

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 48 (2021)
Heft: 1

Rubrik: Mailbag

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The elections to the Council of the Swiss Abroad

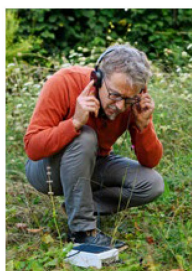
An election where only the members of certain associations can vote is a bit like no one apart from registered members of political parties being able to determine the composition of the National Council. Surely it should be easy to record every Swiss citizen living abroad – the various diplomatic missions should have everyone's address. To be a truly representative council, the CSA needs to get Switzerland's embassies to conduct the elections.

SEBASTIAN RENOLD, BRNO, CZECH REPUBLIC

The CSA elections are for an exclusive club. It says in the last issue that "Any Swiss Abroad is entitled to vote, provided that they belong to a recognised Swiss association". Yet Swiss Abroad affiliated to associations are a clear minority among Swiss living abroad. Therefore, delegates elected by association members cannot claim to "represent the interests of all Swiss Abroad". A democratically elected "Parliament of the Fifth Switzerland" would be different to what we have now.

ARTHUR MEYER, VIENNA, AUSTRIA

What does our home soil sound like?



A noisy soil is a healthy soil! There is more biodiversity under than above the surface. These organisms are responsible for the environmental benefits soils provide us. Very nice publication by the "Swiss Review". And important to grow awareness about the soil, usually not valued by people... seen by many as just dirt! Congratulations!

CRISTINE MUGGLER, MINAS GERAIS, BRAZIL

Thank you for this very interesting piece. There is indeed a noticeable difference between organically and intensively cultivated land – the latter is devoid of life! What a fascinating study.

ALAIN BONET, KIBBUTZ TZE'ELIM, ISRAEL

A new-found miracle of nature – incredible! And something from which we can all learn. Many thanks for this article.

MARIANNE SFINAROLAKI-BÜHLER, CRETE, GREECE

What a fantastic research, congratulations to the researchers and the "Swiss Review" for this wonderful publication. As an agroecologist and soil scientist I think we can promote this approach in soil research in Brazil.

GILSON WALMOR DAHMER, MATINHOS, PARANÁ, BRAZIL

Implications for the framework agreement after voters reject the "limitation initiative"



A "resounding 'yes' to the bilateral relationship with the EU" is by no means a yes to an agreement that states that one party – the European Court of Justice – would adjudicate disputes between Switzerland and the EU. That would be like a child's father settling a quarrel with someone else's child. No, Switzerland – your sovereignty is more important than bowing to diktats from Luxembourg. I am grateful that a party like the SVP are opposed. They are still Switzerland's biggest party, so less of the schadenfreude, please.

JÜRIG SCHWENDENER, PHUKET, THAILAND

History has shaped the political framework of Swiss democracy, which is heavily influenced by our country's unique mountain geography. This is why the Swiss people alone must continue to have the final word on how Switzerland's lawmakers run the country. If there is to be any rapprochement with the EU, Switzerland must insist on having special status.

DORIS THUT, MUNICH, GERMANY

It is quite interesting to see that most of the reader comments here are critical of the EU. In no way do they reflect political attitudes among the wider Swiss expatriate community. Anyone who thinks that their nationalistic, backward-looking outlook is the answer to all our ills is in cloud cuckoo land.

CHRISTOPH TWERENBOLD, COLOGNE, GERMANY

IMPRINT:
"Swiss Review", the magazine for the Swiss Abroad, is in its 47th year of publication and is published in German, French, English and Spanish in 14 regional editions. It has a total circulation of 431,000, including 253,000 electronic copies. Regional news appears four times a year. The ordering parties

are fully responsible for the content of advertisements and promotional inserts. This content does not necessarily represent the opinion of either the editorial office or the publisher.
EDITORS: Marc Lettau (MUL),
Editor-in-Chief: Stéphane Herzog (SH);
Theodora Peter (TP); Susanne Wenger (SWE); Consular Directorate, Innovation

and Partnerships, responsible for news.admin.ch
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT: Sandra Krebs
TRANSLATION: SwissGlobal Language Services AG; LAYOUT: Joseph Haas, Zürich; PRINT: Vogt-Schild Druck AG, 4552 Derendingen
POSTAL ADDRESS: Publisher, editorial office, advertising: Organisation of the

Swiss Abroad, Alpenstrasse 26,
3006 Berne, Tel.: +41313566110.
Account: IBAN CH97 0079 0016 1294
4609 8 / KBBECH22
Email: revue@aso.ch

COPY DEADLINE for this edition:
29 November 2020

All Swiss Abroad who are registered with a Swiss representation receive the magazine free of charge.
Anyone else can subscribe to the magazine for an annual fee (Switzerland: CHF 30 / abroad: CHF 50).
Subscribers are sent the magazine direct from Berne.
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