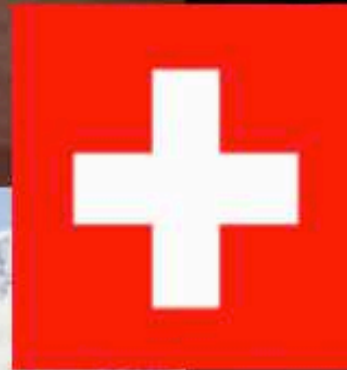


# GETTING TO THE SOURCE

LIVING AND TRANSLATING IN SWITZERLAND



- Grüezi!
- Bonjour!
- Buongiorno!
- Bien di!



# Emma Gledhill

- Born and bred in the UK, translating professionally since 1993
- Living in Switzerland for 20 years – now dual citizen
- BA in German & Music, University of London
  - incl. year abroad in Regensburg
- MA in Translation, University of Surrey
- DipTrans in Dutch-English translation, CloL
- MITI, MCIL, Chartered Linguist





## **Part 1:** **Living in any SL country**

- Benefits
- Key challenges

## **Part 2:** **Living & working in Switzerland**

- Working in Switzerland
- The language landscape
- Cultural aspects



# Benefits

## General

- SL fluency
- Knowledge of systems and cultural references mentioned in your SL texts

## Switzerland

- CH a bit of a mystery
- Language learning abroad focuses on Germany/France/Italy
- Not just an extension of Germany/ France/Italy
- “Militantly” independent, own country



# Keeping your target language fluent and current (1)

- Maintaining your target language skills is critical
- Be(a)ware of “source language creep”
  - Using local SL terms in your TL because they are understood
  - Literal back translations of SL terms
  - When your SL has a “mot juste” for a concept
  - When your SL has proper nouns and/or abbreviations
- Keep up to date with current affairs in your TL country

## Key challenges



## Keeping your target language fluent and current (2)

Ways to keep up with your target language:

- Forums run in your TL
- News sites
- TV, radio, film
- Leisure reading
- Subject material
- Socialise with local TL native speakers – but beware of SL creep



# Keeping your target language fluent and current (3)

In summary:

- Be **AWARE** of the risks to your TL
- Be **SENSITIVE** to TL neologisms you hear
- Active listening



## CPD in your target language

- CPD might focus more on the informal & less on formal events
- Formal CPD in your target language – focus on distance learning
- Missing out on interesting CPD due to geography
  - combine with planned trips
  - plan trips around CPD events

Key challenges – CPD (1)



## CPD in your source language

- Every aspect of your life becomes a form of CPD
- Local CPD in SL → Be imaginative about turning local events into relevant CPD

## Key challenges – CPD (2)



## Key challenges – CPD (3)

In summary:

→ Develop a sensitivity to lifelong learning



# Building networks

- You don't realise how long you've taken to build a network in the country you grew up in
- Can take 15-20 years to build a good network
- Business
  - Business networks
  - Conferences
  - Formal networking events
- Private
  - Hobbies
  - Neighbours, work colleagues, in-laws
  - Motherhood – schools
- How friendly are the locals? Hospitable or keep themselves to themselves?

**Look to make friends – not to win business immediately**



## Part 2

### Living & working in Switzerland

- Working in Switzerland
- The language landscape
- Cultural aspects



# General

- Switzerland is not in the EU or EEA
  - > Work permits
  - > Legalities
- Brexit – Swiss government ‘Mind the Gap’ strategy
  - > Transition
  - > Post transition

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/dea/en/home/verhandlungen-offene-themen/offene-themen/brexit.html>

## The World of Work



# Employment (1)

- Different legislation from home country
- Longer official working week
- Relatively few worker protections
- Flip side – theoretically ease of firing makes for greater ease of hiring
- Disciplinary procedures may be less formalised
- Long notice periods

# The World of Work



## Employment (2)

- Get your foot in the door
- No salary shown in job ads
- Difficulty of employment over age 45
- AHV/ALV – state pension, unemployment insurance, source tax
- Generally more informal work dress code
- Lunches, importance of interpersonal relations
- Work/life balance – “POETS” day

## The World of Work



# Freelancing (1)

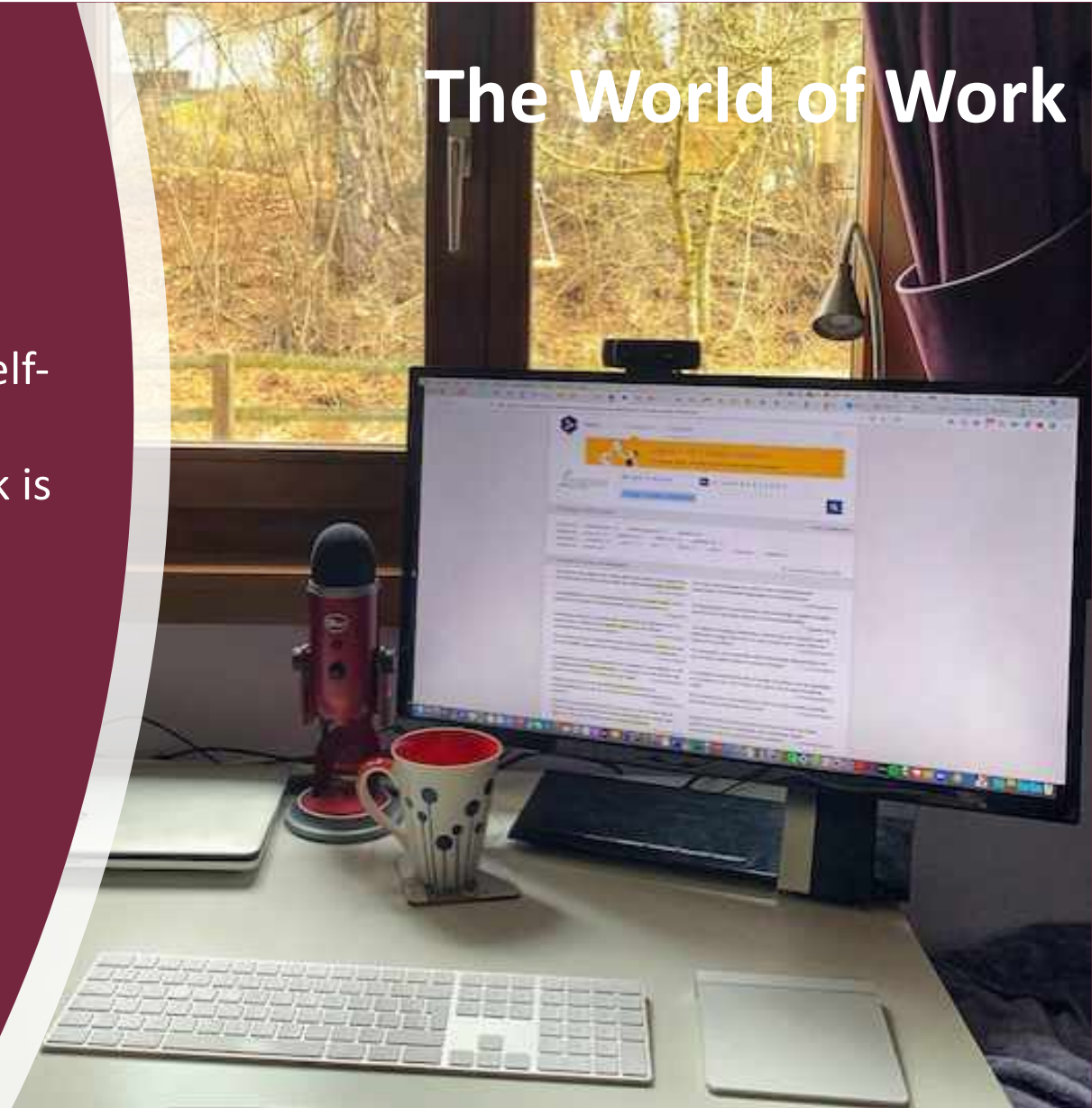
- Sole trader
  - Optional to register in commercial register
  - SVA determines whether you are self-employed, not you
  - Proof of min. 3 clients, business risk is yours, own marketing

Checklist (canton Zurich)\*:

[https://www.svazurich.ch/pdf/Checkliste\\_se.pdf](https://www.svazurich.ch/pdf/Checkliste_se.pdf)

\*Remember it's a federal country so YMMV!

## The World of Work



## Freelancing (2)

- Limited company
  - Same benefits of separation of legal entities as in UK,
  - Limited liability
  - Employer's & employee's contributions
  - CHF 20k min investment (CHF 10k can be in kind)
  - "Off the shelf" companies are rare and expensive compared to UK

## The World of Work



## Freelancing (3)

- For both
  - VAT registration mandatory over 100k turnover
  - Exchange rate risk – GB/EU clients won't pay in CHF
  - Accountancy costs – finding a good accountant
  - ALL COSTS higher – expect to pay standard professional hourly rate CHF 125-180, lawyers CHF 200-300

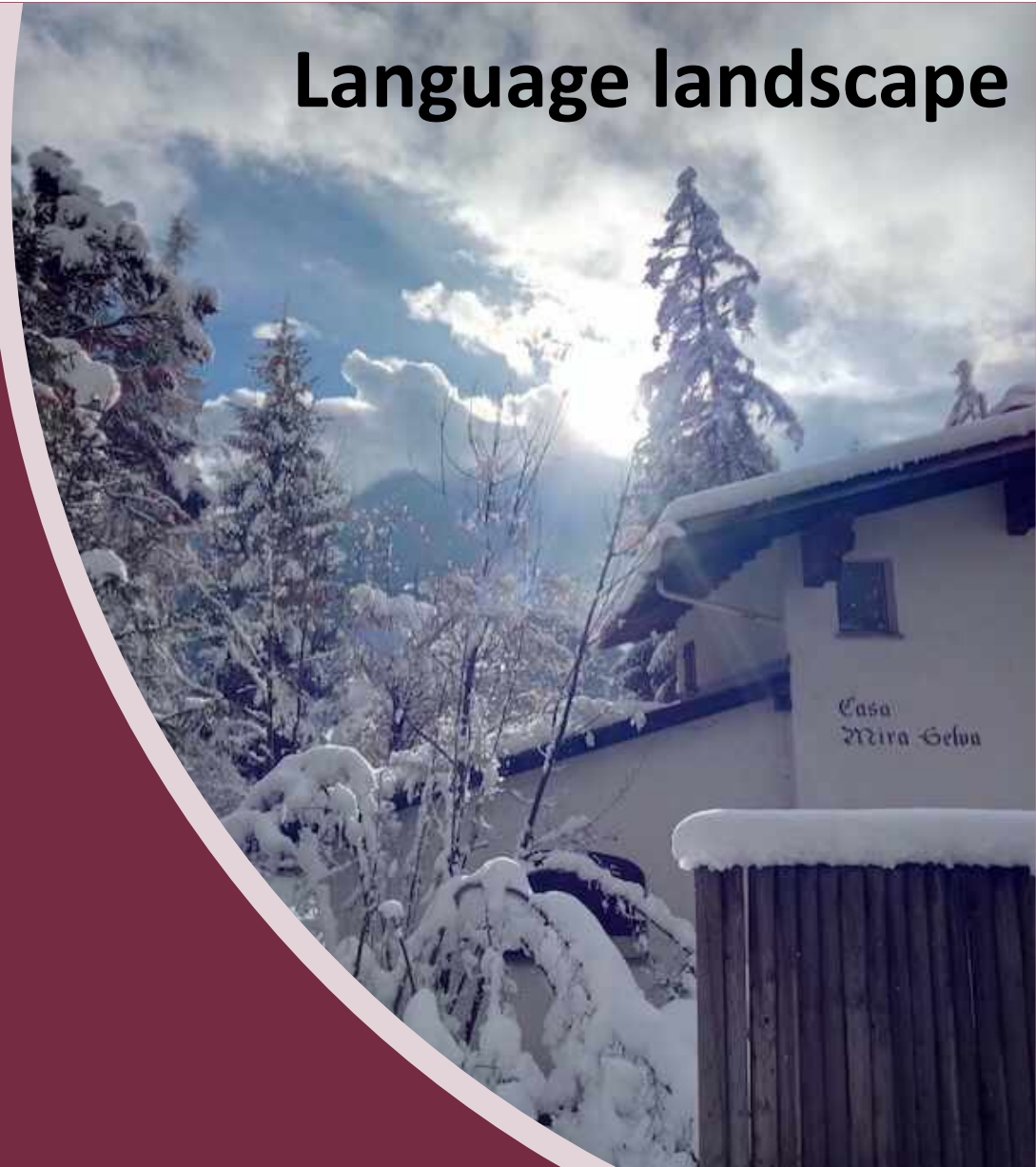
## The World of Work



## General (1)

- Multilingual country
  - Multilingual towns – Biel/Bienne, Freiburg/Fribourg
  - Multilingual cantons e.g. Bern, Fribourg, Valais (all 2), Graubünden (3)

## Language landscape

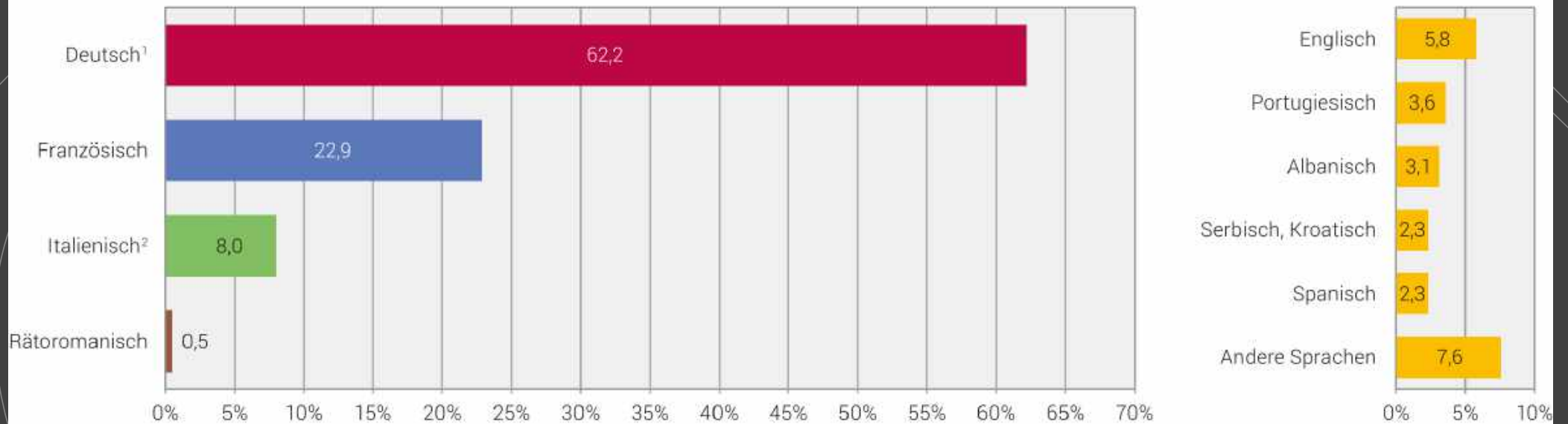




**Where are the various languages spoken?**

# Languages spoken in Switzerland

## Als Hauptsprachen genannte Sprachen, 2018



<sup>1</sup> oder Schweizerdeutsch

<sup>2</sup> oder Tessiner/Bündneritalienischer Dialekt

Ständige Wohnbevölkerung, die in Privathaushalten lebt. Die Befragten konnten mehrere Sprachen angeben.

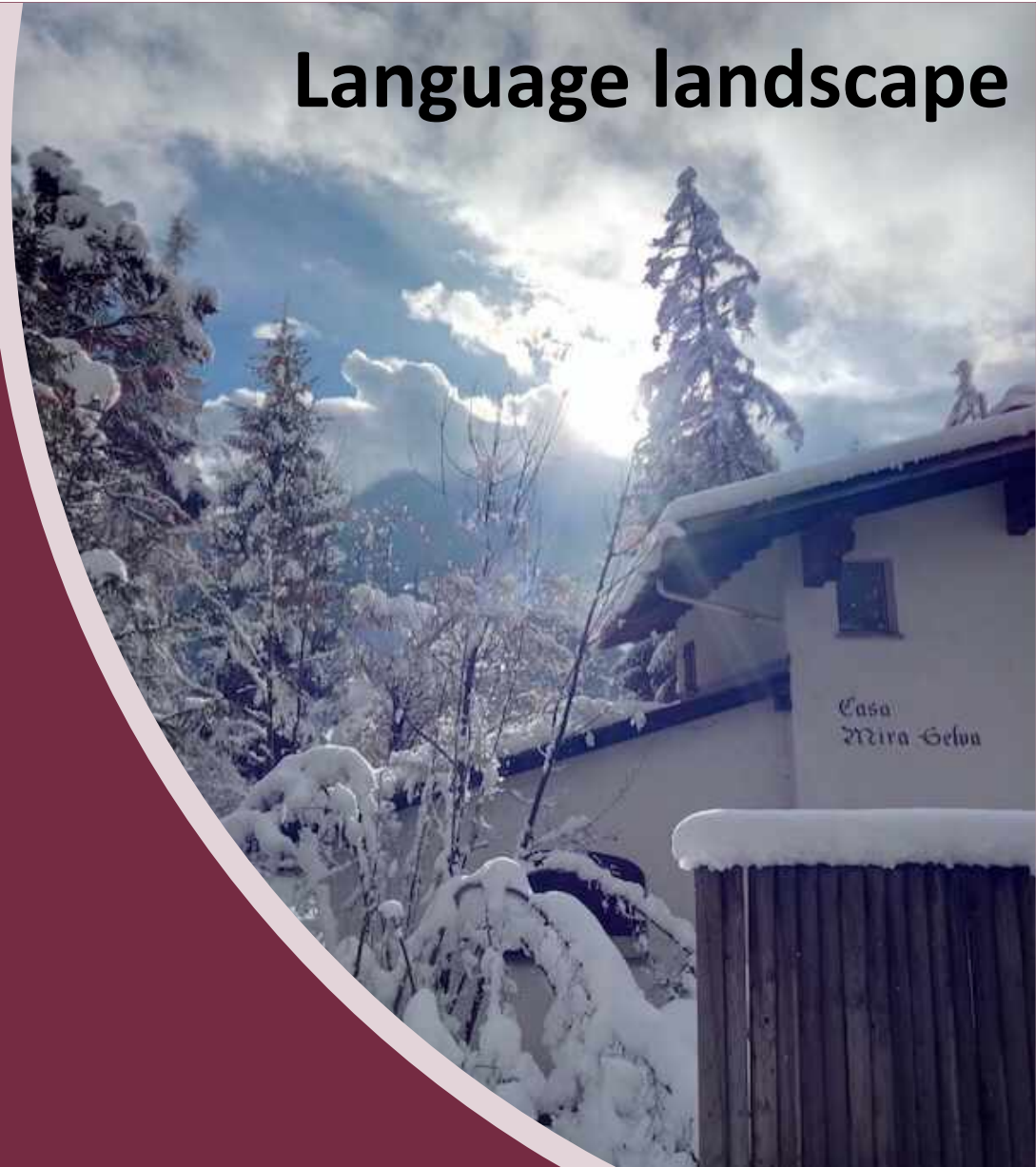
Quelle: BFS – Strukturerhebung (SE)

© BFS 2020

## General (1)

- Multilingual country
  - Multilingual towns – Biel/Bienne, Freiburg/Fribourg
  - Multilingual cantons e.g. Bern, Fribourg, Valais (all 2), Graubünden (3)
- Ease of moving from one language area to another
  - Röstigraben – German/French boundary
  - Flims/Laax/Falera

## Language landscape



Röstigraben —



## General (2)

- Expectation of multilingualism
  - Common to hear different languages
  - Speaking a different language (national or English) doesn't mark you out as foreign
- Multilingual skills in business
  - Most professionals have G/F/E as minimum taught in school
  - You're nothing special if you "only" speak 3 languages
  - Even people who have not been through tertiary education can usually manage local + English + poss. family language

## Language landscape



# National languages - German

- Swiss German
  - Chüechlichäschtli
  - Helveticisms e.g. Pikettdienst, Platten, Bewilligung
  - Adoption of French words – Velo, Cheminee, Lavabo
  - Mix of languages – “Merci vielmal”
  - High German = Schriftdeutsch (written language)
- Pride in being NOT GERMANY
  - “Der grosse Kanton zum Norden”
  - Prefer to speak English over High German
  - Usage of Du vs Sie
- Pride in own dialect, own valley



Language landscape

# National languages - Romansh

- Minority lang. – native 0.5% population, ca. 30k
- Spoken only in Graubünden in SE Switzerland
- Granted national language status in 1938
- 5 dialects
  - Sursilvan – Vorderrhein valley W of Chur, between Trin & Oberalp pass
  - Sutsilvan – Hinterrhein valley S of Chur, between Thusis & San Bernadino pass
  - Surmiran – Albula valley/pass
  - Putér – Upper Engadine around St Moritz
  - Vallader – Lower Engadine around Scuol/Val Müstair
- Dialects are not necessarily mutually intelligible
  - casa – chesa – chasa
- Rumantsch Grischun



Language landscape





## Nevana ed ils siat nanins

Ei era inagada in retg ed ina regina. Els vivevan en in grond e bi casti. In di d'uniern seseva la regina sper la finiastra e surcuseva. Mintgaton mirava ella viado co las scrotas da neiv saltavan per l'aria entuorn e curdavan la finala per tiara. Cheu schabegia ei ch'ella sefora en in det e treis gross daguots da saung crudan ella neiv sil parsiel. Vesend ils treis tacs cotschens el bi alv dalla neiv sper il rom ner dalla finiastra suspira la regina: «O, jeu vess schi bugen in affon che fuss alvs sco la neiv, che vess vestas cotschnas sco il saung e cavels ners sco il rom dà quella finiastra.»

E pren mira, buca ditg suenten ha ella survegniu ina poppa. Quella era alva sco la neiv, veva vestas cotschnas sco il

saung e cavels resch ners gest sco il rom dalla finiastra. Il retg e la regina eran fetg ventireivels d'aver survegniu quei affon ed han dau num ad el Nevana. Mo cuort suenten ei la regina vegnida fetg malsaina ed ei morta. Suenten in onn ha il retg maridau in'otra dunna e quella ei daventada regina. Ella era fetg biala, mo fetg loscha. Mintga damaun stev'ella uras sper in spieghel misterius, e mintga damaun dumandava ella quel:

«Spieghel rodund, ti spieghel rodund, tgi ei la pli biala sigl entir mund?»

E mintga damaun rispundevo il spieghel:

«Dunna regina, regina furtina, la pli biala eis ti, quel sai jeu da dir.»

La regina era leda e cuntenta da quella risposta, pertgei ch'ella saveva ch'il spieghel ditg adina la verdad.

Denton ein ils onns vargai e Nevana ei carschida e daventada ina biala matta. Ella era schizun pli biala che la regina. Ina damaun ha la regina puspei dumandau il spieghel:

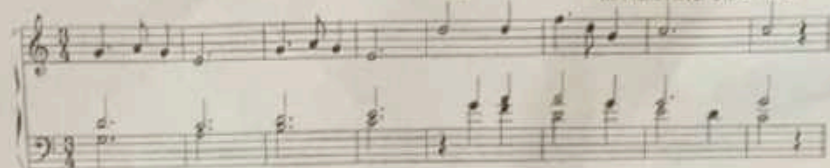
«Spieghel rodund, ti spieghel rodund, tgi ei la pli biala sigl entir mund?»

Il spieghel ha rispundi:

«Dunna regina, eis fetg bial'auc adina, mo aunc melli ga pli biala che ti, ei la Nevana ch'ei er cheu el casti.»

## Clara notg

T. Florian Camathias  
M. Franz Xaver Gruber 1818



Clara notg, de Nadal! Giu dal tron celestial  
Biala notg de Nadal! Bethlehem aud'ual  
Sontga notg de Nadal! Feigl de Diu immortal

eis vegnius affon divin, In pursepsen o car Bambin  
aunghels gloria Diu cantar, ils pasturs van per mirar  
eis per nus vegnius carstgaun, Christus tonschas a nus il maun

Has per tgina vuliu, Has per tgina vuliu  
il Salvader dil mund, il Salvader dil mund  
gidas enta parvis, gidas enta parvis

## Clara Notg

Clara notg de Nadal!  
Giu dal tron celestial  
eis vegnius, affon divin,  
in pursepsen, o car bambin,  
has per tgina vuliu,  
has per tgina vuliu!

Biala notg de Nadal!  
Bethlehem aud'ual  
aunghels gloria Diu cantar,  
ils pasturs van per mirar  
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Feigl de Diu immortal  
eis per nus vegnius carstgaun.  
Christus, tonschas a nus il maun  
gidas enta parvis,  
gidas enta parvis.

## Status & use of English

- Not an official national language but (almost) universal capability
- Language teaching in schools – which 2<sup>nd</sup> language?
- English as lingua franca between language regions
- English is cool
- Widespread use of English loan words & phrases in German, incl. sports commentaries
- Swinglish

Diccon Bewes:

- <https://www.dicconbewes.com/2010/07/16/an-introduction-to-swinglish/>
- “Do you speak English? A little” = a lot!



**Language landscape**

# Lebensqualität in Zeiten des «Social Distancings»

## Delivery Service und Take away

Wir möchten in Zeiten des Social Distancings für unsere Bevölkerung einen Beitrag zur Erhaltung der Lebensqualität leisten. Wer auch in dieser Situation nicht auf Essen aus dem Restaurant verzichten möchte, dem werden die gewünschten Gerichte – in dieser besonderen Situation ohne Aufpreis – direkt nach Hause geliefert. Der Lieferservice kann über die Mobile Ordering Funktion in der INSIDE LAAX App bestellt werden.

Nebst diesem digitalen Weg bieten auch diverse Restaurants in der Destination einen bequemen Delivery Service und /oder Take away per Telefon an. Die entsprechenden Betriebe werden auf der INSIDE LAAX App aufgeführt und regelmässig aktualisiert.

## Lieferung von Grundnahrungsmitteln nach Hause

Wir haben festgestellt, dass das Bedürfnis, Grundnahrungsmittel nach Hause bestellen zu können, in dieser Situation stark zugenommen hat. Deshalb werden wir mit lokalen Partnern auch dies über die INSIDE LAAX App möglich machen.

Die aktuellsten Informationen zum Dienstleistungskatalog und zur Anbieterliste werden regelmässig auf der INSIDE LAAX App sowie auf der Webseite [www.laax.com](http://www.laax.com) aktualisiert. Hier geht's zum Download der INSIDE LAAX App: <https://www.flimslaax.com/inside-laax-app>

Stay safe.

*Flims*

LAAX

Flims Laax Falera

## Responsibility

- Being responsible for yourself
- Child forgets packed lunch ≠ mum forgot to put it in
- Workmen – less H&S, less litigious society



## Commitment...

- Verbal contracts
- Handshake
- Contracts taken VERY seriously

## Culture



## ...being organised

- Social commitments as important as business obligations
- Stick to plans
  - If you say you will attend – turn up!
- Punctuality
  - If you say you will attend, turn up – on time!
- Extrapolates to soundness of character



Culture

# Honesty

- An assumption of honesty is still ingrained in society
- Lost wallet will be handed in with money intact – but you still need to apply common sense esp. in tourist areas
- Conflict of interest - assumed you'll do the right thing
- MPs also company directors
- Let you walk off with valuable goods without paying up front

Culture



# Noise

- Quiet Sundays & bank holidays
  - → practically no Sunday trading, no car washing, no laundry
- Lunchtimes
- 22.00 – 07.00

# Culture



# Consensus rules OK

- Political system
- Business buy-in

→ Slow to adopt but fast execution  
e.g. flat-rate Internet, Broadband



# People power

- Bottom-up politics
- Federal system
- Most important political unit is local community, then canton, then federation
- Referenda 3 times a year
  - → informed population because your vote matters

**Culture**



# The Environment

- Environmental issues matter to everyone, not just Green party
- Rubbish bags
- Recycling
- Hydro-electricity accounts for around 56%, only 2% electricity consumed & 3% generated in Switzerland comes from fossil fuels\*
- Huge usage of public transport – clean, reliable, punctual, integrated, cheap for regular use

\*Source: Swiss Federal Office of Energy

# Culture



## Social customs

- Here are some local social customs:
- Must look people in the eye when clinking glasses
- Shaking hands\*
- 3 kisses\*
- Taking leave of everyone can take half an hour

\*Pre-Coronavirus, of course!

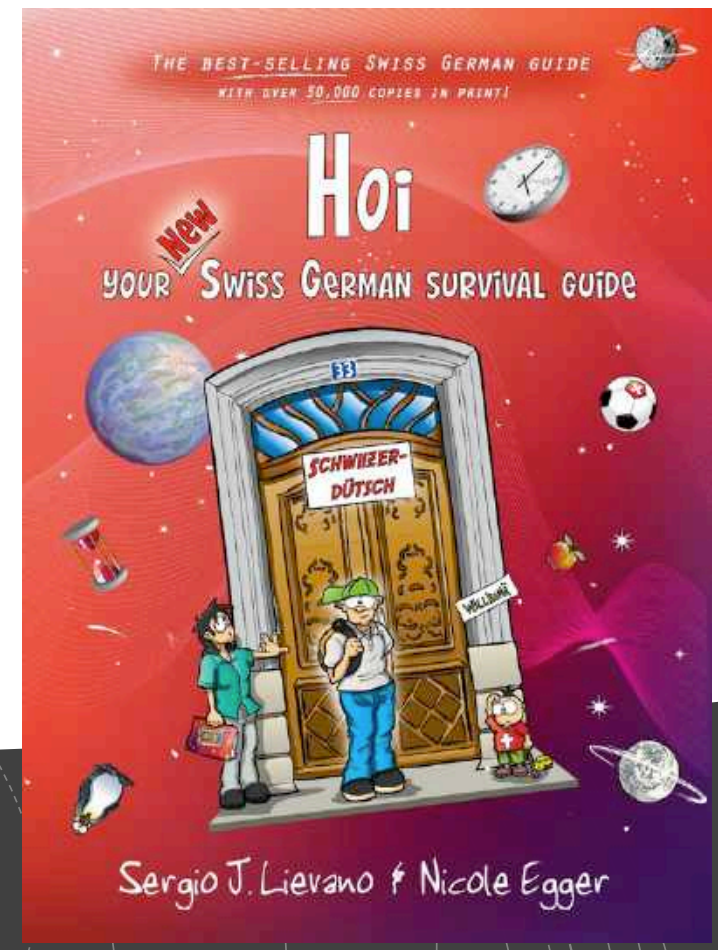
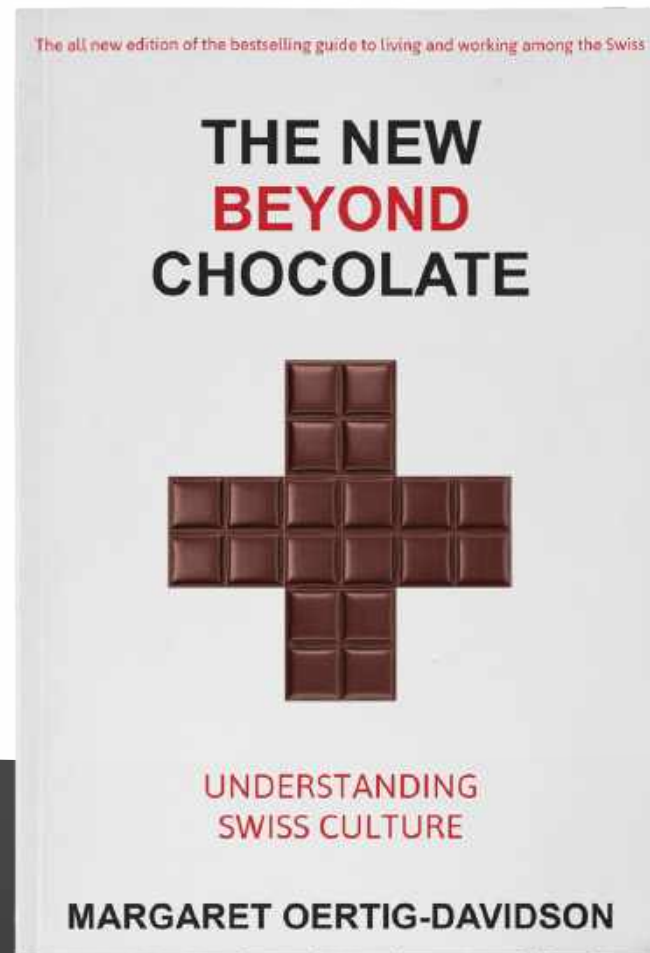
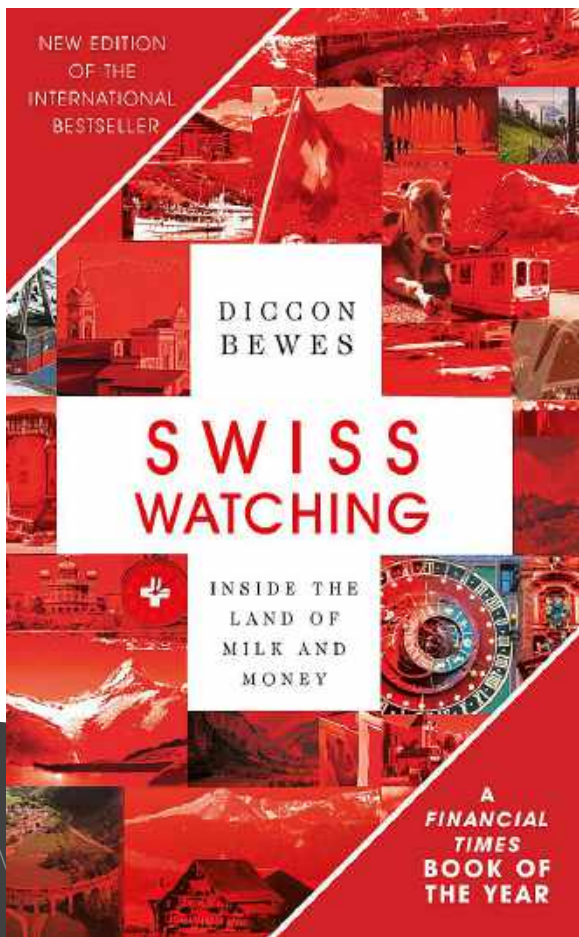
## Culture



# Useful Links

- Swiss authorities online  
[www.ch.ch](http://www.ch.ch)
- Swiss news in English  
[www.swissinfo.ch](http://www.swissinfo.ch)  
[www.lenews.ch](http://www.lenews.ch)  
[www.worldradio.ch](http://www.worldradio.ch)
- Forum  
[www.englishforum.ch](http://www.englishforum.ch)





Further reading

# THANK YOU

LIVING AND TRANSLATING IN SWITZERLAND

[WWW.SHIPWRITE.CH](http://WWW.SHIPWRITE.CH)

[HELLO@SHIPWRITE.CH](mailto:HELLO@SHIPWRITE.CH)

