

ISABELLE
CHALIGNÉ

NEUTRAL FRONTIERS

1. Excerpt "The referendum that changed everything"
2. Testimonies on border abolition (1-3)
 - A. Artifact 1: Pledge of Neutrality and Pacifism
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Institute of Swiss Studies
Bern



Excerpt from "Le Matin"
newspaper (web Article)

"The referendum that changed
everything"

In Switzerland between 2014 and 2020 there were two significant referendums proposed by the UDC (Swiss People's Party) which encouraged strict limits on emigration. In 2014, the first referendum passed with a slim majority of 50.3%.

In 2020 however, a new referendum, echoing the Brexit vote, was rejected by over 60% of the population. During the next 20 years the Socialist party and the Greens have become more dominant due to the millennial and Generation Z vote. A highly mediatized scandal in 2038 known as the Odhiambo Case, when a Kenyan family of immigrants were extradited and mistreated by border police, was the turning point in immigration laws and its policing. One of the scandal's outcomes was the "End Border Policing" initiative; it was passed in 2040 with 65% of the federal vote. Switzerland was the first country to take this bold decision and so far no other European country has followed suit.

Since then the Helvetic Confederation has strengthened its economic ties with the European Union. However the strong influx of skilled and essential workers, as well as the growing number of Swiss goods transit centres, have become highly controversial. These are challenging times for the Swiss nation who are obliged to adapt to their rapidly changing labour market while still trying to preserve their national identity.



Section 2: Testimonies on border abolition

Name/Surname: Dr. Franz Neuberg
Marital status: Single
Contact: drneuberg@zurich.hospital.ch
Profession: Cardiologist/ Teacher at University of Zürich

Are you a Swiss national? Yes ☐ No ☒

When and why did you move to Switzerland? (If you are a Swiss national please disregard this question)

I moved to Switzerland 7 years ago soon after the changes in border policing. I am originally German, I grew up in Hamburg and studied to be a cardiologist at the MSH (Medical School Hamburg), I then completed a 2 years of training in a private clinic in Hamburg before moving to Zürich Hospital to finish my training. For me, it was an easy decision, I didn't have a family yet, I was eager to find an interesting position in one of Switzerland's excellently equipped hospitals and to make a good living. The fact that Switzerland is a German speaking country with a high demand for medical professionals at the time also made it an obvious choice for me.

Do you consider yourself well integrated into Swiss society? Explain how. (e.g: language, education, work, social activities, political involvement) If you are Swiss, please explain what you believe to be defining elements of Swiss society and/or culture.

I do consider myself well integrated in Zurich. As a native German speaker, I found it easy to learn Swiss German which is super important to fit in socially. It meant that when I first arrived, people were more open at work. However in recent years, due to the cosmopolitan mix in the city I find myself speaking more and more English.

I currently teach at the University of Zürich part time which I really enjoy and continue to work at the Zürich main hospital where I have made some of my closest friends and where I met my partner, who is Swiss.

On my days off I like to play at my local tennis club where I am a member and when I have days off I sometimes go skiing. I joined a local society, called the Conscious Living Society, which was encouraged by the Swiss authorities when I first arrived. There I learnt about the strict recycling rules in the city and I continued going to their activities with my partner in order to learn more about small gestures we can make to live more sustainably.

I do not really take part in political activities as I am too busy with work. Taking the Pledge of Neutrality and Pacifism fits into my philosophy and I still try to stay up to date with new laws and regulations.

Has the removal of border policing impacted your work in Switzerland? If so, how?

I moved a year after the law had changed and back then there was a huge demand for medical professionals, especially in specialised fields like cardiologys since there weren't enough Swiss medical graduates. Now the field is becoming a bit more saturated due to a huge influx in foreign medics but there are still many opportunities in the medical field. I find myself teaching many transfer courses for foreign students and highly qualified doctors alike so that they comply with the Swiss medical standards.



Section 2: Testimonies on border abolition

Name/Surname: Mrs Aleba Fadiga
Marital status: Widowed
Contact: alebafadiga@gmail.com
Profession: Package sorter at Goods Transit Center 04

Are you a Swiss national? Yes No

When and why did you move to Switzerland? (If you are a Swiss national please disregard this question)

I moved to Switzerland just over a year ago. I flew to Geneva from Milan to Geneva. I was looking to find a better paid job and trying to find a good place to educate my children who are 3 and 7 years old. I am originally from Congo where the war is terrible and where I lost my husband. I spent 3 years in near Milan working as a cleaning lady but I felt unhappy there and made few friends. Italy is having a tough time and the people were not very welcoming.

Do you consider yourself well integrated into Swiss society? Explain how. (e.g: language, education, work, social activities, political involvement) If you are Swiss, please explain what you believe to be defining elements of Swiss society and/or culture.

I am trying to integrate but I have been in Switzerland for a short time and I wonder if I will ever really completely fit in here. When I first arrived, I was given a complex set of integration forms. I was immediately signed up for French classes since it is mandatory to have an A2 language level in one of the 3 Swiss national languages. The class was given in English to a class of 20 people. I had to pay 35 CHF per month for it, the rest was subsidised by the government. I found the class difficult because my English is not so good. The teacher was strict but helpful. I still struggle communicating with many people but I am slowly getting better and I manage to get by. My daughter is already picking up French at school and she is already starting to help me improve my French.

I am a practicing Muslim and I sometimes get strange looks in the street when wearing my headscarf (I don't wear the full burka). People don't really shout insults like they did in Italy but they often look away or give me judging looks.

I live in an apartment block near Geneva's train station with other foreigners just like me who are also working at the good transit centers, in construction, plumbing, things like that. I don't meet real Swiss people to talk to. But sometimes the manager at the goods transit center invites us staff to a Swiss evening like how to cook fondue. The one about Swiss history was interesting but I still don't quite understand how the country came together. The Swiss chocolate evening was the best as the manager allowed us to bring our kids.

Immigrants like me are only allowed to vote locally and I haven't voted yet. It frightens me a bit but I think soon I will have to take part so I will make more of an effort. I have long working hours at the centre and when I get home in the evening I do my best to make sure my kids do their homework. One thing that made me sad was taking the Pledge of Neutrality and Pacifism. I understand what it's trying to do, but I feel very strongly about the current dictatorship and civil war in Congo and I wish I could do more to help my relatives who are still there.

Has the removal of border policing impacted your work in Switzerland? If so, how?

When I first arrived in Switzerland I tried to find a cleaning job as I did in Italy but it was impossible to find. Because there are now no border controls it was easier to find a job at one of the goods transit centres. This job has given me a good life. The open border has given me a job and given my kids a shot at a better life. But I am worried about the future as the open borders mean that too many other workers are coming looking for work and this means that our pay is likely to go down next year.



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Pledge of Neutrality and Pacifism

Art. 2a LF

A.

n° : 9123678A

Ref. : PNP- 2AERNV6N03

Migrationsamt
Berninastrasse 45
8090 Zürich



Madam Aleba Fadiga
Sustenstrasse 9
8048 Zürich

This signed document certifies that **Madam Aleba Fadiga** residing at **Sustenstasse 9, 8048 Zürich** abides by Article 2A of the Swiss Federal Constitution.

The Pledge of Neutrality and Pacifism is mandatory for any Swiss national, resident or company operating on Swiss soil.

By signing this paper the subject accepts and will conform to Swiss neutrality. They will not engage in any military or political conflicts between any other state or nation with the exception of internal political conflicts in the Helvetic Confederation. Companies who are not registered as Swiss must abide by Article 2a and 2b when operating on Swiss soil.

By signing this document the subject also accepts that any kind of protests must be pacifist in nature. Violence of any kind with exception of *Article 7 on Self-Defence and Protection of the Vulnerable* is punitive by law.

Name, Surname or Company Name of the subject: FADIGA Aleba

Signature, date and place:

Zürich, Feb 2042



Step 1.

Trucks and vans from all over the world arrive at the center to drop off the packages

Step 2.

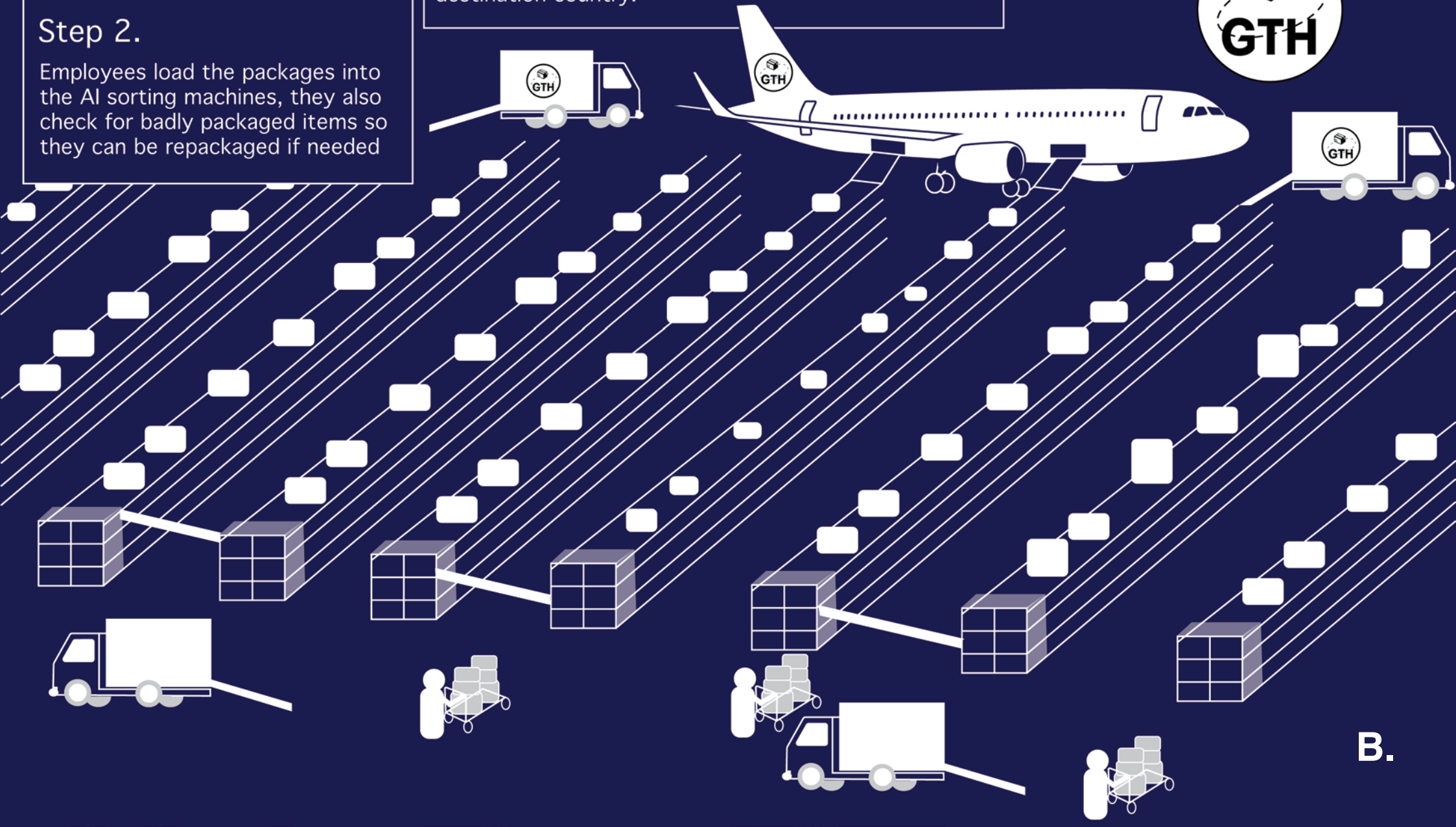
Employees load the packages into the AI sorting machines, they also check for badly packaged items so they can be repackaged if needed

Step 3.

The packages are sorted by country, weight and fragility. A final scanner checks for radioactive or explosive material and stamped with the GDH logo, the packages are sent via GTH vans or planes to the destination country.

GOODS TRANSIT HUB

Largest employer in
Switzerland





Section 2: Testimonies on border abolition

Name/Surname: Mr Thomas Zweiferli
Marital status: Married
Contact: zweiferlithomas@creditsuisse.ch
Profession: Investment Banker at Credit Suisse

Are you a Swiss national? Yes No

When and why did you move to Switzerland? (If you are a Swiss national please disregard this question)

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Do you consider yourself well integrated into Swiss society? Explain how. (e.g: language, education, work, social activities, political involvement) If you are Swiss, please explain what you believe to be defining elements of Swiss society and/or culture.

I believe the Swiss army is a defining point of Swiss identity. In my case, I grew up in St Gallen like the 5 generations before me and received my maturité there. However I wasn't very studious as a teenager, I was only interested in competitive sports and spending time outdoors. Soon after my exams I spent a year doing my military service which was mandatory for men at the time. I believe it has recently become an option for Swiss women. I stayed on longer though as I enjoyed it so much and even cons making it my career. I consider my army training to be part of my education as it taught me discipline and dedication which I use in my everyday life. It taught me how to get on with people from many very different backgrounds and allowed me to make strong friendships with men from all around Switzerland. I believe the army is an important unifying factor in our country especially since we have 3 different national languages!

Sport is very important for the Swiss. Winter sports, the mountains and just spending time outdoors is so important for us. This is certainly the case for me, but I may be biased as there is not a week-end when I don't go cycling in the countryside or skiing in the mountains. Sometimes I go bring my family to watch world cup races in Wengen or I follow our favourite Swiss athletes on TV during the Winter Olympics. Ice hockey is also a big deal, many cantons have competitive teams and my colleagues consider it a little tradition to invite our clients to matches if they are interested.

I think the Swiss people are pretty open-minded and accept diverse cultures. Also as Switzerland has historically always been a neutral country, I think this has made the Swiss people peace-loving and always keen to do anything to avoid physical conflict. Sometimes I think they take this too far and should take a firmer stand when minorities upset the status quo.

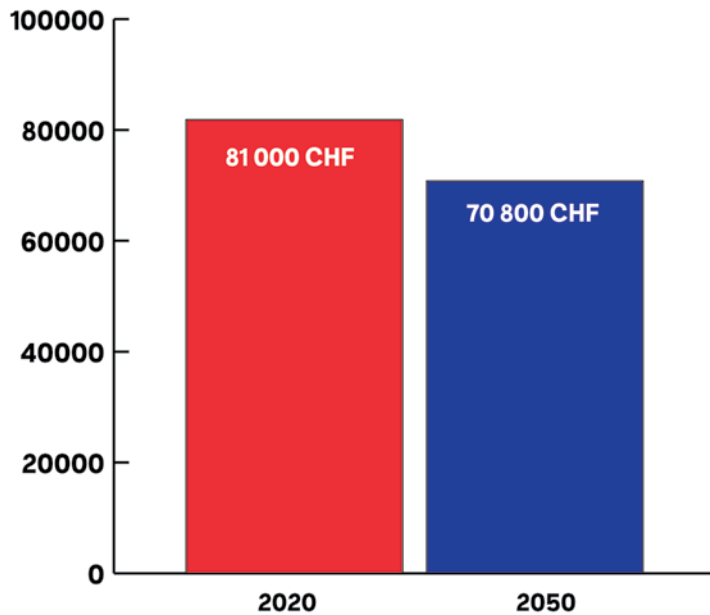
Has the removal of border policing impacted your work in Switzerland? If so, how?

The initiative took me aback even though I suppose it's to be expected in 2040. Crédit Suisse staff has become increasingly diverse. Some of my most recent hires are foreign, mostly Europeans because our employees need to speak German. Due to the increase in foreigners, English is the lingua franca in all multinational firms in Switzerland and I now only speak Swiss German with a few top executives for very confidential conversations. The change in border controls has led to a boom in goods transfer centers which are yielding high profits, but I consider this a bubble which may soon pop. The large influx of white collar foreign workers often means that the quality of life has gone down for your average Swiss and it is putting a lot of stress on our social security system.



Section 3: Graphs (miscellaneous)

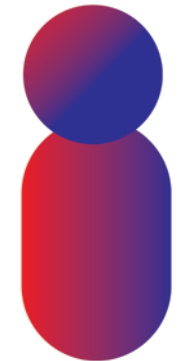
Median Salary (CHF)



Top 3 Employers in Switzerland



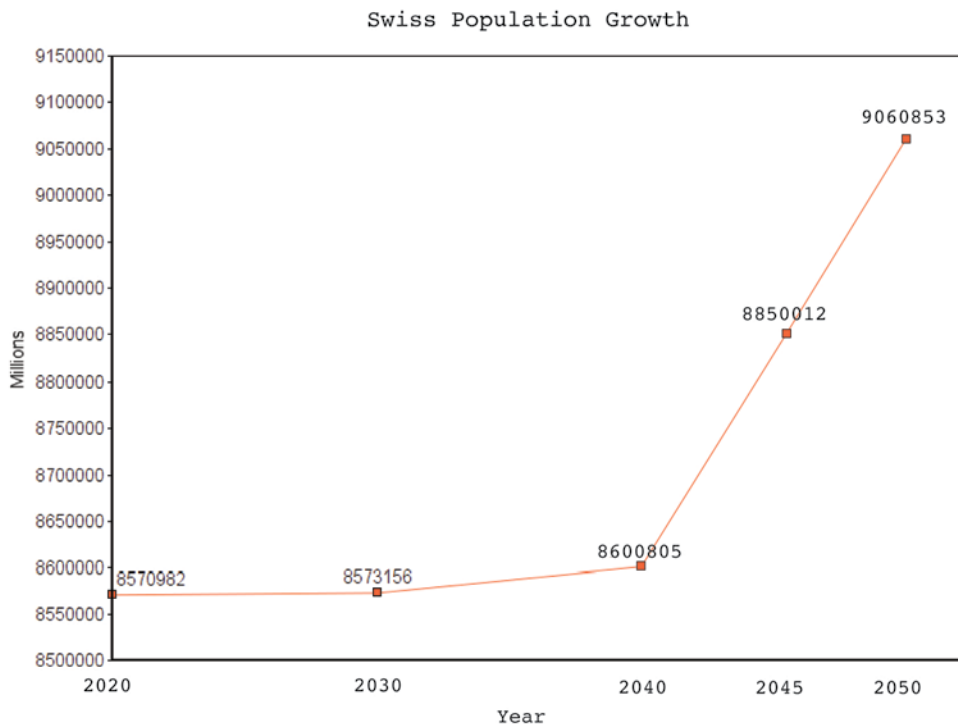
GTH - 150 000
(transport/shipping)



Migros - 90 000
(retail/supermarket)



Novartis - 81 000
(pharmaceuticals)



Job Competitvity Ratio
(Admitted per no of applicants)

1
12
2020

1
17
2040

1
25
2050