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THE SWISS RECEPTION OF HUNGARIAN REFUGEES IN 1956

After the suppression of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution by the Soviets, some two hundred thousand Hungarian refugees came to the West. In proportion to its territory and population, Switzerland hosted the greatest number among them.

The study summarises what the Swiss authorities did in order to secure the reception of the refugees, the ways in which the local society reacted to the crisis, and the results that were yielded by the efforts. The conclusion of the author is that while the Swiss response perfectly fits into the general policies of the West, some local characteristics can also be grasped. He regards as the chief feature of success Cold War opposition and the determined governmental will which derived therefrom.

Alongside the results of international, Swiss and Hungarian scholarship, the study is mostly based on archival documents from the archives of the UN and those of Switzerland, Hungary, France and Great Britain. The results of oral history research are also put to use.