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## OSA advice

*Shortly after my 70th birthday, I received a demand from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Office regarding a mandatory medical examination for my Swiss driving licence. This was sent to me via federal government's RIPOL police search system. What does this mean?*

Anyone who emigrates from Switzerland must exchange their Swiss driving licence for one of their country of residence within a certain period of time. For example, the deadline in EU states is six months. The competent authority in the country of residence can provide you with binding information on the deadlines and procedure. Failure to exchange the Swiss driving licence for one of the country of residence may result in fines or penalties.

If you are moving abroad, you must notify the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Office in Switzerland; then, when you are abroad, you must replace your driving licence with one issued by the country of residence. If you subsequently move back to Switzerland, you may drive with your foreign licence for a year during which time you must apply for this to be exchanged for a Swiss driving licence. An eye test may be required for a Swiss driving licence depending on the canton.

If your move abroad is not reported to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Office, a search may be initiated at the age of 70 when the medical examination to assess fitness to drive becomes due, for example, via RIPOL, federal government's police search system. This happens because the

person concerned is no longer registered in Switzerland but is still in possession of a Swiss driving licence.

Swiss citizens whose definitive place of residence is abroad but who still hold a Swiss driving licence can contact the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Office that issued it so that it can be suspended. There is generally no charge for fees or costs.

Addresses of the cantonal Driver and Vehicle Licensing Offices:

<http://www.strassenverkehrsamt.ch/>

OSA LEGAL DEPARTMENT

OSA's Legal Department provides general legal information on Swiss law and specifically in areas that concern the Swiss abroad. It does not provide information on foreign law and does not intervene in disputes between private parties.

## Information on the right to participate in votes and elections

The Swiss abroad can participate in elections and referenda in Switzerland provided they are registered on an electoral roll in Switzerland. Swiss citizens are not automatically enrolled when they register with a consulate or embassy abroad. They must explicitly request the right to vote. Swiss abroad are usually registered on the electoral roll at the commune where they last resided in Switzerland. This enrolment must be renewed regularly - at least every four years - with the commune (not the representation abroad). This does not take place automatically. Some communes

regularly ask their eligible voters abroad to do this, while others do not. The forms for enrolment and renewal can be found at: [www.eda.admin.ch](http://www.eda.admin.ch) > Documentation > Publications > Swiss Abroad > Leaflets "Political rights"

Direct link: <http://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/doc/publi/ptrali/merkbl.html>

## Youth Seminar at the Congress of the Swiss Abroad



From August 15 to 17, 2014, the Congress of the Swiss Abroad will take place in Baden. This meeting will be the perfect opportunity for Swiss Abroad to learn about modern information technologies and social media. At the congress, the generation of digital natives will get its own platform and undoubtedly bring its input on this topic.

Two years ago, an article in the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung" read: "Since time immemorial, older generations have observed young people's activities with a critical eye.

## SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE ORGANISATION OF THE SWISS ABROAD AND PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

The Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA), a foundation governed by private law, is a centre of expertise for safeguarding the interests of Swiss citizens living abroad. Besides the publication of "Swiss Review", it provides various services for Swiss citizens abroad in collaboration with its partner organisations.

■ **Legal advice.** Free advice on emigrating abroad and returning to Switzerland.  
[www.aso.ch](http://www.aso.ch) - "Consultation" section

■ **Network.** The website SwissCommunity.org provides the opportunity to network with Swiss citizens all over the world.  
[www.swisscommunity.org](http://www.swisscommunity.org)

■ **Offers for children and young people.** Organisation of

holiday camps and language courses, etc. for young Swiss abroad seeking a better understanding of their native country.

[www.sjas.ch](http://www.sjas.ch)

■ **Advice on education and training in Switzerland.** Young Swiss abroad wishing to train or study in Switzerland receive support and guidance in selecting training and

educational opportunities and making grant applications.  
[www.educationsuisse.ch](http://www.educationsuisse.ch)



Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA)  
Alpenstrasse 26,  
3006 Berne, SWITZERLAND  
Tel. +41 31 356 61 00  
[info@aso.ch](mailto:info@aso.ch)



Generally everything was better in the past – or at least different, since everything one does not know generates a considerable portion of scepticism. Sometimes parents can even feel overtaken by the rapid technological development which, in recent years, has totally changed not only the professional world but the consumption of the media as a whole especially by the young generation."

The seminar "Information Technologies and Social Media" will start on 10 August, in Baden, where the participants will meet their host families. From Monday to Thursday the OSA will give the young Swiss Abroad an introduction to the subject. The youngsters will assess and define their way

of using the modern media, exchange views and information, work on their own media competence and publish reports on [www.swisscommunity.org](http://www.swisscommunity.org). For this course, the OSA has put together an interesting panel of lecturers, speakers and workshop hosts. The social programme will provide diversion and entertainment.

At the Congress of the Swiss Abroad the group will present the outcome of its work while participating in the panel on "Youth and Online Media". The discussion with the older generation will therefore be based on specific examples.

Young Swiss from all over the world are welcome to join this informative and interesting course.



*Organisation of the Swiss Abroad  
Youth Service, email: [youth@aso.ch](mailto:youth@aso.ch)  
[www.swisscommunity.org](http://www.swisscommunity.org), [www.aso.ch](http://www.aso.ch)*



## 92<sup>nd</sup> Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Baden – 15 to 17 August 2014

This year's Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Baden will focus on the theme of "information technology and social media: opportunities for the Swiss abroad". Speakers will include Federal Councillor Alain Berset and Otfried Jarren, professor of journalism at the University of Zurich.

Find out more about the theme of the congress at [www.aso-kongress.ch](http://www.aso-kongress.ch). You can also order your congress registration pack online here. Put the congress dates in your diary today. We look forward to seeing you.

**Please send me the registration documents in spring 2014 for the 92<sup>nd</sup> Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Baden. My address is:**

**Surname:**

**first name:**

**Address:**

**Country:**

**postcode/city:**

**Email:**

Please write clearly in block capitals. The registration documents are available in two languages:  German  French (please tick the language required) Return the completed form to: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad, Communications & Marketing, Alpenstrasse 26, 3006 Berne, SWITZERLAND / Fax: +41 (0)31 356 61 01 or email us at [communication@aso.ch](mailto:communication@aso.ch)