

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 49 (2022)
Heft: 1

Rubrik: Swiss Community

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The “Rütli of the Fifth Switzerland” celebrates 30 years of existence

A small commemoration took place in Brunnen (SZ) at Lake Lucerne in November in honour of the Area for the Swiss Abroad set up in 1991. It represents a piece of home for all Swiss living abroad.

Popular online language courses for young people to be repeated

Last year was the first time the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) offered online language courses to young Swiss Abroad aged 15 to 25. The courses were so popular that the OSA intends to offer them again this year.

Intensive two-week courses in German or French are available to young people aged between 15 and 25. Online teaching will give them the opportunity to learn a language or improve their language skills in an effective but creative way together with other young Swiss from all corners of the world, in a fun and social atmosphere.

The language courses will take place from 14 to 25 March 2022 and from 11 to 22 July 2022 and will be run by qualified teachers. With “Switzerland” as the dedicated theme, participants will be able to acquaint themselves with one of the official Swiss languages from the comfort of their own home, thus nurturing an attachment to their home country even if they live far away.

For further details on all OSA Youth Service offers as well as the relevant application forms, visit our website at www.swisscommunity.org > Youth offers.

MARIE BLOCH

The 5,400 square metre area on the shores of Lake Lucerne is a place of “great emotional significance”, said Alex Hauenstein, at the celebration on 18 November 2021. Hauenstein, President of the Area for the Swiss Abroad foundation, recalled how many Swiss all over the world have a connection to the square: many of them contributed financially to the purchase of this small piece of Switzerland. The location is often referred to as the “Rütli of the Fifth Switzerland” due to its symbolism.

Petra Steimen, President of Schwyz cantonal government, also emphasised this significance in her address. She spoke of a “point of reference” and a “place of longing” for Swiss Abroad. Irène May, mayor of Ingenbohl (Brunnen, SZ, is in Ingenbohl municipality), also pointed out that the square contributes to the quality of life of Brunnen’s inhabitants too: children fly their kites, older people walk by the lake and partygoers let off steam there.

The Area was opened in May 1991, the 700th year of the Confederation. The choice of Brunnen as a location is also significant, as it is prominent in the emergence of Switzerland as a country. Leading figures from Schwyz, Uri and Unterwalden met there a number of times. The gradual establishment and development of the Confederation thus began in Brunnen. The Federal Charter drafted in Brunnen on 9 December 1315, known as the “Morgartenbrief” in Swiss history books, bears witness to that



Petra Föllmi plays the accordion – and President Alex Hauenstein (left) and his deputy Norbert Mettler (right) appear in good spirits.

Photo: Josias Clavadetscher

At the event, Foundation President Alex Hauenstein also expressed his hope that the square in Brunnen would continue to represent the allegiance of Swiss Abroad to the Confederation and their connection to their home country as well as uniting the Swiss living in Switzerland with their fellow citizens in near and more far-flung foreign locations (PD/MUL)

www.auslandschweizerplatz.ch and revue.link/brunnen

What are FinTech companies?

Question: “I am a Swiss Abroad in France and have heard about FinTech company Yapeal in the media. What are FinTech companies? Are they also supervised by the Swiss authority? And what services can Yapeal offer me?”

Answer: FinTech stands for “financial technologies”. It is a collective term for modern technologies in financial services. FinTech companies offer financial services via the internet and mobile devices.

FINMA, the Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority, supervises and monitors all the financial sector areas in its role as Swiss financial regulator. Financial services provided via digital channels are also subject to the FINMA regulatory framework. The FinTech licence as per Art. 1b of the Banking Act came into effect on 1 January 2019. FINMA is responsible for granting FinTech licences.

These licences enable public deposits of up to 100 million Swiss francs or crypto-based assets, provided they are not invested and no interest is paid on them. FinTech companies are subject to the Anti-Money Laundering Act, as are all other financial intermediaries.

According to Art. 1b para. 3 of the Banking Act, these companies expressly require adequate risk management and effective internal control mechanisms that, inter alia, ensure compliance with legal and corporate requirements (compliance).

Swiss Abroad often find it difficult to maintain their financial ties with Switzerland. The Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) has spent years working to change that. The new partnership with FinTech company Yapeal, which is recognised by FINMA, is part of the OSA’s ongoing commitment, in addition to the partnership with the Banque Cantonale de Genève (BCGE),

which has been in force for some years. These are two different service types: BCGE is a bank offering Swiss Abroad the full range of banking services. Yapeal, on the other hand, is a FinTech company focused on processing international payments and initially offering its services to those countries bordering Switzerland. A further 15 countries will be added to that group in the first half of 2022.

Jana Maletic, OSA LEGAL DEPARTMENT



Yapeal offering:

yapeal.ch/auslandschweizer

Further information from FINMA:

revue.link/finma



Young, fresh, playful and forward-looking – new logo and website for the FYSA

Although the pandemic has played havoc with its schedule in recent months, the Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad (FYSA) has been anything but idle – using the extra time to work behind the scenes on a future-proofing project. This result was visible for all to see in January 2022, when the FYSA unveiled its new logo and website – showcasing a young, fresh, playful feel as part of its first visual revamp in over ten years.

Free spots on the summer holiday camps

You are warmly invited to visit the new website at www.sjas.ch and take a look at our offers for the year ahead. There are still a few free spots available on the FYSA summer holiday camps for young Swiss Abroad aged eight to 14. Taking place between the end of June and the end of August 2022, these camps are an opportunity for children to get to know Switzerland and its culture – and have a great time. Visit the new website for further details.

LOÏC ROTH


 Stiftung für junge Auslandschweizer
 Fondation pour les enfants suisses à l'étranger
 The foundation for young swiss abroad
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"The job as language assistant is perfect for me"

Isabelle Bucher, a Swiss living abroad, uses her English skills as a language assistant at a Swiss upper secondary school. Her class benefits from the young teacher from Australia – and she herself is getting to know Switzerland better.

INTERVIEW: RUTH VON GUNTEN, EDUCATIONSUISSE

In Swiss upper secondary schools and vocational schools, native speakers enrich language lessons. They not only teach language skills, but also cultural aspects of their country of origin.

These language assistants, usually young students from abroad, come to work through the Movetia agency in cooperation with educationsuisse. Isabelle Bucher is one of them: The Swiss Abroad from Australia is currently working as a language assistant at the Kantonsschule am Burggraben in St. Gallen.

Isabelle Bucher, you grew up in Australia.

What were your motives for gaining work experience in Switzerland?

I was looking for a new, challenging job in Switzerland, also to get to know the education system better. The job as a language assistant, which I found through Movetia, is perfect for me. It allows me to gain experience in teaching English outside of Australia. At the same time, I have enough time to finish my bachelor's degree. I also like living in Switzerland.

So you are still studying?

Yes, I am completing my Bachelor of Social Science and Behavioural Studies online, which includes a lot of social pedagogy and psychology, at the University of Melbourne.

Were you able to settle in quickly at the Kantonsschule am Burggraben?

It was easy to settle in. The teachers are very welcoming and helpful. The students were at the beginning surprised to have a teacher all the way from Australia. We have good opportunities to

learn from one another's culture and language.

How do you cope with everyday life in Switzerland?

Switzerland is not entirely new to me, as I was already here as an au pair a few years ago. But certainly, at the beginning it is difficult to get along in a new country. Since I knew only a few people and like to do sports, I looked for sports clubs nearby to build up a network. That helped me! Now I play football and also rugby and touch football – both very popular in Australia and therefore a little piece of "home".

Are there any differences between Australia and Switzerland that strike you particularly?

I like the completely different lifestyle in Switzerland. For example, there is less pressure to get through the day quickly. There is the lunch break during which you can eat and chat with colleagues. Some people even go home to have lunch with their family! That would be unthinkable in Australia. There, we often eat while working at the computer and find therefore little time for rest. That's why I appreciate things like that in Switzerland. And Switzerland has a great landscape! However, it is very cold here and I miss the Australian weather and the beach, but I also find it nice to be in the mountains. It would be wonderful to have a white Christmas. We celebrate Christmas in summer with a barbecue and 35 degrees.

What are your plans for the future?

I would like to continue working in Switzerland in the field of education. I



have been glad to work as an English assistant and I feel confident in finding the next professional step for me in Switzerland.

What tips would you give young Swiss Abroad who would like to work in Switzerland?

I recommend this programme from Movetia to young people looking to gain professional experience but also for general life experience and immersing themselves in another culture and language. I found Movetia, educationsuisse and the school to be very supportive.

Educationsuisse offers counselling to all young Swiss Abroad on all matters related to education in Switzerland.



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Isabelle Bucher:
"It was easy to settle in."
Photo donated