS economists Matthias Holzhey and Claudio Saputelli said. "The continued strong increase in house-

hold mortgage debt is showing no signs of abating" and the reversal of that "could trigger a price correction".

The SNB imposed a ceiling of CHF 1.20 to the euro in September 2011. This, combined with rate cuts by the European Central Bank, has prevented Switzerland from tightening monetary policy to avert a property bubble. The SNB, which according to the rules would have to request a capital buffer for the government to act, won't make such an application before next year, Central Bank president Thomas Jordan said in August.

Swiss unemployment rose to 2.9% in December

Unemployment increased for the first time in six months in December, suggesting that companies are cutting jobs to weather a deepening European economic slump.

The jobless rate rose to 2.9 percent from 2.8 percent in the previous month, the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs in Bern said. That's the highest since March 2011 and the fourth consecutive monthly gain.

The economy is faltering as the euro area's fiscal crisis and a fall in global growth erode export demand, forcing companies to cut costs. UBS, Credit Suisse, chemical company Lonza, and Gaba, the maker of Elmex toothpaste, are among several companies that have announced sweeping job cuts in recent weeks.

The number of job openings fell by 44 to 15,726 in December, the report showed. Some 178,532 people were looking for a job, 7,665 more than in the previous month.

Meanwhile, a report by the Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETHZ) said Swiss companies were "more sceptical" about business developments for the coming six months than they had been in July.

The Swiss economy "continues to be caught between positive domestic demand and the negative influences of international developments", the Swiss Economic Institute (KOF) concluded in a separate report in its December business tendency survey. The report is based on data received from more than 6,500 companies.

The situation only remains favourable in the construction and financial industries. However, insurance companies are relatively optimistic while the banking sector is "split" in its evaluation of the situation, KOF said.

The outlook for the hotel and catering industries remains poor, and the industrial sector sees development as "barely satisfactory". The rate of incoming orders for industrial companies is "far more lethargic" than last year.

Key figures

2.9%

Current jobless rate

4.5%

The rate in January 2010

178,532

People currently looking for a job in Switzerland

+3.1%

Employed foreigners in 2nd Qtr 2012

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Business Comment

How coaching drives excellence

Superior people management is increasingly being recognised as the way to deliver competitive advantage, and the way to make great businesses into brand leaders. New research at Toyota leads the way.

Harvard Business Review recently reported on how corporate coaching contributed to Sears' brand turnaround; the International Personnel Management Association has shown that coaching increased its internal productivity by 64 percent; and a recent survey by Manchester Inc. of 100 top companies found that corporate coaching provided an average financial return of almost 600 percent on the original investment.

Coaching is increasingly important in the executive's arsenal as evidenced in a recent Hay Group study that found that up to 40 percent of Fortune 500 companies utilise Executive Coaching as a standard tool for leadership development.

Power to transform

At the heart of coaching's success is its transformative power with people. "We started searching for innovative ways to improve productivity and staff satisfaction," said Hylton Bannon, then head of Toyota Tsusho Corporation in Johannesburg. "The company was already successful; what we

needed was a sustainable competitive edge. We couldn't change our product – what we needed to change was how we lead. You can be efficient with processes, but not with people. People need to be fulfilled."

Bannon headed up a major coaching drive within the organisation after he experienced the effects first hand through a course at the Centre for Coaching at the University of Cape Town's Graduate School of Business (GSB).

As Janine Everson, director of the Centre for Coaching, explains, "Success is only as sustainable as your staff satisfaction. There's a reason sports teams invest in the best coaches. You can have a team of highly skilled individuals but unless they're aided in working together efficiently and happily, they're unlikely to win championships. The corporate world is no different: coaches take your performance to the next level."

"Ultimately, what we find time and time again is that it is this 'soft-skill' approach that is the key ingredient that turns good companies into great companies and great companies into brand leaders."

Decide on goals

Having a clear idea of the desired outcomes is also essential to success. Toyota planned to accomplish a constructive utilisation of leadership conversations through the giving and receiving of feedback, understanding



and managing constructive conflict situations and effectively dealing with internal requests and external delivery promises. What they soon found, though, was that the benefits went far beyond these outcomes.

Employee satisfaction was markedly higher with a decrease in office tension and a notably lowered incidence of conflict. There was also evidence of swifter, calmer resolution of minor conflicts and disagreements through open dialogue, as opposed to misunderstandings and increasing tensions resulting from unresolved issues.

Management reported that building an environment of personal empowerment meant they no longer had to

micro-manage staff. This had the knock-on effect of decreasing absenteeism and even had such practical applications as decreasing the lead-time in the service and parts departments.

As Everson notes, "In our experience, employees tend to improve their confidence. At a professional level, we typically see a culture of personal empowerment coming from engaged and motivated employees. Changing the work culture may begin with the individual, but it ends with the team."



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Money Matters

Taxing times

Two things in life are certain: death and taxes. If you are domiciled or resident in Switzerland you have to pay tax here, and every year your completed tax return must be submitted. Tax laws and tax rates vary from canton to canton.

Married couples complete a joint tax return – both spouses are required to sign it. Tax returns must be completed and sent to the authorities in Vaud and Geneva within 30 days of you receiving the forms from the tax office. Applications to the cantonal tax authorities for an extension are almost always granted. If you don't respect the 30-day deadline expect a reminder setting a new deadline. Do not wait until the last minute to send off your tax return – sending it in early will make the final assessment available sooner and ensure more accurate tax rate calculations.

Check carefully to see what deductions you are eligible to claim – the

guidelines provide detailed information on this and you really don't need an accountant to judge what you can and cannot claim.

Taxable income is only arrived at after the authorised deductions have been made (see below). In addition, a wealth tax (0.5 percent) is levied on the value of your assets (property, cash, shares etc.) less any debts and the admissible social deductions.

One of the best tips to facilitate preparing your Swiss tax return is to gather together the following documents throughout the year – well before you receive your tax return:

- Salary certificate
- Bank statements from the bank or the post office
- Securities records
- Payments into a third pillar 3a pension fund (voluntary pension)
- Specific payments into a second pillar 2 pension fund (occupational

pension; contributions are listed on the salary certificate)

- Medical expenses (insurance premiums, out-of-pocket expenses)
- List of professional expenses
- Records of completion of continuing education
- Receipts for donations to charities
- For homeowners: property tax, debt interest, renovation, work etc.

Some deductables

Expenses incurred in earning income (production costs)

AVS, pension, health and life insurance contributions, donations to charities and interest payments on private debts

Deductions for childcare outside the family and for dependants requiring support.

Foreign reserves challenge

Swiss National Bank (SNB) Governing Board member Fritz Zurbrugg says managing the central bank's foreign currency reserves of CHF 424.4 billion (\$448 billion) is a "major challenge".

"The SNB takes care to ensure that its investments do not disrupt the markets," Zurbrugg said. "We are aware that the huge amounts we have under management could impact significantly on market prices."

The SNB, under the stewardship of President Thomas Jordan, has been forced to pile up unprecedented currency holdings to defend a franc ceiling of 1.20 per euro introduced last year. While reserves fell in December, they still amount to almost 70 percent of the country's gross domestic product.

The franc has weakened about 0.4 percent versus the euro over the past three months after the European Central Bank pledged to buy government bonds of distressed nations in tandem with the region's rescue fund.

Middle class squeezed

Switzerland's middle class has never enjoyed as much income as it does today, but the richest and poorest sections of the population have seen their increase more substantially, a study by Avenir Suisse said.



Sixty to 80 percent of the population are considered middle class, and while they are not especially wealthy, they do not face major financial problems. A couple without children with a revenue of between CHF 67,000 and CHF 150,000 belongs to this category, as does a couple with children and income of between CHF 94,000 and CHF 210,000.

Over the past 20 years, real income for the Swiss middle class has increased six to eight percent, more than in most other countries. For the wealthiest, revenue growth has risen by up to 15 percent, while for lower income households it is around ten percent. As a result, large sections of the middle class are "dissatisfied" with their situation and fear slipping further behind.

While lower-income categories benefit from state intervention, much of the middle class is not financially better off. In families where both parents work, for example, fees for crèches are means-tested. Once all costs including taxes are paid, up to 90 percent of the second family income is gone, encouraging many women to stay out of the job market and hindering upward mobility, Avenir Suisse said.

The think tank suggests replacing means-tested social policies and subsidies with a "user pays" system, in order to ease the financial burden on the middle class. It rejects higher taxes for the rich, however, saying the wealthy would leave Switzerland if the economic environment were no longer favourable.

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Insight

Will Obama's second term resolve Swiss-US bank tensions?

The Swiss banking industry has been having a rough ride recently in its dealings with the US and the EU.

After failing to reach a tax agreement with Germany in late November which would have imposed a withholding tax on accounts held by Germans in Swiss banks, Berne now turns to resolving its long-standing banking dispute with Washington.

The re-election of US President Barack Obama on 6 November prompted mixed reactions in Switzerland where the banking dispute between Washington and Berne looms as the single issue in bilateral relations for the near future.

While the Swiss public may largely have favoured Barack Obama over Mitt Romney, the banking and

political sectors clearly preferred Romney, who apparently had squirreled away millions of dollars in a UBS account which he closed in 2007.

Switzerland has sought to negotiate a solution to the crisis in which 11 banks – including Credit Suisse and Julius Bär – have been accused by US authorities of having helped American clients evade taxes. According to a US law passed in 2010, known as FACTA (Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act), Switzerland must turn over to Washington the names of delinquent taxpayers and fine the banks involved.

In its effort to stem withdrawals by customers concerned about a widening hunt for tax dodgers, Berne has asked that the threat of prosecution against the 11 banks be dropped in exchange for the payment of fines and

the transfer of client names.

Few however expect the otherwise good relations between the two countries to change. On the night of Obama's re-election, Swiss Foreign Minister Didier Burkhalter told Swiss public radio RTS that Switzerland "will establish a solid relationship with the new [Obama] team".

Speaking at an election night party for expats in Berne, US Ambassador Donald Beyer said he is confident an accord will be adopted. "The next test will be the tax accord between Berne and Washington and how the US Congress will vote", he said.

The concern of many others, including Martin Naville, director of the Swiss-American Chamber of Commerce, is that "the bank issue must be tackled before it spills over to the rest of trade".



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SÉJOURS LINGUISTIQUES

Switzerland should defend its banking sector from US pressure

Interview with Bastien Maupassant of Econometrica Suisse, a Bern-based think tank.

We deplore the weakness of the Swiss Federal Council in the face of the “warlike attitude” of the United States and others on the banking crisis. When a government such as ours can turn over lists of holders of so-called fraudulent accounts to judicial authorities from other countries to protect the interests of private companies, some of them foreign such as HSBC, it is indeed “serious”. “Discriminatory?” Yes, in the sense that our economic partners, the US and the EU put pressures on Switzerland that are not applied to them.

“Berne should become the leader in these negotiations that it once was”

The United States is creating huge problems for Switzerland by questioning bank secrecy, while anyone can open a company in the state of Delaware without even mentioning the source of the money. Today one can



Bastien Maupassant

stash away money, even undeclared criminal money, very effectively by completely avoiding Switzerland. England has approximately 300,000 people who are eligible for special tax treatment while in Switzerland we are criticized for having 5,000. Then there’s the royal family of Qatar which is exempt from taxation on its investments in France. Obviously it’s bad that we have dirty money in Switzerland and we need to do more to clean up our act but this also applies to others.

Perhaps during the good times we

became lazy and it resulted in this madness. But we shouldn’t go to the opposite extreme whereby opening an account in Switzerland becomes so complicated, difficult and even dangerous that it will discourage everyone. Especially as Swiss banking know-how has flourished for two hundred years and developed renowned expertise.

Berne should become the leader in these negotiations that it once was. Why not negotiate with our main competitors and try to agree on a strategy, rather than allowing everyone to beat up on Switzerland? I heard a French parliamentarian say, “if we can ‘bend’ Switzerland, we can bend others.” The Federal Council has given up fighting the major issues that affect taxation or the protection of privacy and our neighbours have clearly

noticed.

In Switzerland prepaid tax deposits bring in CHF 700 million a year, a small percentage of tax revenue for the country but it would not be a good idea to eliminate it. Secondly, these people consume a lot, which generates VAT on services, cars, housing etc. Those who receive special tax treatment are often well-educated and wealthy and it’s estimated that their wealth through direct investment in Switzerland amounts to several billion francs a year.

I believe Switzerland has a financial future. There is widespread agreement that ultimately it is one of the most serious financial markets in the world – certainly more honest than many others – with its banks properly and securely funded. Even the loss of bank secrecy does not worry me too much, precisely because of the greater problems in the world. Obviously I do not rejoice. Switzerland is not a happy island in the middle of an ocean of tears, but seriousness and professionalism will always be rewarded.

In Profile

Daniel Rossellat

An interview with the Mayor of Nyon and President of the Paléo Festival.

by Catherine Nelson-Pollard

Daniel Rossellat, a well known name in Switzerland and beyond its borders, gave this interview in late December 2012, the day before he was due to fly out to Côte d'Ivoire. I asked him what he expected to find there.

"I'm going for the meeting of the Association of Francophone Mayors. Nyon is well known in the French-speaking world and has a good reputation due to its festivals. This association is an interesting platform for exchange and dialogue."

Turning to his role as President of Paléo I was interested to learn about his travels to hear new music.

"In the last twelve months, I've been to Nashville to the Bonnaroo Festival, to the Montreal Jazz Festival and the Quebec Summer Festival, as well as visiting Lebanon, Jordan, Israel and Palestine to hear music for the Village du Monde area of Paléo for 2012. This autumn I went to Madagascar, Mozambique and South Africa and soon I'll be going to Zanzibar, to do some research for the next festival."

And what musical tastes does a president of a music festival have himself? "When I was 15 or 16 I was already listening to an eclectic mix of music, but I didn't have an extensive knowledge. Over the years I have discovered a lot about classical music, and I continue to listen to rock, folk, pop and world music. I've also got to appreciate a lot of styles and some music fusions that are still not well known over here."

In his role of Mayor of Nyon I asked him to outline his personal vision for Nyon in 10-20 years' time. "The ideal



COURTESY DANIEL ROSSELLAT

will be to have kept the soul and the character of the town while creating infrastructure that meets the needs of the growing population. Combining these two requirements is a constant challenge."

Finally, to round off our conversation I asked him how expatriates can get the most out of their time in Nyon.

"Whether you are single, married, with or without children, try to join a club such as a sports club: it's a good way to meet locals. If you can't do that, then keep things "local" as much as you can, go to concerts or arts events in the area and eat in local restaurants. If you are here for a fixed time then explore the area. When the time comes to leave you will do so having got to know a little bit about this part of Switzerland."

This is an extract of a longer interview on www.livinginnyon.com



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Technology

Smart gets smarter

No need to turn to your smartphone to look at your diary, read a tweet or squint at a map. All this information, and much more, will soon be displayed on the lenses of your "augmented" glasses via a mini projector embedded in the frames.

The applications envisioned for this eagerly awaited invention are numerous – support for the deaf and hard of hearing, games, GPS, teaching enhancement and a myriad other types of augmented reality applications.

A team at the Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne (EPFL) had to overcome a number of technological challenges, the most formidable of which was to find a way to allow users to simultaneously see the information displayed on the lenses as well as see through them.

"This technology has many advantages," says Professor Christophe Moser. "It provides high-definition, precise images. And unlike other models of the same kind, it conserves the entire field of vision and allows us to use existing eyeglass designs."

The team is working closely with

EPFL start-up company Lemoptix to develop a high-definition micro-projector that will fit discreetly into an



arm of the glasses. The projector sends images and information to the specially treated glasses lens via holography. The resulting hologram is projected onto the lenses in such a way that the image is reflected in the direction of the eye, while the lenses still appear transparent. The user can therefore still see normally through the glasses.

It will be between two and five years before the technology is perfected and the glasses are available in shops. So keep an eye out!

Allons-y:

Winter – it's all about après ski

The skiing in Switzerland is pretty much perfect, that's a given. So your destination of choice should come down to the quality of the après ski. If partying is what you're after, look no further than Verbier, a resort worshipped by the British. Boutiques, restaurants and nightlife have made the town one of Europe's most exciting and sought-after destinations. The Nevaï, a boutique hotel in the centre of town, is one of its important trendsetters and a must for any lover of elegance. Surrounded by über-luxurious décor, you can eat, drink and join with the in-crowd in style. Ideal for that special weekend.

If your priority is more chill than thrill, The Cambrian is for you. Entering this divine retreat in Adelboden is a lesson in measured serenity. The iconic furniture and general design scheme that screams urban chic combine with a surrounding mountain scape that takes your

breath away. Indeed, every room comes with an Alpine view. The outdoor thermal pool that seemingly laps onto the mountainside is the perfect antidote to a day's skiing or hard spa-ing. Dining at the Cambrian is to be charmed by an exceptional fusion of traditional local recipes spiced up with subtle Asian ingredients that are just in perfect harmony with the surroundings. And that's not even to mention the stunning breakfast.

Both hotels are members of the Design Hotels group and bookings can be made through www.designhotels.com 00 800 37 46 83 57



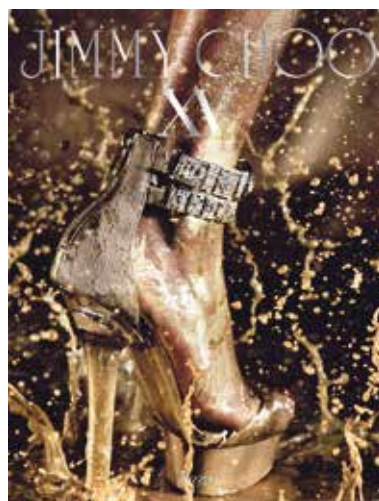
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Lifestyle: books



Jimmy Choo XV
Jimmy Choo
Published by Rizzoli, New York
CHF 75.-

From the moment a pair of Jimmy Choo's first stepped out on to the red carpet, the luxurious footwear and accessories brand has been favoured by Hollywood stars, pop divas,

royalty and some of the world's most fashionable women.

To celebrate the brand's fifteenth anniversary, Jimmy Choo has produced a sumptuous limited-edition coffee table book, *Jimmy Choo XV* by Tamara Mellon, which focuses on the 15 most iconic shoes from the company's past and reflects on what has made them so successful.

"Around the office, we refer to the shoe styles as 'she', endowing them with a personality, life and story all of their own," says Tamara Mellon, OBE and Jimmy Choo founder. "Each of the thousands of shoes that we have created has its own story."

The book contains stunning imagery from leading fashion photographers such as Mario Testino and Terry Richardson, editorial from the world's top fashion magazines, paparazzi shots from the red carpet and original design studio sketches, all wrapped up in a deluxe snakeskin presentation sleeve.



Dior Couture
Patrick Demarchelier
Published by Rizzoli, New York
CHF 105.-

Dior Couture, with stunning photography by Patrick Demarchelier, is a gorgeous must-have book chronicling the glory days of the Parisian fashion house established by Christian Dior shortly after World War II.

Dior, one of the legendary couturiers, is famous for revolutionising the world of haute couture with the launch in 1947 of his first collection of hour-glass silhouettes, christened the "New Look".

"The delicate stitches of Christian Dior's couture are reminiscent of a spider's web, mirroring nature, and these photographs capture the silhouettes like flower buds about to bloom," American artist Jeff Koons writes in the book's foreword.

“
The delicate stitches of Christian Dior's couture are reminiscent of a spider's web, mirroring nature, and these photographs capture the silhouettes like flower buds about to bloom”

Demarchelier, who has shot editorials for the likes of *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar*, captures more than 100 gowns, suits and coats from the entire span of Christian Dior haute couture through to recent creations by Galliano. His images are as classically composed and true to the effortless elegance that Dior strove so unerringly to achieve.

Dior Couture, published by Rizzoli, serves as testament to the label that rewrote the fashion rule book.

Local Community Groups & Associations

CLUBS AND GROUPS

Nyon CinéClub

Offers a selection of great international films on Mondays at 20.00. This not-for-profit club is open to suggestions for possible screenings in its two theatres.

5 rue Neuve, CH-1260 Nyon
 informations@cineclubnyon.ch

Lausanne Terriers FC

A club for young soccer enthusiasts (boys and girls). Started to provide talented players with a high level of instruction in English to enable them to play in good local teams or in college teams on their return to their home countries.

Tel: +41 (0)21 323 3343
 terriersfc@hispeed.ch

Lausanne Scots Kirk Business Network

This new group helps professionals keep up to date with current business practices and to expand their networks. Meetings are held in English on the third Thursday of each month.

Tel: +41 (0)21 323 3343

Cossonay Cricket Club

Meets for practice every Thursday evening in the village. Matches played throughout the summer

Tel: +41 (0)21 334 5990
 members@cossonaycc.ch

Geneva Amateur Soccer Club

A multilingual club for people serious about playing good football. Three men's teams and two women's

Kevin Montreux
 Tel: +41 (0)22 674 5230
 membres@geneve_foot.ch

Lausanne Le petit théâtre

Amateur dramatics in French. Five productions per year. New members welcome. Seeking players for Moby Dick in March 2013

Place de la Cathédrale 12, 1005 Lausanne
 Tel: +41 (0)21 087 5112
 info@lepetittheatre.ch

New Groups and Associations

Any group that wishes to raise its profile is welcome to submit an entry for free to Le News on a first come first served basis. Only entries from charities and not for profit organisations will be accepted. Entries must be no more than 50 words long and they must not fundraise, sell or promote events. Priority will be given to new organisations.

Vevey Ski club

Over 50 and still enjoy a hard day's skiing? Our club offers older skiers the challenge of off-piste with the reliability of guides. Annual membership of CHF 300 for 12 weekends. Transport provided from Vevey, Lausanne and Montreux
 Bernard Smythe
 Tel: +41 (0)21 087 5112

HELP AND SUPPORT GROUPS

Geneva Alcoholics Anonymous

Meetings are now going to be held in English in the Geneva area. There are also daily meetings held in a number of other languages: French, German and Spanish. AA Geneva has just launched an English-speaking contact and helpline for general information
 Tel: +41 (0)22 328 9286

Geneva Narcotics Anonymous

(Narcotiques Anonymes) has an English-speaking meeting that takes place on Tuesdays from 20:00 to 21:00
 Maison de L'Ancre, 34 rue de Lausanne, Geneva
 Tel (24/7): 0840 12 1212

Geneva HIV/Aids: Groupe SIDA

This group is one of the best known providers of support and advice to those whose lives are affected by HIV/AIDS. In French. Starting in Lausanne in January every Thursday at 18.00, Fondation Roveriaz, av Roveriaz 21b, Lausanne.
 17 rue Pierre-Fatio, 1204 Geneva
 Tel: +41 (0)22 700 1500

Helpline Cancer Support

The English Speaking Cancer Association is a group offering emotional support, practical help and information to cancer patients, their families and carers in the Geneva and Vaud area. They also hold information and discussion evenings.

www.ESCA.ch
 Tel: +41 (0)79 531 5511

Geneva Family Planning and Sexual Health

The Geneva University Hospitals has a family planning centre that offers consultations and advice free of charge (in French). English by appointment

47 Bd de la Cluse, 1205 Geneva
 Tel: +41 (0)22 372 5500

Helpline Mental Health: La main tendue

The Swiss equivalent of the Samaritans, providing help and support to those in need. Listeners are available 24/7 in English and now in Spanish and Portuguese.

Tel: 143

Helpline Parents' and Children's Support Groups: SOS Enfants

Available 24/7 for children and adolescents in need.

Tel: 147 or +41 (0)22 312 1112

Geneva ASK – All Special Kids

ASK is a new Geneva-based network for families with special needs children. It provides information relating to special needs issues through monthly support meetings and thematic workshops. The group focuses on helping English speaking children.
 www.ask.ch

Morges Women's Support Groups

Solidarité Femmes provides help and support for women and their children suffering from domestic violence. It is opening a help centre in Morges in March and plans to offer consultations in English.

Tel (24/7): +41 (0)22 797 1010

Blonay Play Team

An informal group for lonely senior citizens in the region.

www.blonaymates.ch



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Trousers Men UVP: CHF 129.00*	CHF 89.90**

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Travel

Romance and more in Verona



LUIGI STRANO

The Italian city of Verona is famous for being the inspiration behind William Shakespeare's star-crossed lovers, Romeo and Juliet. But there is so much more to this fabled city of romance than the Bard's tragic tale of thwarted love and revenge. Verona, a UNESCO heritage site in the northern region of Veneto, offers a rich palette of attractions from opera to architecture and art, and is a paradise for gourmands as well as those who like their travels steeped in history.

Enjoy the winter theatre season at the Teatro Dante and Il Grande Teatro. Check out Sunday matinee performances during the international classical and contemporary music festival at Sala Maffei del Teatro Filarmonico. For dance, live shows and classical music concerts, try the newly renovated Teatro Ristori. Verona also offers year-round jazz concerts and ballet at the Roman Theatre and Shakespearean plays in Italian at other venues.

At Christmas, craftsmen from all over the world decorate Verona's ancient open-air amphitheatre with intricate re-creations of the nativity scene. The exhibition includes the gigantic illuminated Star Comet

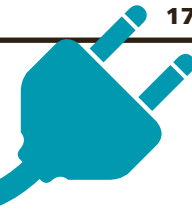
sculpture on Piazza Bra. Visit the Mercatino di Natale – Christmas market – in the heart of the medieval city to sample local wines and traditional Veronese delicacies such as savoury sausages and mountain cheese.

Verona has a number of gourmet and fine dining establishments, such as the Michelin-starred Il Descò. La Fontania, another Michelin-starred option, is just around the corner from the arena. This 200-year-old osteria specialises in traditional fare with a modern twist. Al Pompiere near the Casa di Giulietta is known for its specialty meats and regional cuisine.

Lovers of Italian fashion houses will not be disappointed. Luxurious clothing and accessories boutiques, including Gucci, Roberto Cavalli and Fiorucci, line Verona's most fashionable shopping streets, the pedestrian-only Via Mazzini and Via Cappello. For vintage buys, try Cecile on Via Salvatore Corte Reggia 9 and Corso Sant'Anastasia for antique shops.

For a romantic splash out, stay at the luxury boutique hotel, Il Sogno di Giulietta, which is conveniently located inside the courtyard of the palace where lovers come to marvel at Juliet's mythical balcony.

Plugged in



The trick to having a great first date is to work your hardest to make it a success (while coolly making it look like you're not trying too much). Yet no matter how magical a first date may seem to an outsider, for the couple involved every detail has likely been agonized over and carefully planned. If you have a first date coming up, be sure to follow these tips to make it so fantastic that you'll be begged for a second!

DRESS TO KILL

Dressing for a first date must meet a variety of criteria including looking good, communicating who you are and being comfortable. A first date is not the time to try out a new "look". Remember that your date wants to be with the "you" that s/he has come to know. Also, know what your plans are so that you don't show up dressed for clubbing if you are going bowling.

Speaking of plans, do plan for your first date so that you don't waste time wondering where you should go and what you should do (a sure-fire recipe for ruin). Many successful first dates include fun activities where you can both talk and talk (and talk).

Sometimes when all you desperately want to do is be funny and smart, you get tongue-tied. Easily solved! Just

think up a few conversation starters before you even leave home. For interesting ideas, scan the local paper, investigate reviews of the film or play that you are about to see; or bone up on trivia about your date's interests.

COOL NOT CRAZY

When you are looking fabulous, having fun and spouting out witticisms left and right, the chances are good that your date will be impressed. It is easy to get carried away on this high, so don't get burned, be cool not crazy. It is entirely OK not to do anything you are uncomfortable with or feel that you might regret in the morning. So avoid: showing off too loudly; gossiping about friends or foes; or thoughtlessly violating your own rules on things like drinking, smoking and sex.

When you're on a first date, you want it to work and that will happen if you show that you have the confidence to do only what you are comfortable doing. Be yourself and have fun. If you can manage both of these, then undoubtedly you will be well on your way to the end of first dates and the start of a real relationship.

COOL IN SITES

THEUSELESSWEB.COM

Presented with a big "TAKE ME TO ANOTHER USELESS WEBSITE PLEASE" button, this website is all you need to spend hours doing absolutely nothing, with a few laughs now and then.

CAMCORDERINFO.COM

If you fancy yourself as a bit of an independent film-maker then you are going to need some decent kit to play with, and www.camcorderinfo.com provides all the information you need.

Classified & Local Ads

LE LAW

Employment issues? Instruct heavyweight solicitors without heavy rates. 022 143 55 87 www.schpring-houselaw.ch

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Stung By Bad Professional Advice? Get your own back. Contact the **professional negligence specialists**, Jean-Philippe Bloom, solicitors, Versoix. No win – no fee available. 022 212 41 91

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L' ART

Suit fat cat office. Set of 4 framed and mounted **Hogarth Election Scenes**. Stipple engraving by Jackson Stodart published in 1932 by the Museum Galleries, 60cm by 65 cm. Serious offers to Dale Framton on 022 7025 7323

Beryl Cook Lithographs A Bathroom, "My Fur Coat" Signed, numbered €5,000.00 each O.N.O bc@hispeed.ch

LE READ

The **Surrealist Cookbook**. Ideal Christmas present. Brilliant cook recipes from New York. www.darkwindows.ch (ISBN9780957164468).

"**The Pub Quiz**." A novel by Andrew Hines. Kindle. One sale to my sister. She hated it.

Punishment The new book by Thom Brooks on Amazon.

"**Totality**" by Ed Bowie - "MENSA adventure!" Available on Amazon.

Weekly book reviews on video, with Alexandra Heminsley www.60secondreviews.com or through app store.

You like humour, so you'll love **Tales from the Liars Club** by Walter Beaney. Very British humour. Amazon, Kindle.

LE LOVE

Female Music-Lover and Cinephile, sixties, seeks tall male for concerts and enjoying Geneva. femus@blumail.com

North Vaud attractive blonde, 50's, seeks chap to share love and lifestyle. didgeneva@gmail.com

Love Mud? Countryside online dating for those who lead a muddy-boots lifestyle. www.muddymatches.ch

Female doctor, early 40's, Lausanne, looking for soul mate caratuza27@g-mail.com

Dating 4 Grown Ups. Dating introductions for the over 40's, with no upper age limit. Geneva/Vaud. We are currently able to offer a limited number of non-fee memberships to suitably

eligible men. Please Tel. Paul for an initial chat. 021 728 6350 www.dating4grownups.ch

Person To Person – non-internet magazine for new friends/partners. Est. 1984: still going 'cos it works! Tel: 021 643 7095.

Man in late fifties, enjoys country living. Slim, fit and active wltm like-minded woman of similar age or younger to share life with. Living in the Aigle area, he is open to meet someone either locally or elsewhere in Switzerland. Please call Blomberg 022 3008 6388.

LE NEED

Google launch: Sept, 1998. First investment opportunity: Aug, 1998
Toptag launch: Jan, 2013 First investment opportunity: Dec, 2012. 022 129 0967 Hark@toptagit.com

Opportunity in **mining and horticulture**. Investor needed. hayfedin2@hispeed.ch

Geneva — St Gallen By Bicycle, final € 4,000 needed to publish unique traffic-calmed cycle route book. UBS 09-06-61 4128352 www.swisscycling.com

Enthusiastic volunteer needs funding to join **charity venture** to bring fun and happiness into the lives of desperately underprivileged sad Romanian children through music and play. Please help, thank you. RFS-06 16227131-5

Friendly **Gland chamber choir** needs decent tenors for exciting 2013 concert season. www.glandchoir.ch

LE PROPERTY

Small barn, **ideal writer's retreat**, surrounded by olive trees on the Jura hills above M-S-Rolle. Magnificent views, CH. One bedroom w/ensuite bathroom, sitting room with fireplace and sofabed. Eat-in kitchen. Eat-out under fig tree. Long-term lets (min. 6 months) CHF 400 pm. helen@sun-rise.ch

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LES SERVICES

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Anglophone architects firm seeks architectural technologist / CAD draughtsman. Freelance basis, possibly

leading to full employment. enquiries@ropobsteir.ch

Xmas party entertainment with professional caricaturist! 021 790 89 32 see www.caricatures.ch

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LE MOTOR

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BMW 318 1.9i, 2003, auto Ci coupe. Blue, 3 Series, 2 doors, Petrol, Automatic, Coupe, Auto/Tiptronic Sports Box, BMW Business Radio Cassette with CD Autochanger, Black cloth interior, 16" BMW Alloys. CHF 12,500. Call 022 122 98 98.

Ford Focus 1.6l 1999. Expertised November 2013, No Tax, Hpi Clear, 90000 Miles with Full Service History, Cambelt Changed at 88000 Miles, Diamond White with Grey Interior, Power Steering, Air Con, Heated Quickclear Windscreen, Electric Windows, Central Locking with 2 Keys, Runs and Drives Really Well, Good Condition But Would Be Better With A Polish!!! Hence The Low Price CHF 1,695 ovno. Call Dan on 079 412 6655 for details.

LAND ROVER FREELANDER 2.2 TD4e XS, 2012. 7,200 km. Part-Leather, Ebony/Lunar Dinamica, alloy wheels, Privacy glass, Colour navigation system with TMC, Dynamic Stability Control (DSC), Heated front windscreen, Heated seats, Alpine audio system with single CD player, Park Distance Control - front, Auto-dimming interior mirror, Dual power heated foldback mirrors, Instant Mobility System, Single CD player, Anti-lock braking system, Automatic climate control, Automatic headlights, Cold climate Pack, Cruise control, Driver & passenger airbags, Driver & passenger side airbags, Electric front seats, Electric heated door mirrors, Electric windows, Electronic Brake Assist (EBA), Electronic Brake-Force Distribution (EBD), Front fog lamps. CHF 31,000. Call 021 662 5685.

NISSAN JUKE 1.5 dCi 110 ACENTA + Sport Pack. 2012. 4,500 km. Grey, alloy wheels, ABS, Brake Assist, air conditioning, Cruise control, Drive computer, EBD, ESP, Engine immobiliser, Fog lamps. Forced sale due to overseas posting.

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Letters

Dear Editor,

I am writing on behalf of Action Rail, a voluntary organisation based in Montreux that lobbies for better rail services. We have recently become aware of problems on the Lausanne to Montreux line and other local rail services caused by extensive cancellations, leading to gaps in the timetable. CFF has advised that these have been due to "staff shortages".

Our group considers these to be unacceptable, given that passengers are paying hundreds of francs a year for the services of the company – which also receives significant support from the Department for Transport.

There should be sufficient staff to enable the timetable to run as advertised.

We would like to compile a "dossier", which will be sent to CFF's Chief Executive and to the State Transport authority outlining the company's poor performance, and detailing the problems that are being experienced by passengers on a personal level (for example lateness at work).

To assist us with this, we would like to hear from Le News readers who use the Geneva to Montreux line regularly and have been delayed. Their stories about the knock-on effects would be very helpful. If your readers can help us in this project please can they contact us by emailing campaignforrail@bluewin.ch
– Lars Nielsen, Action Rail

Dear Editor,

I wonder if readers realise that housing developers are sitting on land that already has planning permission and waiting for approval on more profitable greenfield sites, instead.

New research published by the Centrale des autorisations de construire (CAC) in Canton Vaud reveals that more than half of 1,200 new homes which have already received planning permission are being shelved and have not actually been built yet! (18 November 2012). The housing planning application for 109 dwellings on the old factory site in Renens is a case in point.

The chairman, Michel Sapperelli, said: "We need to reform the planning system as it is clear that unlocking demand caused by greedy speculation, not increasing housing supply, is the fastest way to solve the shortage in the housing market today."

Why concrete over our valuable green fields, when we do not have to? What has happened to common sense?

– Laurent Braun

Dear Editor,

Your article last week about the delay to the launch of the XR37 tablet was in fact wrong. Wazoo does not purposely hold back stock to artificially create demand and "hype" as described by your reporter. We are first and foremost a customer-focused organisation.

– Wolfgang Meier, Wazoo Suisse SA

Français & English

FR Assister /a.sis.te/

EN Assist /ə'sist/

Assister à means **to attend something**: J'ai assisté à la conférence - **I attended (went to) the conference.**

To assist means to help or aid someone or something: **I assisted the woman into the building** - J'ai aidé la dame à entrer dans l'immeuble.

FR Sensible /sa.sibl/

EN Sensible /'sensəbl/

Sensible in French means **sensitive**, as in **He's a sensitive soul.**

Sensible in English would be translated as **raisonnable**: **Be sensible!** Sois raisonnable!

Recipe



Rösti for the ravenous

Rösti is a traditional Swiss dish – very like the hash browns that are popular in North America. It can be bought in packets in just about any grocer in Switzerland, but home-made is truly delicious.

Ingredients

- 2 large potatoes (Maris pipers are ideal)
- 20g lard (cooking fat to fry in)
- Seasoning to taste

Method

Peel and cut the potatoes in half. Boil fast for five minutes, cool in cold water for a minute and then drain. Leave to one side for five minutes to continue cooling to make them easier to handle. Grate the potatoes with an ordinary coarse grater and season with a little salt and pepper. One can also add ½ a fried onion to the grated potato mixture.

Heat a non-stick frying pan, add the lard and when the fat is at a hot frying temperature, add the potato to form a big omelette. Be careful not to put in too much potato: it must not be too thick or it will not cook properly and may become a bit stodgy. Cook until a golden brown (8 - 10 minutes). Turn the rösti over and cook the other side.

Serving tips

Rösti can be kept warm for about half an hour, but it becomes quite sticky in the middle and the edges dry out into a crust if left too long.

For easy metric conversions visit our website www.lenews.ch

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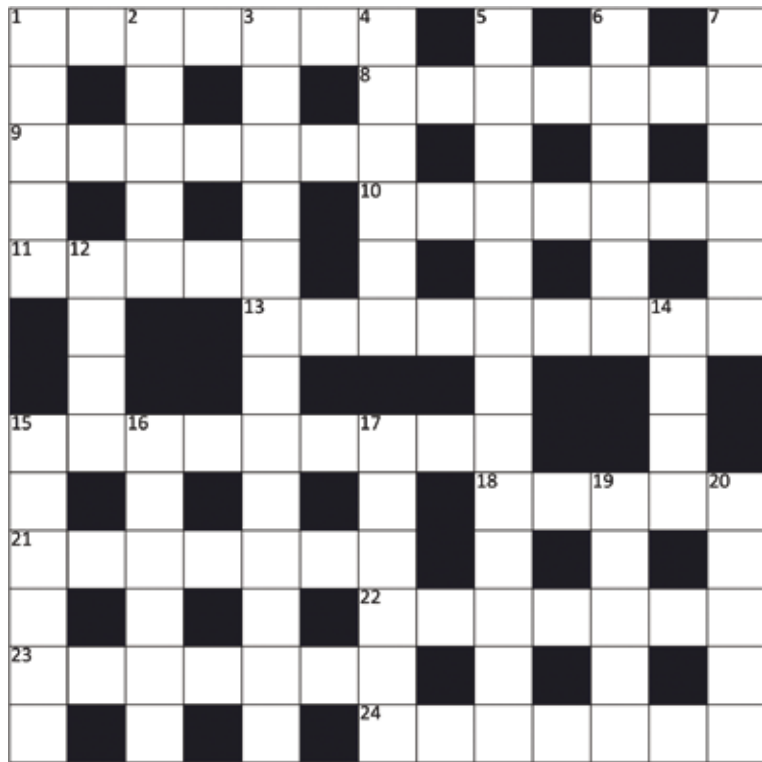
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Puzzles



QUICK CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Poker-faced (7)
- 8 Inspire with love (7)
- 9 Army officer (7)
- 10 *Frankenstein* author (7)
- 11 Eager (anag) (5)
- 13 Name of St Petersburg from 1924 to 1991 (9)
- 15 Tolerate, endure (3,2,4)
- 16 Part of the body between the head and abdomen (6)
- 17 Denied (anag) (6)
- 18 Unconventional (5)
- 19 Put forward for discussion (5)
- 20 Standing (5)
- 21 Large cat (7)
- 22 Elevate to the aristocracy (7)
- 23 Take aback (7)
- 24 Comedown (of ancestry?) (7)

DOWN

- 1 Capital of Bangladesh (5)
- 2 More competent (5)
- 3 Hallucinations caused by

- alcohol (4,9)
- 4 Wrestling hold (6)
- 5 Team game involving a paper chase (4,3,6)
- 6 Hat (for cricketer?) (6)
- 7 Entreated (6)
- 12 Hindu spiritual teacher (4)
- 14 Declare solemnly to be true (4)
- 15 Buff up – foreign language (6)

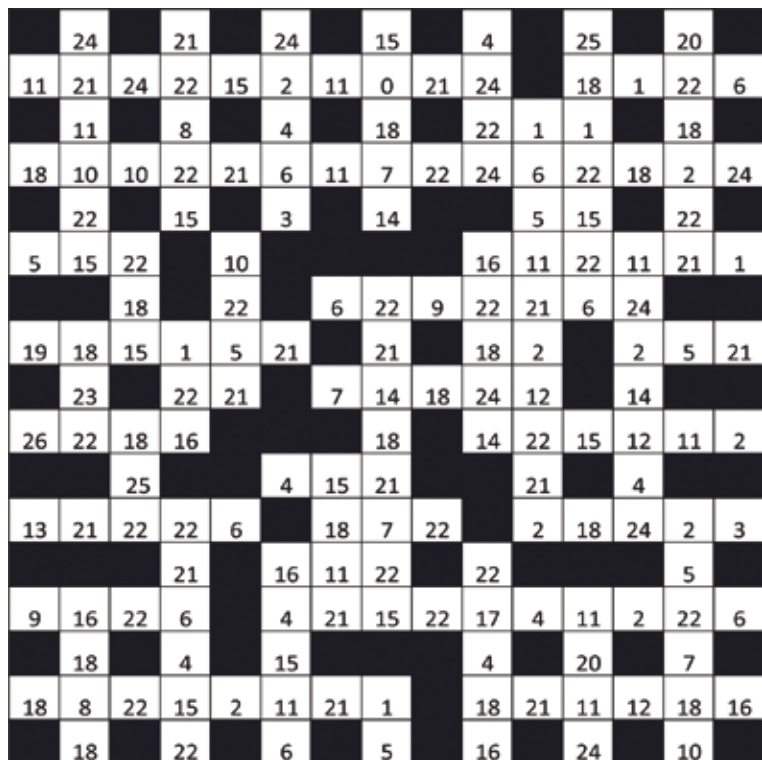


WIN!

Send your solutions to prizes@lenews.ch or Le News, Case Postale 911, 1000 Lausanne
A prize of CHF 30 for the first correct entry drawn for each puzzle.

CODEWORDS

Each alphabet letter has been replaced by the same number throughout the puzzle. Simply decide which letter is represented by which number and complete the puzzle. Here are the first three codes to help you.



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
					D							
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
							N				W	

Searched and found!

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Regional Events

Adapting Your CV to the Swiss Job Market: Viva Coaching & Consulting Workshop

Thursday 8 March 2013
Thursday 15 March 2013
from 19.00 to 21.00

A two part career workshop hosted in Geneva guiding delegates through the steps to create an impressive CV to meet Swiss standards and open the door to career opportunities.

Location
Geneva

Price
CHF 95.-

Contact
076 559 6711
www.vivacoaching.ch



Puppet Show: C'est quoi ça? Un ornithorynque

Sunday 18 February 11.00 and 15.00

Ideal for ages 4 and over.

Location
Théâtre de marionnettes de Lausanne

Price
CHF 12.-

Contact
021 343 4355
www.theatremarionnettes.ch



Pub Crawl in Nyon

30 January

If you are new to the area and would like to let the club know you will be going, so you can meet and chat to a friendly face, then send an email to prangins.international.club@gmail.com.

Programme
18.30 Cactus Jack
21.00 Bar de la Gare
21.30 Les Brasseurs
22.00 Le Cesar
22.30 Braxton's
21.00 Le Grand Café
21.30 Quai 23
22.00 Fisherman's Pub.



Sinbad the Sailor Pantomime – Fun for the Family

Friday 23, Saturday 24,
Sunday 25 January

It's the end of the pantomime season (oh yes it is!) for the Geneva Amateur Operatic Society's production of Sinbad the Sailor. Suitable for children of all ages.

Location
Aula du College de Saussure,
Petit Lancy, Geneva

Price
Tickets starting at CHF 30.-
on www.theatreinenglish.ch



The IWCN (International Women's Club of Nyon) Big Charity Bazaar

Saturday 24 January
from 10.00 to 16.00

This bi-annual event is a great opportunity for expats to meet over a bite to eat at the bistro, and to buy second hand English books, toys, home-made jams, gifts and presents etc. There's a tombola too with lots of prizes.

Location
Salle Communale, Nyon



FILM REVIEWS

2012 ★★★ DR SEUSS' THE LORAX Animation, U Certificate

Voices by Zac Efron, Ed Helms, Taylor Swift, Danny DeVito, Betty White.

The Lorax is one of the better Seuss adaptations, as brightly coloured, light and fluffy as candy floss, filled with cute creatures, songs and even an environmental message.

Ted lives in Thneedville, a walled town where everything is plastic and man-made, to the point where residents have to buy their fresh air from local business bigwig O'Hare. But Ted is in love with neighbour Audrey who dreams of seeing a real tree, so he decides to travel outside Thneedville to the wasteland beyond that's the home of the Once-ler, the one creature who can tell Ted what happened to the trees and how to bring them back. The Once-ler tells Ted of a man who began cutting down the candy-coloured forest that



used to be, angering a little orange fuzzy guy called The Lorax who spoke for the trees and animals and tried to save them.

Adults will probably find the songs a bit twee, but kids will love the look of this movie (the trees look like big fuzzy lollipops), the humour (the little woodland critters are a lot like the minions from Despicable Me in terms of comic relief) and the sheer glossiness of it all.

On DVD and Blu-Ray 12 January

2012 ★★★★★ ARGO

Action drama, R Certificate

Ben Affleck's certainty of touch in Argo is astonishing, in that it harks back to a bygone age – yes, the glorious seventies – when storytellers were all powerful in the industry, before films had to have numbers on the end of them, preferably not the number one, to secure any kind of distribution deal.

As well as directing himself and co-stars John Goodman, Bryan Cranston and Tate Donovan, Affleck is central to the screen action in this so-bizarre-it's-actually-true tale. He plays Tony Mendez, a CIA agent charged with bringing home safely six Americans trapped in Iran, immediately after the revolution of 1979. As well as the hostages everyone knew about trapped in the US Embassy, there were six officials who got out of the building but were left cowering under the brave protection of the Canadian Ambassador.

How the CIA got them out is the stuff of dramatic adventure, with Mendez masquerading as a film



producer scouting for locations in the Middle East. As if... but it really happened. The race to get them safely beyond the reaches of their Iranian scouts is properly tense, and I learned more about the recent political history of Iran in the first five minutes than in 20 years of watching the news.

If Argo's success once again proves there is a market for movies without accompanying computer wizardry, and encourages more films not franchises to fill the screen, then Ben Affleck can only be congratulated on an extremely impressive creative achievement, never mind the era.

In cinemas from 4 January

TV/Radio Reviews

BBC ENTERTAINMENT

FRIDAY, 21.00

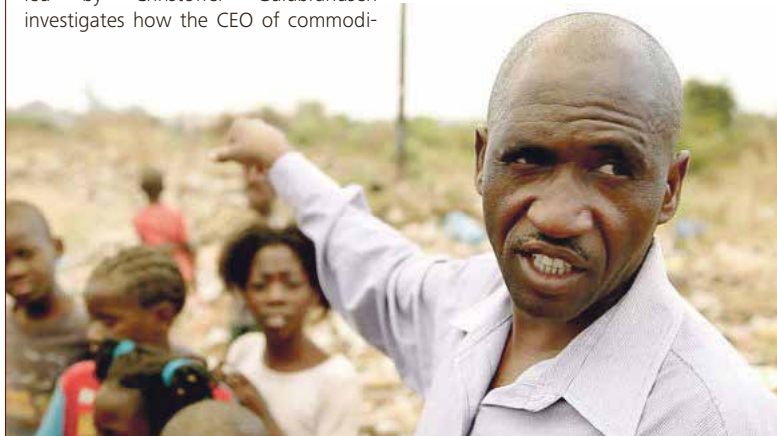


Why Poverty? Stealing Africa

Zambia has huge copper reserves that are making commodities companies like Glencore rich, yet Zambia itself is one of the world's poorest countries. Why is the money – mainly in the form of tax revenue – bypassing Zambia and heading straight into the coffers of cantons in Switzerland?

This week the Why Poverty? team ably led by Christoffer Guldbrandsen investigates how the CEO of commodi-

ties giant Glencore is paying tax in Switzerland rather than in Africa, where the copper mines that generate the company's wealth are located. As a result, the Swiss village of Ruschlikon has more money than it needs, while in Zambia, 60 percent of the population lives on less than \$1 a day and 80 percent are unemployed.



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

SUNDAY, 20.30



Doomsday Preppers: Armageddon Addicts?

People who prepare for the worst are just looking for a purpose, says Jack Seale in his weekly TV review

People need hobbies. Men need hobbies. Lonely men need hobbies. Preppers USA: Surviving Armageddon was ostensibly about "preppers": crackpots who think law and order are about to be splintered by war, rioting or natural disaster, so they've dedicated their lives to anticipating catastrophe.

In reality, it was about extreme hobbyists. Mike, a former soldier, feared adverse weather having been deeply affected by Hurricane Katrina. "They expected somebody to come and save them," he said, choking up, "and nobody did." Mike lives in England, a country that's not vulnerable to 100mph tropical storms nor does it lie below sea-level protected against the sea flooding by dykes.



RTS ESPACE 2

FRIDAY, 21.30



Espace JazzZ with François Lindemann & Friends

Public concert from Studio 15 at Radio Télévision Suisse in Lausanne. Renowned jazz pianist, François Lindemann playing with trumpeter, Jimmy Ferris and Malian saxophonist Fort Fortuna, for the first time in 5 years. Expect cool trad jazz spiced with west African notes.

RTS DEUX

SATURDAY, 22.30



The Dark Ages: An Age of Light

Waldemar Januszczak (photo) lurks in the recesses of Roman catacombs, jabbing excitedly at cryptic symbols. He's a man on a mission. He wants to rehabilitate the reputation of art during the Dark Ages.

He starts with early Christian art, and highlights a fascinating array of subjects, from why the first representations of Jesus were of a blond, fresh-faced,

androgynous young man to why we can refer to Xmas and not be blasphemous.

At times dogmatic – "Art never lies!" – at times chummy – "The mosaic-lovers among you..." – Januszczak is never anything less than illuminating, and his sure-footed direction perfectly matches the subject matter, with a pleasing mix of light and shade.

RTS UN

MONDAY, 18.15



L' épicerie fine de Guy Martin

Ten chefs enter the kitchen, where Monica Galetti and Guy Martin challenge them to make a dish using ingredients from a selection of beef mince, wild mushrooms, an aubergine, red wine, pears, brioche and almonds. They each have just one hour to hold their nerve and show their creativity to the judges. There are some real highs and lows

among this week's invention test dishes. Monica Galetti greets one pudding with a lot of head nodding and mmmm-ing followed by "This tastes wonderful. I'd love Michel to try this!" while another excites guest Bertrand Reymond so much he announces he doesn't just want to eat it, he wants to bathe in it. Thankfully he doesn't do any such thing.



TV/Radio Reviews

RTS DEUX TUESDAY, 19.45

Falcón

Falcón is a moodily melodramatic adaptation of Robert Wilson's thriller. It casts stubby Marton Csokas as Spanish detective Javier Falcón, a troubled guy who never sleeps. He stalks the streets at night and is, of course, irresistible to women. What's his secret? Possibly that he's forever necking a bottle of agua sin gas. But while it's high on atmosphere and Seville looks a treat, the two-part Falcón story falls foul of some bizarre casting –

Emilia Fox and Kerry Fox (no relation) and Bernard Hill are the least likely Spaniards you'll ever see. Its a reliance on the twisted, sadistic violence (sliced eyelid, anyone?) has become a modern crime cliché. Throw in some grisly bullfighting scenes (we are in Spain, after all) and Falcón feels like a gratuitous stomach-turner, an exercise in style over substance.



ON DISPLAY



MUSEUMS

Jewels from the Silk Road

Baur Foundation – This private collection presents 9,000 exquisite works of art acquired by Swiss collector Alfred Baur (1865-1951). Housed in an elegant late 19th-century townhouse, the permanent exhibition includes Chinese imperial ceramics, jade and snuff bottles from the 10th to the 19th centuries as well as Japanese prints. The biggest collection of Far Eastern Art open to the public in Switzerland, the Baur is currently staging a temporary exhibition of precious jewellery from the Silk Road.

China to the Caucasus" features some 200 pieces from the Ghysels Collection. The exhibition leads the visitor on a journey from China to the Caucasus, via Mongolia, Tibet, Nepal, Northern India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asia. These pieces of exceptional quality reveal peoples, civilisations, and cultures from now vanished worlds.

Exhibition runs until March 2013.
Open Tues-Sun 14:00-18:00
8 rue Munier-Romilly, 1206 Geneva
www.collections-baur.ch

"Jewellery from the Roof of the World – From



Torc, bracelets and rings from Pakistan. Silver, glass and vermillion

CNN WEDNESDAY, 22.30

Worthing Smyth Plus

How much more of this self-assured vapid commentary can even vaguely informed people watch. Worthing is, as usual, surrounded by his sycophantic gang of hopelessly unqualified, over coiffured and super waxed side kicking yes people. With all the sincerity of a game show host, billionaire's progeny Smyth examines how poverty could be eliminated if only the rich were more socially aware and responsible.

His clearly uncomfortable trip into the wilds of rural New Jersey to meet with a group of soon-to-be dispossessed farmers who are being foreclosed on by local banks is no more than by rote programming – an increasing trend at CNN. The only redeeming feature of this apologist fest was watching Smyth try to appear unconcerned for his patent shoes as he picked his way through the farmyard.



What if it wasn't just the beef that burned?

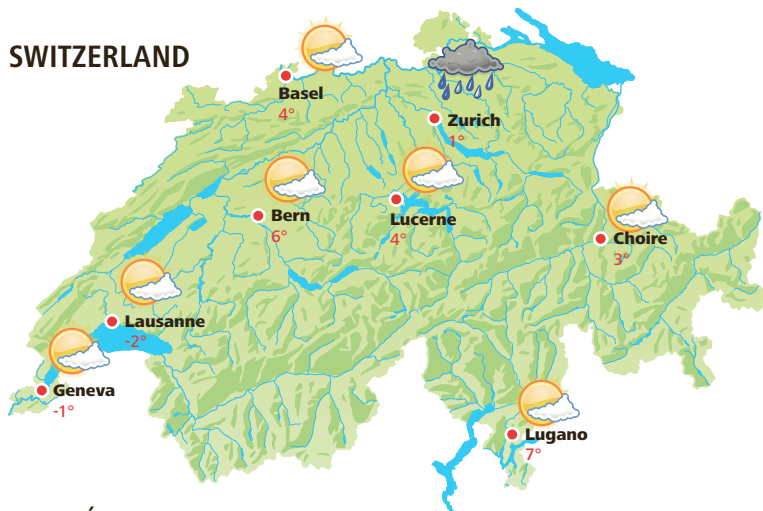
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ARC LÉMANIQUE

THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED
0 - 6°	1 - 8°	1 - 6°	1 - 5°	0 - 5°	-1 - 5°	-1 - 4°
10 - 20%	2 - 8%	5 - 12%	10 - 24%	13 - 26%	22 - 34%	20 - 30%

SKI & SNOW REPORT

Leysin	-1°	Light powder	St-Cergue	-2°	Light powder
Villars	1°	Icy	Les Diablerets	1°	Icy
Les Diablerets	-1°	Risk of avalanches	Portes du Soleil	-1°	Fresh snow
Verbier	1°	Light powder	Les Mosses	-1°	Light powder

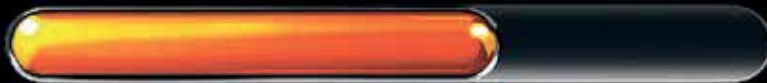


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