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Dear Swiss Abroad,

The Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) has a small but important favour to ask. Please ensure that your local Swiss representation has your current personal email address. Many Swiss expatriates have not yet provided their Swiss representation with an email address, while many of the email addresses registered with Swiss representations are no longer used. The OSA urges you to keep your email address up to date. This is important for a number of reasons.

Protection and security: The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly shown how vital it is to stay connected in times of crisis. Armed with your latest email address, your Swiss representation can contact you quickly and easily in a crisis. This is for your own protection and security.

Weight and influence: All Swiss living abroad being reachable by email translates into greater political leverage for the "Fifth Switzerland". This is precisely what we want with a view to enabling direct elections to the "Parliament of the Fifth Switzerland", the Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA), to be staged online. Having everyone's email address offers the possibility to invite all Swiss Abroad to participate in a direct election – although at present it is not clear when such an election could take place. Essentially, direct elections enhance the legitimacy of the CSA. In turn, this will give the OSA greater weight and influence when it comes to representing the interests of the Swiss Abroad within Switzerland.

Furthermore, your email address is useful if there is an issue with postal deliveries in your country of residence and you receive the print edition of "Swiss Review" very late or not at all – in which case it is worth switching from the print edition to our free online edition. Once you have made the switch, we will send you a preview email before every new issue.

Please note that you should provide your local consulate, not the OSA, with your email address. For data protection reasons, the OSA cannot access the addresses of Swiss who live abroad. The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) is responsible for managing the relevant address database. You can also enter your new or updated email address simply and easily via the FDFA's online desk for Swiss nationals residing abroad: www.eda.admin.ch/swissabroad. This dedicated government website is a one-stop shop, offering you convenient online access to a range of services.

I hope you enjoy this new issue of "Swiss Review". All the best, and stay safe.

Ariane Rustichelli
OSA Director



Switzerland and the COVID-19 pandemic



countries.

Switzerland dealt with COVID-19 in a very responsible manner. Of course, it is bad when people lose their jobs and futures. However, Switzerland's response was quick and, for once, un-bureaucratic, unlike that of numerous EU

DANIEL TRÄCHSEL, MARZELL, GERMANY

Switzerland was caught napping like a lot of other countries, unfortunately. Countries that were prepared were hit much less severely (South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore). Will Switzerland learn from this? The chances of that are slim when you consider how reluctant the Swiss media have been to criticise.

ADRIEN LOEWENBERG, PORTUGAL

I agree that there was a support system in place, and that the federal government worked very hard to help the entire country (unlike in the US, where it is absolute chaos except in states whose governors are endowed with a modicum of common sense). It was reassuring to know that my mother in Geneva could seek help if necessary. However, many of the underprivileged lacked the necessary safety net. The long line of people queueing at a food bank in Geneva was a good example.

GUILLAUME DE SYON, LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA, USA

Voters to give their verdict on paternity leave



I'm surprised Switzerland, one of the wealthiest countries in the world, is so behind in this case. If you ever gave birth to a child, you know how much energy it takes away from the mother. The support of the Daddy is so important for the new born baby and the mother. It's a good investment for the whole family and even more so for the whole country.

RONALD THOMA, ONTARIO, CANADA

As a Swiss expatriate who has been living in Germany for many years, I am just horrified at how incredibly backward Switzerland is when it comes to things like this. Take the word 'Vaterschaftsurlaub' for example, which literally means 'paternity holiday'. Having a small child at home is anything but a holiday. Parenting is a wonderful but energy-sapping responsibility that extends over a good many years. Hence we refer to it as parental leave in Germany, because both parents can happily do their bit instead of the mother shouldering all the burden like she does in Switzerland.

ANDRÉ TSCHACHTLI, GERMANY