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New Year's camp – a wonderful time was had by all

The OSA Youth Service kicked off 2020 with two winter camps. Fantastic weather, good snow conditions, and motivated participants and camp leaders were the recipe for an unforgettable time in the Swiss Alps.

The New Year's camps in Les Diablerets (Vaud) and Anzère (Valais), attended by 33 and 20 young people respectively, were both a huge success. Participants spent the morning and afternoon of almost every day on the piste, where they received tuition from qualified ski and snowboard instructors.

The camp leaders also put on a varied and exciting programme of leisure activities off the piste. Participants in Les Diablerets witnessed the Olympic torch arrive in the centre of the village, where it was lit in an official ceremony. They also went on a torch-lit procession, walked on the suspension bridge connecting the twin mountain summits of Scex Rouge (altitude of 2,971 metres), skied and snowboarded at night, and even had the chance to carve their turns on a glacier. Par-

ticipants in Anzère went sledding near their camp base, visited the local spa facilities and enjoyed a silent disco at the ice rink. They also spent some evenings in to recover from their exertions, enjoying board and other indoor games. Held in glorious weather in the beautiful Vaud and Valais Alps, the camps were a fitting way to see in the new year for all those who made the trip.

It will soon be time for our summer camps. Visit our website for more information about the camps and how to register for them: <https://www.swisscommunity.org/en/youth/youth-offers> Youth Service contact details: Youth Service of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA), Alpenstrasse 26, 3006 Berne, Switzerland; tel.: +41 31 356 61 00; fax: +41 31 356 61 01; email: youth@aso.ch

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Interested in education or training in Switzerland?

educationsuisse provides advice to young Swiss Abroad regarding educational opportunities in Switzerland.

Every year, around 70,000 young people throughout Switzerland begin an apprenticeship and over 39,000 men and women begin university studies. As Switzerland offers an excellent educational system, young Swiss Abroad are also attracted to their families' country of origin. They come from all corners of the world recognising that this is a good opportunity to get to know



Switzerland better. According to the Federal Statistical Office, some 3,500 Swiss Abroad were enrolled in a Bachelor's or Master's programme in the 2018/19 academic year.

But how do you find the right educational course? What are the admission requirements? Are my language skills sufficient? How do you find an apprenticeship? There are so many questions to be answered. Every year, educationsuisse is in contact with numerous young Swiss Abroad to answer their questions. Edu-

cationsuisse offers information, advice and support:

- Information relating to different educational options such as university studies or vocational training
- Information relating to specific questions regarding admission requirements, required language skills, deadlines, accommodation, insurances, etc.
- Individual counselling, also in cooperation with a professional career counselling provider
- Assistance in applying for a cantonal scholarship and administrative support
- Student grants from educationsuisse and private foundations

The educationsuisse staff speak German, French, Italian, Spanish and English. We will be glad to help and answer questions about education in Switzerland via email, telephone, Skype or at our offices in Berne.

Information and contact

The Swiss educational system is illustrated and outlined in an easy-to-follow diagram on www.educationsuisse.ch. The website also contains a lot more information on the topic of education in Switzerland.

For specific questions contact: info@educationsuisse.ch or phone +41 31 356 61 04.

Educationsuisse, Alpenstrasse 26, 3006 Berne, Switzerland, www.educationsuisse.ch.



What challenges does our democracy face?

This year, the Annual Congress of the Swiss Abroad will focus on key questions for the future. It will be held in the Mediterranean atmosphere of the southern town of Lugano.

Immigration, data protection, digital challenges, and exercising our political rights: how is the Swiss democratic system meeting today's challenges? Where does it need to change? How can we guarantee respect of the basic democratic rights in Switzerland, unique in the world, in a time of increasing autocracy? Should Swiss political rights be granted to second generation immigrants or to young people from the age of 16?

These are just some of the questions that speakers at the 2020 Congress will be asked to answer or debate.

If you are interested in these topical issues and keen to discover (or rediscover) the incredibly varied Ticino landscapes and architectural heritage, unlike any other in Switzerland, reserve the weekend of 22–23 August 2020 and join us in Lugano, an Italian Swiss town with a Mediterranean atmosphere.

(JF)





Does my child automatically become a Swiss citizen?

"I live abroad and will soon become a mother. I would like to know whether my child automatically becomes a Swiss national like me, or whether formal/legal steps are necessary. Is my child allowed to have dual citizenship?"



Photo Stock

Your baby has arrived. If you want your child to own a Swiss passport one day despite being born abroad, we recommend that you have your child registered at the registry office of your Swiss municipality of origin in good time.

Yes, your child will acquire Swiss citizenship at birth. According to the Swiss Citizenship Act (SCA), a child born to Swiss parents is a Swiss citizen from birth. If the parents are unmarried and only the mother is Swiss, the child automatically receives Swiss citizenship. The father, on the other hand, first must recognise the child as his own via the competent authorities.

Irrespective of the above, you must notify the Swiss representation at which you are registered regarding the birth. This is important, because a child born abroad to a Swiss parent who is also a citizen of another country may lose their Swiss citizenship on reaching the age of 25, unless a Swiss authority abroad or in Switzerland has been notified of his or her birth or the individual has declared in writing that he or she wishes to remain a Swiss citizen. For a detailed look at the SCA including amendments and related transitional provisions, visit the website of the State Secretariat for Migration (available in German, French and Italian only). (Short link: ogy.de/buergerrecht)

To avoid any administrative complications in future, we advise you to notify your Swiss representation (embassy

or consulate) of the birth as soon as possible. They will check your documentation and forward this information to the Swiss authorities, so that your child can be registered at the registry office of your Swiss municipality of origin.

To answer your question about whether your child can become a dual citizen: Switzerland recognises dual nationality without restriction. Swiss law allows you to be both a Swiss national and a citizen of another country. However, some other countries do not recognise dual nationality. By acquiring Swiss citizenship, you might automatically lose the citizenship of the other state concerned.

For more information, please contact the authorities of the state whose nationality you wish to acquire or have already acquired.

STEFANIE MATHIS-ZERFASS, HEAD OF THE OSA LEGAL DEPARTMENT

The OSA's Legal Service provides general legal information on Swiss law, particularly in areas which concern the Swiss Abroad. It does not provide information on foreign law or intervene in disputes between private parties.

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