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Swiss challenge, Yvonand, 2019. Photo: OSA/Youth service

Youth camps are back

In 2021, the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) will once again be organising its traditional youth camps for the Swiss Abroad.

2020 began with two fantastic ski camps in the Vaud and Pennine Alps, bathed in glorious sunshine. Unfortunately, storm clouds soon rolled in: the OSA was obliged to cancel the summer camps due to the coronavirus pandemic. The situation remains critical. However, we hope that better times will soon be with us, with no clouds on the horizon, and are pleased to announce our new camp offers.

Offers at a glance:

- **10.7.–23.7.2021** Sport and activities camp in Château-d'Oex (VD) (15-18 yrs)
- **10.7.–23.7.2021** The Swiss Challenge (15-18 yrs)
- **24.7.–6.8.2021** Sport and activities camp in Gsteig (BE) (15-18 yrs)
- **7.8.–22.8.2020** Language, sports and culture camp, in Berne (BE) and Lugano (TI) (16-25 yrs)

- **27.12.–5.1.2022** Ski camp in Grächen (VS) (15-18 yrs)
- **27.12.–5.1.2022** Ski camp in Anzère (VS) (18 yrs +)

We will be happy to send you our information brochure upon request with a list of our offers. Summer and winter camp registration will be open from **11 January 2021** at ogy.de/youth-offers. The deadline for registration is **15 March 2021**.

Of course, we remain vigilant regarding the developing health situation. The health and safety of our participants and instructors are our top priorities. For this reason, we will be taking all the necessary safety precautions required at the time.

For more information, please contact:
Organisation of the Swiss Abroad OSA,
Youth service,
Alpenstrasse 26,
3006 Berne, Switzerland,
Tel. +41 (0)31 356 61 24,
email: youth@aso.ch

Summer camps for children aged 8 to 14

From the end of June to the end of August 2021, Swiss children living abroad can have a fantastic time with around 40 other children from all over the world while also discovering Switzerland and its culture at summer camps lasting two weeks. Registration for the summer camps will begin on 11 January 2021. The summer camps 2021 will take place on the following dates:

- Sat. 26.6.–Fri. 09.7.2021
- Sat. 10.7.–Fri. 23.7.2021
- Sat. 24.7.–Fri. 06.8.2021
- Sat. 07.8.–Fri. 20.8.2021

The exact details of the various offers (locations, age groups, etc.) will be available from the middle of December 2020 at: www.sjas.ch/en.

We would also be pleased to send you our information brochure with an overview of the offers available by post on request.

The registration deadline is 15 March 2021.

The Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad (FYSA) wishes to give all Swiss children abroad the opportunity to discover Switzerland in this way on at least one occasion. We can therefore offer reduced rates in justified cases. The required form can be requested on the registration form. We would be pleased to provide you with further information.

(LR)

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Stiftung für junge Auslandschweizer
Fondation pour les enfants suisses à l'étranger
Fondazione per i giovani svizzeri all'estero
Fundazion per giovani svizzeri a l'estero



Your chance to elect the new Council of the Swiss Abroad

Between January and June 2021, Swiss expatriates around the world will vote to determine the composition of the Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA), referred to as the “Parliament of the Fifth Switzerland”. We have put together the following FAQ about the CSA and next year’s elections.

STEFANIE MATHIS-ZERFASS

What is the Council of the Swiss Abroad?

The Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA) represents the interests of all Swiss Abroad vis-à-vis the authorities and the general public in Switzerland. It is therefore referred to as the “Parliament of the Fifth Switzerland”.

How long has the CSA existed?

The CSA has existed in its current form since 1989. Its forerunner was the New Helvetic Society, founded in 1919.

What is the composition of the CSA?

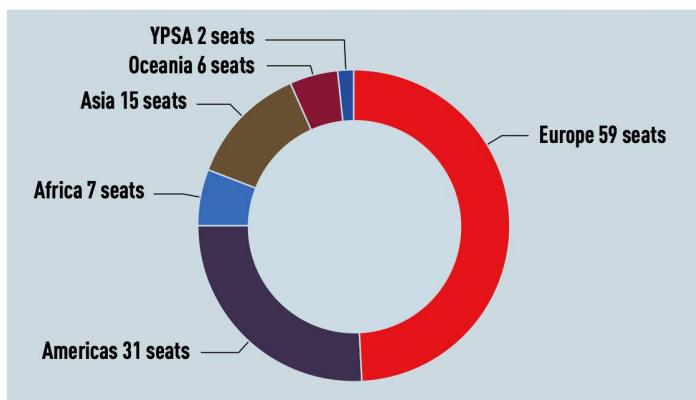
The CSA has 140 delegates, of whom 120 represent Swiss communities abroad and 20 live in Switzerland. Out of this total of 140, two seats are reserved for delegates who represent the young people in the Youth Parliament of the Swiss Abroad (YPSA).

How are the seats distributed?

The official regulations of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) govern how seats are distributed, stating that the CSA determines the number of delegates per umbrella organisation and per country or group of countries based on importance. In other words, the distribution of seats depends on how many Swiss Abroad there currently are per country or continent. The distribution of seats must also provide for an adequate representation of Swiss communities in all parts of the world. At its virtual meeting on 10 July 2020, the CSA determined that the distribution of seats during the 2021–25 parliament would be as shown below.

Why does the CSA include Swiss-based delegates?

The Swiss-based delegates represent the interests of the Swiss Abroad



Making an informed choice

Not all countries share the same procedure for electing CSA delegates, so the vote cannot be centrally coordinated. Details of elections in individual countries and regions will therefore appear in the regional editions of “Swiss Review”. The respective Swiss associations and umbrella organisations that coordinate the ballot will provide details on how voting will take place as well as information about election events. Candidates should contact the editorial office of their local “Swiss Review” to have their election profiles published in the regional edition.

Your election hub

SwissCommunity.org will play a key role during the elections, allowing voters to engage directly with candidates. You can ask questions, criticise, make suggestions, voice concerns and, naturally, discuss the issues that matter to you.

www.swisscommunity.org

in their home country — representing the CSA within the relevant bodies (parliament, Federal Administration) and championing the cause of Swiss expatriates at a political level. Some are members of the National Council or the Council of States. Others represent institutions or organisations. The CSA appoints these delegates based on the recommendations of the OSA.

How are expatriate delegates elected?

Unfortunately, the OSA is unable to offer e-voting as a centralised means of electing delegates directly in 2021. Unlike at the last elections, there will be no e-voting pilot projects in individual countries either. This is because the e-voting platform developed by the canton of Geneva is no longer available, and because e-voting has been discontinued throughout Switzerland.

When will direct elections be possible?

The OSA has since identified a suitable e-voting system to enable direct voting. However, this system still lacks the necessary funding. The OSA is currently liaising with the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) in this regard, having discussed the matter at a meeting with Federal Councillor and FDFA head Ignazio Cassis. It is confident of delivering a solution in time for the 2025 elections.

How are the umbrella organisations coordinating the vote?

At the forthcoming elections, the various umbrella organisations (or CSA-recognised Swiss associations, where applicable) will coor-



The Council of the Swiss Abroad meeting in Montreux – a show of hands calling on the Federal Council to do more on the issue of e-voting.

Photo: Adrian Moser (2019)

dinate voting in respective countries in accordance with the CSA's electoral guidelines. They will be in charge of all other aspects related to the vote themselves, e.g. they may also hold a direct ballot (electronically or by post).

Who can vote abroad?

Any Swiss Abroad is entitled to vote, provided that they belong to a recognised Swiss association. However, umbrella organisations and Swiss associations can also extend the circle of voters to non-members.

When will the elections take place?

The elections will be held from January to June 2021. The responsible bodies in individual countries will determine their own voting dates. On 20 August 2021, the newly elected CSA will meet for the first time to appoint the Swiss-based delegates recommended by the OSA Executive Board.

Who can be voted on to the CSA?

Anyone who wants to stand for election must, specifically, be a Swiss citizen, live abroad, speak French or German, have ties with the Swiss community in their respective region, and be able to travel to Switzerland twice a year in order to participate in CSA meetings. The umbrella organisations and Swiss associations can specify additional eligibility requirements. Delegates receive a modest fee for attending meetings. They must cover the cost of travel and accommodation themselves.

What powers does the CSA have?

The CSA is the governing body of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad. As an independent foundation, it represents the interests of the Swiss

Abroad in Switzerland. Not only is the CSA able to lobby and make political statements, it can also put forward specific demands, decide on referendum slogans, and issue voting recommendations. However, it has no legislative powers.

What are the CSA's key achievements?

- Swiss Abroad enshrined in the Federal Constitution (Art. 40)
- Continued voluntary old-age and survivors' insurance (OASI) and disability insurance (DI)
- Training and education funding for young Swiss Abroad
- Introduction of postal voting
- Adoption of the Swiss Abroad Act

For further information, visit

ogy.de/asr-2021

Details also available from:

Stefanie Mathis-Zerfass,
OSA Legal Service;
tel.: +41 31 356 61 00; mathis@aso.ch



Studying at Switzerland's universities

educationsuisse provides advice to young Swiss Abroad who want to come to Switzerland to pursue their education.

In Switzerland, over 255,000 students are currently enrolled in Bachelor's, Master's or doctorate courses. The proportion of women studying at Swiss universities has risen to around 52 per cent in recent years.

With the exception of one private University of Applied Sciences, all of Switzerland's universities are public institutions. The ETH Zurich, the EPF Lausanne and a number of other Swiss universities are well placed in the international rankings (ogy.de/rankings). These rankings are based on various criteria and are mostly geared to a specific target audience (students, researchers, sponsors, prospective students). No rankings can reflect or ultimately compare all the aspects that contribute to a good university. Factors such as geographical location and the local culture also need to be taken into account.



Semester time at the ETH Zurich Hönggerberg campus

Photo: ETHZ / Alessandro della Bella

Find out as much as you can

Gaining a footing in today's constantly evolving job market is a daunting prospect for many young people. Before making any career decisions, it therefore makes sense to consider your own interests and aptitudes. Online tests such as the "Study interests" survey are helpful tools in this regard (ogy.de/studien-check; available in French, German and Italian). Your own circle of friends and acquaintances can also provide you with insights into the world of work. Former students are another useful source of information. For example, Switzerland's official vocational and academic counselling website www.orientation.ch now also includes profiles of former students who describe the transition to professional life as well as possible career options after university (ogy.de/portraits). (RG)

Universities and the ETH and EPF

Some 157,000 students are currently enrolled across Switzerland's ten universities and two federal institutes of technology ETH and EPF. The universities offer courses in law, economics, mathematics, natural sciences, humanities, and social sciences, while the ETH and EPF focus on engineering, mathematics, and natural sciences. To gain admission, students need to have obtained their Swiss high-school diploma (Matura) or a foreign equivalent. Special require-

ments apply to students who wish to study medicine. Prospective students must normally register with any one of these institutions by the end of April.

Nine Universities of Applied Sciences

Around 80,000 students are currently enrolled across Switzerland's nine Universities of Applied Sciences, where over 60 educational departments offer practical study primarily in the areas of health, social sciences, business management, innovative technologies, music, and art. To gain admission, students need to have completed an apprenticeship-based vocational baccalaureate or a high-school diploma followed by a subsequent year of work experience.

Universities of Teacher Education

There is a University of Teacher Education in nearly every canton. Around 21,000 students are currently training to become teachers at the various school levels (nursery school, primary school, lower-secondary level, upper-secondary level) or in special needs education (e.g. speech therapy). Admission requirements vary depending on the specific course of study.

(RG)

The educationsuisse staff recommend starting your research well in advance. Please do not hesitate to contact them for information or advice.

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Tips for job hunting in Switzerland

"I want to return to Switzerland and look for a job. Can you give me any tips or information?"

As a Swiss citizen, you can work in Switzerland without a permit. If you are intending to look for a job in Switzerland, remember that just sending a CV is normally not enough. Swiss employers expect a complete application. Besides a targeted cover letter and a CV including photo, your application should include job references as well as copies of degree certificates or other relevant qualifications. The State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) has published brochures containing valuable tips on its internet platform. Here is the direct link to an overview of SECO publications and offers: ogy.de/work-swiss

There are no official rules governing the translation of documents such as degree and other certificates. If a certain document could be a very important factor in whether or not you get the job you want, it might be worth having the document translated into one of Switzerland's national languages.

The Consular Directorate (CD) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) offers the Swiss Abroad a special service in relation to the job search itself, whereby it forwards job applications to cantonal employment offices for the attention of the regional employment centres in your preferred regions. Interested employers can then look at your application at their own leisure. Here is the direct link to the CD website for job seekers: ogy.de/employment-in-switzerland

A selection of links to job search engines and job recruitment agencies is available on the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) website. Your local employment office will also be able to help you as soon as you are registered and domiciled in Switzerland. Here is the direct link to job search engines and job recruitment agencies on the OSA website: ogy.de/find-a-job

Useful links

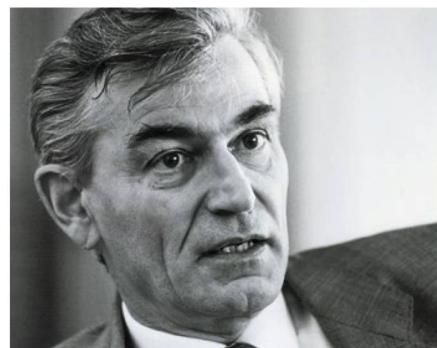
SECO: ogy.de/work-swiss

FDFA/CD: ogy.de/employment-in-switzerland

OSA: ogy.de/find-a-job

In memory of Georg Stucky

Georg Stucky headed the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) from 1998 to 2007. In August, he died at the age of 89. His legacy includes paving the way towards voting rights for the Swiss Abroad. The OSA owes Georg Stucky a debt of gratitude, as we look back fondly on his legacy.



Georg Stucky in 1989 – during his time as National Councillor

Photo: Walter Rutishauser, collection of the Library Am Guisanplatz

What a rich and fulfilling life he led! Georg Stucky worked and lived for many years in Hamburg, the Middle East and North Africa. He was the Swiss honorary consul to Libya and had first-hand knowledge about the hopes and concerns of the Swiss Abroad. Stucky was a church councillor, a cantonal government member, a National Councillor and a director at various companies. He was a member of the OSA Executive Board for 15 years, acting as vice-president from 1992 to 1998 and then president until 2007. All this is a testament to how highly people regarded Georg Stucky – and how great and lasting his legacy is.

I first encountered Georg Stucky at a meeting between the cantonal governments of Zug and Basel-Stadt. Our paths crossed again in the National Council. We became friends during the years that we spent together in the National Council Economic Affairs and Taxation Committee and, later on, in the OSA Executive Board.

Georg Stucky began championing the cause of the Swiss Abroad even before he joined the OSA. In 1986, he submitted a motion calling for an amendment to the Federal Act on the Political Rights of Swiss Citizens Abroad that would give Swiss Abroad the right to vote on all federal matters. In doing so, he played a key role in the introduction of postal voting for the Swiss Abroad at federal level. It was in 1995 that the Swiss Abroad were able to use postal voting in the federal elections for the first time.

Georg Stucky continued to promote change during his time as OSA president, e.g. introduction of e-voting; increase in the number of Swiss Abroad eligible to vote; voluntary old-age and survivors' insurance (OASI) and disability insurance (DI).

“Georg lived and breathed the OSA,” his wife told me. That much was obvious. All of us within the OSA have fond memories of him and owe him a debt of thanks. We extend our most sincere sympathies to his wife Elisabeth and family.

May he rest in peace.

Remo Gysin

President of the OSA

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