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Announcements

Equal status for spouses under naming and citizenship laws – the Federal Council has implemented the corresponding amendment to the Civil Code, which will take effect on 1 January 2013.

The amendment to the Civil Code adopted by Parliament on 30 September 2011 grants spouses equal status in surname and citizenship. Marriage will essentially no longer have an impact on the name and citizenship of future spouses. Husband and wife will each keep their surname and citizenship but can declare when they get married that they want to use the bride's or the groom's unmarried surname as a common family surname. Same-sex couples who register their partnership will also have the same opportunity in future.

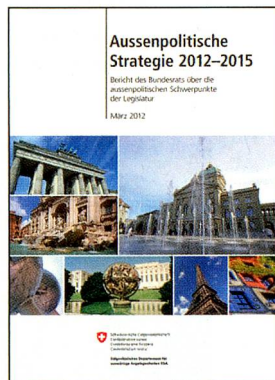
The children of married couples will be given either the common family surname or – if the couple uses different surnames – the surname that the couple decides on for their children upon marriage. If the parents are not married, the children will be given their mother's unmarried name. In cases of joint parental custody, the parents can declare that their children will have their father's unmarried surname.

The transitional law provides that spouses who change their surname upon marriage before these amendments enter into force will be able to declare at any time to the registry office that they wish to use their unmarried surname again. If such a declaration is made, the parents will have until 31 December 2013 to declare that their children will have the unmarried surname of the parent who has made this declaration. Unmarried parents with joint parental custody will have one year in which to declare that their children will have their father's unmarried surname. Children who have reached their twelfth birthday must consent to any change of name. Same-sex couples who register their partnership before these provisions enter into force will have one year in which to declare that they wish to use the surname of one of the partners as a common surname.

Publications

Foreign Policy Strategy 2012–2015

As reported in the June issue of "Swiss Review" (interview with Laurent Goetschel), the Federal Council has set out its priorities and key focus areas in foreign policy for the current legislative period. The 26-page brochure can be ordered or downloaded and printed out as a PDF file in German, French, Italian or English via the FDFA website (www.eda.admin.ch > Documentation > Publications)



ELECTIONS AND REFERENDA

The following proposals will be put to a vote on 23 September 2012:

- Federal resolution of 15 March 2012 on promoting music among young people (counterproposal to the "jugend+musik" (Youth+Music) popular initiative);
- Popular initiative of 23 January 2009 "Sicheres Wohnen im Alter" (Secure housing in old age);
- Popular initiative of 18 May 2010 "Schutz vor Passivrauchen" (Protection against passive smoking).

POPULAR INITIATIVES

By the time of going to press, the following federal popular initiatives had been launched since the last edition of "Swiss Review" (deadlines for the collection of signatures in brackets):

- "Für ein bedingungsloses Grundeinkommen" (For an unconditional basic income) (11.10.2013)
- "Schutz vor Sexualisierung in Kindergarten und Primarschule" (Protection against sexualisation at nursery and primary school) (17.10.2013)

The complete list can be found on the Federal Chancellery's website at www.bk.admin.ch under "Aktuell / Wahlen und Abstimmungen / Hängige Volksinitiativen" (in German; also available in French and Italian).

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