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Volunteers drive revelers home

Nearly 24,000 people took advantage of the "Red Nose" service during the Christmas and New Year period to get home safely after celebrating. Voluntary drivers take people home so that they are not tempted to get behind the wheel when drunk. The service is free.

The Red Nose organisation announced that 23,853 people had used its service between December 9 and January 1. A total of 11,157 trips were made, while the distance covered reached 460,349 kilometres. The operation called on 7,771 volunteers.

New Year's Eve was the busiest time. The busiest volunteers were those in the northern canton of Aargau, while in French-speaking Switzerland Geneva made most use of the service. The Red Nose Operation first started in Quebec. The French-speaking canton of Jura was the first to adopt it in Switzerland, in 1990.

swissinfo

Switzerland faces a lack of new GPs

Fewer and fewer young doctors in Switzerland are choosing to become general practitioners. If the trend continues, the decline in the number of GPs could have a serious effect on health care.

To better inform the general public of the situation, the association of GPs has launched a campaign demanding a change to health policy that encourages more students to embrace the profession.

Only ten per cent of medicine students plan on careers as family doctors. Meanwhile, half of Switzerland's GPs are expected to retire in 2016, and by 2021, it is expected that 75 per cent will have retired.

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Foreign families trust Swiss boarding schools

Switzerland has a long tradition of boarding schools. Today they attract mainly foreign students whose families appreciate this elite form of education. There are some 100,000 students enrolled in private Swiss schools, according to the Swiss Federation of Private Schools (SFPS). They come from all over - in particular Russia, Germany, France, Britain and the United States, as well as Switzerland.

Within the boarding schools, about 80 per cent of the students are foreign. In total there are about 110 boarding schools in Switzerland. The range of programmes and school settings is vast, with the 'right' programme for every child - international baccalaureate, British A-levels, German Abitur. Switzerland's multilingualism is another attraction. Foreign families trust Switzerland as a top educational country.

In addition, the location in the middle of Europe, the safety and stability of the country and the beautiful landscape add to the appeal.

The chance to get familiar with other cultures is important for many families, who appreciate it when schools offer a large selection of cultural and sports activities, as well as the opportunity for the children to travel.

The demand for boarding schools is not so high among Swiss families. They generally find the desired educational opportunities closer to home - and these cost much less than a boarding school. Swiss boarding school fees range from SFr20,000— 90,000 per year.

However, one-year and summer courses remain popular with Swiss students, who might combine the opportunity with intensive language learning in another part of the country.

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Workers happy with their jobs

A survey has found that 94 per cent of employees in Switzerland are satisfied with their job situation - and that 35 per cent are in fact very satisfied. Only six per cent said that they were dissatisfied with their jobs. It seems that women in particular are happy at work: 37 per cent said they were very satisfied in comparison with 33 per cent of the men.

As for the workload, 64 per cent of those questioned said it was just right.

Swiss salaries scored well: 85 per cent said they were satisfied with their income - and 20 per cent said very satisfied. Just 15 per cent indicated that they should be earning more. The managers of Switzerland also rated highly. While nine per cent of the workers said they were dissatisfied with their boss, 47 per cent said they were satisfied and the remaining 44 per cent said very much so.

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