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Holiday camps since 1934

The Organisation of the Swiss Abroad has been running holiday camps for the past 90 years for young Swiss people living all over the world. We will celebrate our 90th anniversary in central Switzerland to coincide with the 100th Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Lucerne.

The camps allow young people to enjoy the warm ambiance of Switzerland, make new friends and return home with memories that last a lifetime. Details of our holiday camps are below:

From 6 to 19 July 2024

In Flüeli-Ranft (canton of Obwalden), “Sports & leisure” camp attendees can expect a summer full of fun and sporting activities, hiking and excursions.

Running in parallel, the “Swiss Challenge I” camp reveals Switzerland in all its diversity. The campers will experience the various characteristically Swiss landscapes and find out what it’s like when four languages come together in one country. This holiday experience is a mix of tourist outings, trips, mountain hikes, sport and culture.

The two camps will take place on the shores of Lake Lucerne and celebrate the 100th edition of the Congress of the Swiss Abroad and 90 years of hosting camps.

From 20 July to 2 August 2024

The second holiday camp at Flüeli-Ranft offers an action-packed programme. In addition to this, from Monday to Thursday the campers will start the day with a French or German lesson. This allows them to learn or improve their knowledge of a Swiss national language thanks to professional teaching.

From 3 to 16 August 2024

“Swiss Challenge II” marks the end of the summer season. The attendees will get to know Switzerland through games, sport and fun. Hiking in the Swiss Alps, magnificent views of the towns, lakes and plains as well as various sporting and recreational activities are all scheduled.



This small bridge in the Swiss mountains can also be seen as a symbol: holiday camps always create a connection between young Swiss people from all over the world. Photo: MAD

From 27 December 2024 to 5 January 2025

This camp will be at Davos (canton of Grisons) for an unforgettable winter adventure in the heart of the Swiss countryside. The ski camp includes an opportunity to celebrate the New Year in a unique way. It will be some people’s first experience with snow, whereas others will be able to enjoy their first ski session of the year on the slopes. Our camp has something for everyone, whether they are a beginner or an expert skier, including skiing and snowboarding lessons for all levels, to ensure that everyone can make the most of their time in the snow. Our young campers can look forward to unforgettable experiences, thrilling descents and lasting memories.

All the information on our offers can be found on our website: revue.link/youthoffers. The Youth Service also has a budget to help those Swiss Abroad with limited financial resources to attend the camps. You can find further details on our website. You will also find information there relating to donations. Whatever you can contribute will make a difference, by helping young people to attend our camps.

MARIE BLOCH



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“What are the rules regarding health insurance when returning to Switzerland?”

Question: I have spent several years abroad and now plan to return to Switzerland. What do I need to do regarding health insurance?

Answer: Health insurance is mandatory for all persons living in Switzerland. That means you have to take out compulsory cover as soon as you register in Switzerland and are resident there. Everyone is entitled to this basic insurance and the benefits are defined by law. That means health insurers may not deny compulsory cover to Swiss Abroad re-

turning to Switzerland – irrespective of age or health.

If you would like more extensive cover than what is offered under the compulsory insurance, you can take out supplementary insurance. However, that is a private insurance matter, and the health insurers are allowed to refuse cover for a certain person



Doctors' and hospital fees are high in Switzerland. That's why you need health insurance, including for emigrants returning to Switzerland.

Photo: Keystone

Holiday camps – the best time of the year

Parents and fans of summer, take note: in 2024 the Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad (FYSA) will again hold summer holiday camps as well as ski and snowboarding camps for Swiss Abroad aged 8-14. To keep pace with the rising popularity of these camps, we are now offering three new Swiss Trips plus three skiing and snowboarding holidays. On our Swiss Trips, around 30 children will visit various locations. We will travel around Switzerland with our hiking boots and tents. Our residential holiday camps have space for 35 to 50 people and this year they are taking place in regions rich in adventure in the cantons of Berne, Grisons, Lucerne, St. Gallen and Valais.

22 June to 5 July 2024:

Flüeli (LU), residential holiday camp
for 10 to 14 year olds

26 June to 5 July 2024:

Swiss Trip for 12 to 14 year olds

6 to 19 July 2024:

Kippel (VS), residential holiday camp
for 12 to 14 year olds

10 to 19 July 2024:

Adelboden (BE), residential holiday camp
for 8 to 11 year olds

10 to 19 July 2024:

Swiss Trip for 12 to 14 year olds

20 July to 2 August 2024:

Pizol (GR), residential holiday camp
for 8 to 11 year olds

20 July to 2 August 2024:

Evolène (VS), residential holiday camp
for 12 to 14 year olds

3 to 16 August 2024:

Bad Ragaz (SG), residential holiday camp
for 12 to 14 year olds

7 to 16 August 2024:

Swiss Trip for 12 to 14 year olds

27 December 2024 to 5 January 2025:

Valbella (GR), skiing and snowboarding trip
for 8 to 11 year olds

27 December 2024 to 5 January 2025:

Surprise, skiing and snowboarding trip
for 12 to 14 year olds

2 to 8 January 2025:

Lenk (BE), skiing and snowboarding trip for children
born in 2010 or 2011

The full holiday camp 2024 schedule is available on our website sjas.ch/en/. Participants can also register via our website. Please send any questions or feedback to info@sjas.ch. We hope to see you soon!

ISABELLE STEBLER AND DAVID REICHMUTH, FYSA



Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad (FYSA)
Email: info@sjas.ch / www.sjas.ch

or to apply caveats in order to exclude certain benefits.

The Federal Office of Public Health publishes a list of approved health insurers in its capacity as a supervisory authority. You can select whichever insurer you like from this list. Each family member must have their own health insurance. All insured persons pay a premium, which may differ among the insurers. It is thus advisable to compare premiums on www.priminfo.ch.

When returning to Switzerland, you must take out health insurance within three months of registering. Your cover will then be backdated to the date you became resident in Switzerland. We would also point out that a premium supplement is charged when, without adequate justification, the insurance is taken out after this three-month period has expired.

STEPHANIE LEBER, OSA LEGAL DEPARTMENT

Do you have any other questions about health insurance? You can find additional useful information on the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) website: revue.link/foph

Why there are different types of universities

Swiss universities are well placed in international rankings, and some are among the best in the world. There are three different types of higher education institutions: universities, universities of applied sciences and universities of teacher education. They are all equivalent, but still different in their university orientation.

All universities in Switzerland, except for one university of applied sciences, are public institutions. They offer study programmes organised according to the Bologna model and the ECTS credits system, on which 49 European countries have agreed. The study cycle is therefore divided into several successive stages: Bachelor, Master and doctorate/PhD. The basic studies, i.e. the Bachelor's degree programme, generally lasts six semesters with 180 ECTS credits. The subsequent Master's programme usually lasts three to four semesters with 90 to 120 ECTS. The language of instruction at Bachelor's level is usually that of the region in which the university is located. In contrast, Master's programmes are often bilingual or in English.

Most degree programmes start in September. The application deadline is usually 30 April, with a few exceptions such as medicine or special degree programmes at universities of applied sciences.

The prerequisite for admission is a Swiss Matura certificate or an equivalent foreign diploma. The universities set country-specific standards for foreign diplomas, which can be found at revue.link/requirements.

University—University of Applied Sciences—University of Teacher Education

The ten **Universities** offer degree programmes in law and economics, mathematics and natural sciences, humanities and social sciences, and conduct basic research. They are spread throughout Switzerland: in German-speaking Switzerland in St. Gallen, Zurich, Basel, Berne, Lucerne; in French-speaking Switzerland in Neuchâtel, Lausanne, Geneva; and in Italian-speaking Switzerland there is the Università della Svizzera Italiana. The University of Fribourg is German and French-speaking.

The **Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology** ETH and EPF are located in Zurich and Lausanne. They are specialised in engineering, mathematics and natural sciences.



One of the universities standing for Swiss educational diversity: the Università della Svizzera Italiana, here at the Lugano site. Photo: press service Università della Svizzera Italiana

The nine **Universities of Applied Sciences** comprise numerous institutes offering practice-oriented degree programmes in numerous fields of study. The fields of health, social sciences, business administration,

innovative technologies, music and art are particularly well regarded. They are good alternatives for students who want a stronger practical orientation in their studies. Some universities of applied sciences also offer Bachelor's degree programmes purely in English.

There are also smaller and larger **Universities of Teacher Education** throughout Switzerland, which train future teachers at all school levels.

RUTH VON GUNTEN



The language of instruction at Bachelor's level is usually that of the region in which the university is located. For these students at the Università della Svizzera Italiana, this means predominantly Italian. Photo: press service Università della Svizzera Italiana

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



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Small initial steps on the long road to more democratic CSA elections

The Council of the Swiss Abroad comprises delegates who represent the “Fifth Switzerland” in Berne. A working group is modernising the election procedure. What has it achieved so far?

What is the Council of the Swiss Abroad?

The Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA) has 140 members, including 120 delegates from abroad. The CSA is in some respects the parliament of the “Fifth Switzerland”. The delegates are elected for a four-year term, during which they represent the interests of Swiss Abroad to the Swiss authorities.

How are the delegates elected?

The elections to the Council of the Swiss Abroad do not follow a standard format. For a start, individual larger countries form a constituency. There are also regions of the world in which larger groups of countries are entitled to one or more seats. However, the most glaring deficiency is the lack of a uniform, transparent and representative electoral system.

Who are we and what is our goal?

This is where the working group, which was established in 2023 at the Congress of the Swiss Abroad in St. Gallen, comes in: it has set itself the task of proposing and promoting a standardised process for democratic elections. This standardised process can be used in the countries that wish to use it. Specifically, the working group is aiming for an e-voting tool tailored to CSA needs – plus guidelines. These guidelines will be used in the individual constituencies and show how the system works plus any points to note in particular. The new system is scheduled to be ready for the CSA elections in 2025.

What have we achieved to date?

The project aims to improve the representativeness of the Council of the Swiss Abroad. We naturally liaise regularly with the OSA directorate to report on our progress. We are also in touch with most of the countries or regions and have received initial feedback from them. For example, we have realised that implementation has become slightly harder in EU countries due to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Naturally, for a project of this scale, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) must be kept in the loop: it is the contact point for consular services for the Swiss Abroad. Having conducted initial talks with the FDFA, one challenge has become apparent: in order to hold digital elections, the email addresses of all voters will be needed as a minimum requirement. That’s why all Swiss Abroad need to provide their nearest representation (embassy or consulate) with their email address. The more addresses there are, the higher the number of people who can take part in the CSA elections – and the more representative and democratically legitimate is the election result. The exchange with the FDFA is ongoing. Other items for discussion include possible solutions to missing email addresses.

In summary, we are taking many small steps that we hope are bringing us closer to a workable and suitable solution. There is still a long way to go.

TOBIAS ORTH, WORKGROUP.OSA@OUTLOOK.COM

Is our magazine arriving late?

We are currently receiving increasing reports that the printed copy of “Swiss Review” is being delivered very late. We are extremely sorry for these delays. We are currently looking into the causes, and into ways to improve the situation. As it remains unclear how quickly the situation will improve, we would like to inform you below of two ways in which you can enjoy the magazine, while you wait for your printed copy to arrive:

- You can read the latest issue online (www.revue.ch). Or, you can download the magazine as a PDF and print it out if you like (also at www.revue.ch).
- You can install the “Swiss Review” app on your tablet or smartphone. This app allows you to download, leaf through and read each new issue, including offline. You can find the app by searching for “Swiss Review” on your app provider (App Store or Google Play).

Incidentally, if you choose to make a voluntary contribution for your subscription for the coming year in spite of the current difficulties, we would be all the happier.

MARC LETTAU, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

AND FRIEDA BLOGGS, REGIONAL EDITOR FOR X COUNTRY

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