

New Anglo-Swiss agreement on social insurance

Autor(en): [s.n.]

Objektyp: Article

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - (1960)

Heft 1366

PDF erstellt am: **25.04.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-690343>

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NEW ANGLO-SWISS AGREEMENT ON SOCIAL INSURANCE.

On 7th June the Swiss Ambassador went to the Foreign Office to exchange with the Head of the Treaty Department the instruments of ratification of the *Supplementary Convention on Social Insurance* signed at Berne, on 12th November 1959.

This new agreement extends to the Isle of Jersey the scope of the 1953 Anglo-Swiss Agreement on Social Security, thus giving our compatriots on the island similar advantages to those they would have in Great Britain.

It further makes the Swiss Old Age (AVS, AHV) transitional pensions (rentes transitoires, Uebergangsrenten) payable to British citizens established in Switzerland provided they have been living there continuously for the last fifteen years.

Finally, it introduces for the first time in the field of sickness insurance some sort of link between the compulsory British scheme and the Swiss voluntary schemes.

According to this agreement, which came into force on 1st July, Swiss nationals who are insured against sickness in Switzerland are fully qualified to receive British sickness benefits. They will qualify for such benefits immediately, i.e., without having to pay 26 contributions to the British insurance scheme, as was the case before. This, however, only applies to Swiss coming to Great Britain as employees or as self-employed persons. It does not apply to Swiss who come as visitors, students or house-daughters in "au pair" jobs.

Again, by virtue of this new agreement, a national of either country returning to Switzerland after a stay in Great Britain will, provided he has paid *thirteen* weekly contributions to the British insurance, be allowed to join an authorized Swiss "caisse de maladie" and qualify immediately for their benefits (with the exception of maternity benefits).

* * *

In its present form the agreement only relates to British nationals going to Switzerland to take up employment and become residents. It is hoped, however, that some of the "caisses de maladie" which have been designated by the Federal Office of Social Insurance will be extended later to include also British tourists and holiday-makers.

PERSONAL.

We extend heartiest congratulations to Mrs. Geneviève O. Davidson, of 9 West Road, Birkenhead (Swiss-born wife of the late Mr. J. M. Davidson, formerly an official of Lloyds Bank), who recently received an honorary M.A. degree from Liverpool University.

Mrs. Davidson has been president of the French Literary Society in Liverpool since 1937. She is also president of the Swiss Relief Committee in Liverpool, and vice-president of the Italian Literary Society.