

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 38 (2011)
Heft: 4: 2011 parliamentary elections

Rubrik: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad

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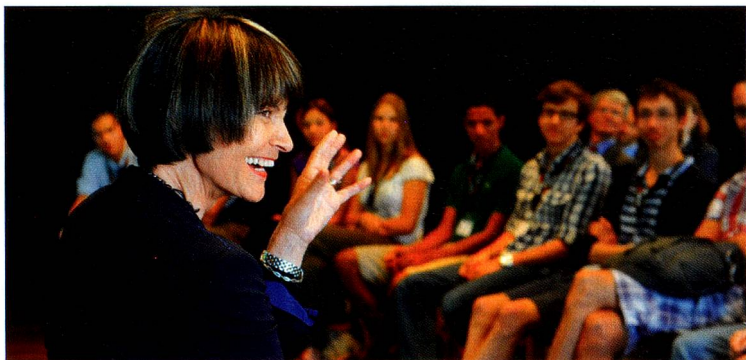
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Youth seminar: "Parliamentary elections in Switzerland" 17.10. – 24.10.2011

OSA is encouraging young citizens, in particular all who have recently become old enough to vote, to take part in the elections on 23 October. In the week prior to the election weekend, OSA is holding a seminar that will provide a look behind the scenes of the election campaign. We will ask: How will the election work? How do politicians feel about the election campaign? What is their motivation, and what do the parties want to achieve? How is the media reporting the election?



Federal Councillor Micheline Calmy-Rey in discussion with young Swiss abroad

Young people will be given an introduction to the Swiss political system, they will meet parliamentary election candidates and will have the opportunity to discuss matters with them. Participants will experience the reporting by television, radio and the press up close. Finally, we will share the excitement of election day with the parties and subsequently analyse the results with experts.

Return to Switzerland to study or undertake vocational training

Many young Swiss citizens abroad take this step each year, leaving behind their family and friends to return to their homeland to study, start an apprenticeship or perfect their knowledge of one of the national languages. The Association for the Promotion of Education for Young Swiss Abroad (AJAS) provides information on the opportunities available to them.

While aware of the excellent standard of education in Switzerland, these young people give various reasons for making this decision. It is often a case of wanting to familiarise themselves with Swiss culture. Reasons also include the desire for a change or even a taste for adventure. Depending on the circumstances, this is a natural step for some,

while for others the decision is made after lengthy consideration or is simply unplanned.

Whatever the case may be, it is essential to prepare properly for departure and arrival in Switzerland. The Association for the Promotion of Education for Young Swiss Abroad (AJAS) offers assistance here. It provides documentation and general information on educational opportunities in Switzerland. If necessary, it can also provide administrative support with applications for cantonal grants.

Under certain conditions, AJAS provides additional funding in the form of grants or interest-free loans. Please contact AJAS' secretariat, which is housed in the same premises as the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad:

*AJAS, Alpenstrasse 26, 3006 Berne
Tel. +41 31 356 61 04, Fax +41 31 356 61 01
E-mail: ajas@aso.ch*

OSA advice

I live abroad and I have contributed to Old Age and Survivors' Insurance. At what age can I draw an Old Age and Survivors' Insurance pension?

The legal retirement age in Switzerland is 64 for women and 65 for men. The pension entitlement can be brought forward by one or two years. However, bringing forward the retirement age has an effect on the amount of the Old Age and Survivors' Insurance pension, which will then be reduced throughout retirement. Claiming the pension one year early results in a 6.8% reduction in pension and claiming it two years early means a 13.6% reduction until the normal retirement age. The level of pension reduction is then recalculated. It should be noted that the entitlement to draw the pension early is an individual right, which means that married persons can request early receipt of their pension independently of their spouse. The request for early payment of the pension should be made to the competent authority, which, depending on the place of residence of the person concerned, is either the local social insurance institution (clearly state that the request concerns early pension payment) or the Swiss Compensation Office:

*Swiss Compensation Office
Av. Edmond-Vaucher, 18
P.O. Box 3100, CH-1211 Geneva 2
Tel: +41 22 795 91 11, Fax: +41 22 795 97 05
Website: www.zas.admin.ch*

We recommend that you submit this request three to four months before reaching the age when you would like to claim your pension. The receipt of the Old Age and Survivors' Insurance pension results in the termination of invalidity or survivors' pensions paid up to this point in time. No pension is paid for children during the early claim period.

Please note that while it is possible to claim the Old Age and Survivors' Insur-

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ance pension early, a request can also be made for it to be delayed by 1 to 5 years. This results in an increase in the pension amount.

For further details, please consult the Old Age and Survivors' Insurance website: www.ahv-iv.info.

To find out where you should submit your pension request, please visit the Central Compensation Office's website: www.zas.admin.ch (click on "Swiss Compensation Office SCO" -> "Making an application" and then choose the corresponding link).

Winter camps for children aged 8 to 14

Whether they are skiers or snowboarders, beginners or at an advanced level, Swiss children living abroad aged 8 to 14 will have a great time at our winter camps.

Winter camp Sedrun (Grisons)

Date: Tuesday, 27 December 2011 to

Thursday, 5 January 2012

No. of participants: 48

Cost: CHF 900 (contribution to the camp)

Ski or snowboard hire: Approx. CHF 150

Registration deadline: 30 October 2011

Winter camp Arolla (Valais)

Date: Tuesday, 27 December 2011 to

Thursday, 5 January 2012

No. of participants: 36

Cost: CHF 900 (contribution to the camp)

Ski or snowboard hire: Approx. CHF 150

Registration deadline: 30 October 2011

Registration

Precise details on the winter camps and the registration form will be available from 15 September 2011 at www.sjas.ch ("Our forthcoming activities"). Reduced contribution rates are available in justified cases. The form required can be requested on the registration form. We are also happy to post you our information brochure on request.

Draw to attend JUSKILA

600 Swiss children, including a number of Swiss children living abroad, born in 1997 and 1998 will have the opportunity to attend Swiss Ski's big ski camp in Lenk free of charge. This will take place between 1 and 8 January 2012. To take part in the Jusmila trip, Swiss children abroad must be

REGISTRATION FORM FOR THE DRAW FOR JUSKILA (1 TO 8 JAN. 2012)

Please complete in clear print.

First name:	Surname:
No., street:	Town/city, postcode:
Country:	Date of birth:
Name of parent(s)/guardian(s):	
<input type="checkbox"/> Female / <input type="checkbox"/> Male	Telephone:
Commune of origin in Switzerland (see Passport/ID):	
E-mail address of parent(s)/guardian(s):	
Type of sport* <input type="checkbox"/> Alpine skiing / <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-country skiing / <input type="checkbox"/> Snowboarding	
Language of child <input type="checkbox"/> German / <input type="checkbox"/> French / <input type="checkbox"/> Italian	
*Please only tick one box. The type of sport cannot be changed after the draw.	
Signature of parent(s) / guardian(s):	
Signature of child:	

Please send the form, together with a copy of the Swiss passport of a parent/guardian or of the child, by 15 October 2011 (date of receipt) to:

Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad, Alpenstrasse 26, CH-3006 Berne

Tel. +41 31 356 61 16, Fax +41 31 356 61 01, E-mail: sjas@aso.ch

able to communicate in at least one of the three Swiss national languages (German, French or Italian). The draw only covers the camp itself (winter sports coaching, food and accommodation). Parents will be responsible for organising and financing travel to and from the camp. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of the draw at the end of October.

Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad

Alpenstrasse 26, CH-3006 Berne

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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)

Organisation of the Swiss Abroad

Alpenstrasse 26, CH-3006 Berne

Phone +41 31 356 6100, Fax +41 31 356 6101,

info@aso.ch, www.aso.ch

New host families sought in Switzerland

OSA is looking for families who would be willing to host our young people from all over the world. These guests will certainly be a breath of fresh air, introducing exciting intercultural exchange and variety into family life, and bringing with them experience of other ways of life. Host families provide the young visitors with food and accommodation while they cover

all other costs themselves. The stay with a host family is usually combined with an educational programme. However, two-week holidays without a fringe programme are also possible. Information on offers for young people can be found in the "Offers" section at www.aso.ch.