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**Congress of the Swiss Abroad from 22 to 24 August 2008 in Fribourg**

## **Switzerland without borders?**

**The Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) will be holding its 86th Congress of the Swiss Abroad from 22 to 24 August. Lots of exciting events have been lined up in the delightful Canton of Fribourg.**

Switzerland's accession to the Schengen area is a big issue for the Swiss living abroad. What would become of Switzerland if it opened up its borders and discarded border controls? What would happen if Switzerland isolated itself from Europe? There is going to be an optional referendum on the introduction of the free movement of people. The 650,000 or so Swiss citizens residing abroad are following developments at home with a close eye. Crossing borders, being a foreigner and looking for work as a foreigner are all issues they are familiar with from their own experience. Their country's future concerns them, whether they themselves currently live inside or outside the Schengen area. Leading experts

will discuss the background to the Schengen agreement and the free movement of people at this year's congress, while the Swiss abroad will bring their own experiences to the debate and delve into unresolved issues in workshops.

The Canton of Fribourg's history of migration makes this year's venue especially appropriate. In 1818, at least three hundred families left the canton, where people were starving, to establish a new home in Brazil. They founded the town of Nova Friburgo, which today has more than 180,000 inhabitants, in the state of Rio de Janeiro. Those who attend the congress will also find out more about the Fribourg emigrants.

### **Programme**

The 86th Congress of the Swiss Abroad has much to offer the heart, the intellect and the palate.

Prominent speakers will look at the opportunities and risks presented by Schengen and the free movement of people in short presentations and debates.

Congress participants can find out exactly how the Schengen information system works in workshops.

There will be breaks in the programme where visitors can

enjoy an exhibition of art by the children of the Swiss school in Santiago, Chile and a primary school in Neuenegg (Canton of Berne). The boys and girls will show how they approached the theme of the congress. Participants will also have the chance to see a fascinating photographic exhibition on Nova Friburgo.

The congress is also a very sociable occasion. There will be plenty of time to enjoy each other's company over fine Swiss cuisine during the opening of the congress on Friday evening and during the excursions on Sunday.

## **Look forward to summertime in Switzerland**

**Holidays in Switzerland. The Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) is offering you the chance to explore nature, plus lots of entertainment, adventure and fun besides, at its holiday camps in Flumserbergen this summer. OSA provides interesting and educational holidays just as you want them. And during Euro 2008 we'll be close to the action. We have the perfect holiday for you.**

OSA expects around 160 young people to attend its big summer camps in Flumserbergen this year. Visitors from more than 30 countries will enjoy the spectacular alpine scenery of Churfirsten. OSA gives you the

opportunity to discover new outdoor activities or to improve your performance in one of your favourite sports. You'll be able to take part in workshops relating to creative, IT and musical activities. You'll make lots of new friends too during a summer in the mountains in 2008. The camp dates are:

*Flumserberg I: 13.7.-25.7.2008*

*Flumserberg II: 27.7.-8.8.2008*

## **Workshop on the 2008 European Football Championship**

Young Swiss people abroad will also get a taste of football fever this summer. OSA is offering you the opportunity to spend a week in June 2008 close to the action at the big event, Euro 2008. Trips to the Swiss cities hosting the tournament, tours of the stadiums and visits to the headquarters of FIFA or UEFA and the Swiss Football Federation are all part of the programme. We'll take a look behind the media coverage and celebrate a wonderful festival of football with visitors from all over Europe in the fan zones.

### **A great way to learn a language**

Our programme for young people has so much to offer. Swiss youngsters living abroad can learn to speak German or French on two-week language courses. Our welcoming host families will allow you to experience everyday life in Switzerland. We'll provide you with advice on educational matters, and of course we need

### **86TH CONGRESS OF THE SWISS ABROAD, 22 TO 24 AUGUST 2008**

Please send me the information pack on the 86th Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Fribourg (please use block capitals).

Last name: \_\_\_\_\_ First name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete and return the coupon to the following address by 30 May 2008: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad, Congress, Alpenstrasse 26, CH-3006 Berne. For organisational reasons, the registration deadline for the Congress is the end of June. The registration form is included in the Congress information pack that can be ordered using the coupon above. The Congress information pack can also be ordered by e-mail from [communication@aso.ch](mailto:communication@aso.ch). Please remember to give your full postal address.

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young people to attend the Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Fribourg. The theme for this year's congress is "Switzerland without borders?" concerning Switzerland's relationship with its big neighbour, the European Union. *Youth Service*  
Telephone: +41 31 356 61 00  
[youth@aso.ch](mailto:youth@aso.ch)  
[www.aso.ch](http://www.aso.ch)

## Education in Switzerland

Young Swiss people abroad who return to Switzerland for their education are often faced with certain problems, which may concern starting school, taking up an apprenticeship or

admission to a university. The Association for the Education of Young Swiss Abroad (AJAS) provides advice and support to help young people adjust to life in Switzerland. The association provides information on educational opportunities in Switzerland including work-experience placements, apprenticeships, university courses, accommodation and student finance, etc. If need be, it also places inquiring parties in touch with the relevant agencies. Lots of information and guidance is available on the AJAS website: [www.ajas.ch](http://www.ajas.ch).

AJAS also provides young people with advice on financing their studies. Young Swiss people abroad whose parents cannot afford, or can only partly pay for, education in Switzer-

land can apply for a grant from their canton of origin. AJAS can make contact with the department responsible and act as a mediator. If the cantonal grant does not cover living and educational costs, an application can be made to AJAS for an additional grant or loan.

Please contact us at the following address with any ques-

tions you may have concerning educational opportunities in Switzerland.

*AJAS*  
Alpenstrasse 26  
CH-3006 Berne  
Tel. +41 31 356 61 04  
Fax +41 31 356 61 01  
E-mail: [ajas@aso.ch](mailto:ajas@aso.ch)  
[www.ajas.ch](http://www.ajas.ch)

## ORGANISATION OF THE SWISS ABROAD

### *Our services:*

- Legal Department
- Youth Service
- Association for the Promotion of Education for Young Swiss Abroad (AJAS)
- Committee for Swiss Schools Abroad (CSSA)
- Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad (FYSA)

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