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100 Faces – Portraits of Swiss living abroad

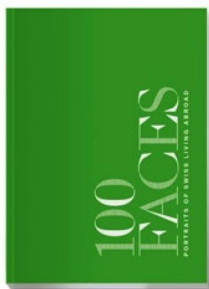
Presence Switzerland, part of the Consular Directorate at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and responsible for the image of Switzerland abroad, has worked closely with the OSA to mark the 100-year anniversary of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) with the release of the book "100 Faces – Portraits of Swiss living abroad".

One hundred people, from past and present, with extraordinary life stories, represent their home to the world and influence the image of Switzerland abroad. Their lives are multifaceted and their reasons for emigration diverse. Yet all of Switzerland's citizens living abroad

have something in common – their connection to Switzerland.

Participants were invited to speak about their social background and their professional career in the language of their choice. This created portraits of 90 people from roughly 50 countries and all five continents with different life stories, personal stories that also represent the history of Swiss identity. Furthermore, the lives of ten figures from past centuries are highlighted, figures who made a name for themselves abroad.

Get to know these 100 people on the website www.houseofswitzerland.org (Search - 100 Faces).



Federal referenda

Voting proposals are determined by the Federal Council at least four months before the voting date.

The following proposal will be put to the vote on 27 November 2016:

- Popular initiative of 16 November 2012:
"For an orderly exit from nuclear energy" (Atomausstiegsinitiative)

Further voting dates in 2017:

12 February, 21 May, 24 September, 26 November

All information on the proposals (voting pamphlets, committees, recommendations of Parliament and the Federal Council, electronic voting, etc.) can be found at www.admin.ch/votes.

Popular initiatives

The list of pending popular initiatives can be found at www.bk.admin.ch under Aktuell > Wahlen und Abstimmungen > Hängige Volksinitiativen.

Important notice

Please notify your Swiss representation of your email address(es) and mobile telephone number(s) and/or any changes to these and register at www.swissabroad.ch to ensure you do not miss any communications ("Swiss Review", newsletter from your representation, etc.).

The latest issue of "Swiss Review" and previous issues can be read and/or printed out at any time at www.revue.ch. "Swiss Review" (or "Gazzetta Svizzera" in Italy) is sent free of charge to all households of Swiss Abroad who are registered with an embassy or consulate general either in printed format or electronically (via email or as an iOS/Android app).

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CH Info: The Brochure App



The "Swiss Confederation – a brief guide" brochure gives a current overview of Switzerland's political system, the administration and its judicial authorities. It is now also available as an app for tablets and smartphones.

What makes Switzerland unique? How is Parliament made up? Who is the government? When do people vote? Questions like this are answered with text and graphics, and large-format photos give the publication special appeal.

The section on the separation of powers explains what type of jurisdiction the Parliament, the

government and the Federal Supreme Court have. The policy priorities of the departments are also presented, as well as an overview of how the parties are positioned at federal level.

Numerous links offer further information online. But the app is your quickest source of information: with one quick tap you're taken straight to the corresponding website. The app is always updated six weeks before voting, with links to explanations for Federal Council votes and videos explaining the individual bills.

The brochure can be ordered at: www.bundespublitionen.admin.ch (in German).

The "CH info" app can be downloaded from the Apple Store or the Google Play Store for free. The publisher is the Federal Chancellery.

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Travel advice

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itineris

Online registration for Swiss citizens travelling abroad
www.fdfa.admin.ch/itineris



Plan well.
Travel well.

App available for free for iOS and Android

The dawn of online consular services: the FDFA opens its virtual consulate

By 2020, half of the people on our planet will be connected to the Internet and almost 90 % of data traffic will flow through mobile devices. Service providers would do well to bear these figures in mind when thoughts about quality, efficiency and customer satisfaction dictate their decision-making in developing tools for work and modern communication.

e-government

In 2007, the Swiss Federal Council adopted an e-government strategy intended in particular to modernise the procedures of Switzerland's authorities, especially by ensuring communication is possible through electronic channels. It also put in place measures to enable citizens to file all their important paperwork with the authorities electronically.

By expanding the law to include the Swiss Abroad, parliament has clearly established the framework for providing consular services via a single point of contact. For its part, the Federal Council added that these services could be offered and obtained either electronically or virtually and that they should cover in particular areas such as consular services, the mailing of publications, the generation of statistics and the setting up of information channels.

Conscious of the importance of IT in contemporary society, the Swiss Abroad themselves made it the central theme of their 92nd congress in August 2014. Speaking at the event, the then OSA President Jacques-Simon Eggly said that, to improve relations with their fellow citizens, "the authorities should take advantage of new information technology to inform, contact and maintain close ties with the Swiss diaspora."

A single virtual point of contact

To meet these different mandates and expectations, the FDFA has developed a modern IT-based management system for the Swiss Abroad.

Aside from a more up-to-date IT architecture, this new system primarily offers the Swiss Abroad online services based on four principles: interactivity between users and the authorities, mobile access to information, online payment and interconnection with parallel systems (social insurance, local authorities, etc.).

Thus, from early October 2016 onwards, a new internet portal will enable all the Swiss Abroad to benefit from a range of online services: notification of arrival or departure abroad, the initiation of administrative procedures, direct contact with consulates, changes of address, etc.

This portal will be easily accessible via the FDFA's main site (www.dfae.admin.ch, "Online counter") as well as those of the relevant Swiss representations. The main challenge for access to the online counter will be in identifying users. Because it is dealing with personal information that must be reliable at all times, two procedures have been laid down: direct access for SuisseID cardholders and access via two-stage identification (name and personal password + a code received by SMS). Detailed information can be found on the online counter page.

Like all the other FDFA websites, the online counter will be accessible via all devices (PCs, laptops, tablets and smartphones) thanks to the integration of responsive design.

Dynamic approach

In order to encourage users to make use of an online service, they need to be able to use it regularly and thus become acquainted with the system. Such regular use requires the range of services offered by the online counter eVERA to be attractive. It will therefore be expanded further in the future. New features are already planned, including notifying changes of address, online payment for issued certificates, registry office announcements and crisis management.

The FDFA is thus pleased to be able to extend its services to the Swiss Abroad in a way that is effective and environmentally friendly by limiting the use of paper, all thanks to moving to virtual transactions.

LAURENT PERRIARD, DEPUTY DIRECTOR CONSULAR AFFAIRS, FDFA



Registration screen:

There are two ways to log on to the online counter.

Online counter:

Having successfully logged on, you are taken to the main page, where you can choose from various services.

Data screen:

You can consult and download your data at any time.

Available services:

Services can be ordered and paid for online.