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Switzerland and Mexico are like Yin and Yang

The Swiss Abroad Fabio Reyes grew up in Mexico and attended the Swiss school in Cuernavaca. At the age of 20, he decided to ‘emigrate’ to Switzerland. Here he talks about his experiences during his education, in the military and in his current job.

“In addition to the public schools, there are numerous private schools in Mexico, most of which offer a better and broader educational programme. I had the great privilege of attending the Swiss school, which also became my second family.

Various reasons led me to move to Switzerland in 2015: security, military service, personal and financial freedom, good educational opportunities... and my first love. At the beginning, I worked in customer service for a credit card company and then completed ten months of military service under the ‘Durchdiener’ model (service in one stretch). They were intensive months during which I learnt a lot – including about myself.

Afterwards, I opted for the two-year post-baccalaureate business training programme (Postmaturitäre Wirtschaftsausbildung PWA), which is aimed at high school graduates or students who are interested in business and are looking for a quicker entry into practice. The programme, during which you also receive a salary, consists of school and a long internship in a company. For me, this training was very instructive, but I wanted to improve my language skills.

So, I enrolled on the three-year Bachelor’s degree programme in Applied Languages at the Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW). I believed that the wide range of modules such as project and event management, marketing, research, social media communication, intercultural competence, editing and regional and cultural studies would provide me with a very useful and efficient foundation and thus open many doors for my future career. In order to be able to devote myself fully to my studies, I had saved a little and calculated well. And thanks to the scholarship from my home canton of St. Gallen, whose application process educationsuisse supported me with, my plan worked out pretty well. As I couldn’t find a suitable Master’s programme, the idea of a ‘study break’ and a change of perspective in general was attractive to me. So, I applied for a six-month internship in project management and communication at the can-



He first attended the Swiss school in Mexico, then as a young adult, he moved to Switzerland to continue his education. Photo provided

ton of Zurich’s Department of Justice. I was then able to continue working there as a project employee on a major cantonal project. I find this project work very exciting and challenging, and you learn a lot in a short space of time. However, I have to admit that I miss the multilingualism and multicultural aspect of my degree programme in everyday life. Nevertheless, I can use some of the things I

learnt during my studies in my day-to-day work, such as my knowledge of project and event management, my understanding of communication in a company and the application of my editorial skills.

People often ask me if I don’t miss Mexico. I’ve been living in Switzerland for almost nine years now and I like it here. I keep realising what a privilege it is to be able to study, work and build a life in Switzerland. Nevertheless, I miss other things that make life a

“My strategy is to get the best out of both worlds and make the most of it.”

Fabio Reyes

little more colourful. I miss the sunny weather, the culinary delights, the warm openness, serenity and spontaneity of the people, the traditions, the desire to celebrate, not only life but also death, and sometimes the loud music and the passionate telenovelas.

I think Switzerland and Mexico are like Yin and Yang; they are opposite poles and complement each other wonderfully. To be happy and not be overwhelmed by nostalgia, my strategy is to get the best out of both worlds and make the most of it.”

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



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Complex politics made simple

To explain complex proposals submitted to the vote of the people in a straightforward way: that is the aim of the new webinar series set up by the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) and its partner easyvote. The first webinar was on 14 May. There were two sessions – one in French and one in German – to present the voting papers for 9 June in a neutral way. The new programme is designed to help increase participation by Swiss Abroad in federal popular votes. The first webinar was recorded and can be viewed on our website. The next webinars in cooperation with easyvote on federal proposals submitted to the vote of the people are on 27 August and 29 October 2024. Furthermore, the 4th Congress for young Swiss Abroad is scheduled for Tuesday, 17 September.

YANNICK ACTIS, YOUTH SERVICE

www.revue.link/easyd, www.easyvote.ch

Whitsun holiday camp for children aged eight to 14

The Jublasurium national camping event run by Jungwacht Blauring – a children's and youth organisation similar to the Swiss Guide and Scout Movement – takes place next year from 7 to 9 June 2025 over the long Whitsun holiday weekend. A delegation from the Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad (SJAS) visited the Swiss National Jamboree (mova) two years ago. As was the case at mova, 25 young Swiss Abroad aged eight to 14 will also represent the SJAS at the three-day Jublasurium. Participants will be able to meet many children from Switzerland and take unforgettable memories home with them. Visit www.sjas.ch to sign up for the camp. It is recommended that participants have at least a basic knowledge of German, because Jungwacht Blauring is only active in the German-speaking part of Switzerland.

Further details about the Jublasurium: www.jublasurium.ch
More information on Jungwacht Blauring: www.jubla.ch

Stiftung für junge Auslandschweizer
Fondation pour les enfants suisses à l'étranger
The foundation for young swiss abroad
Fondazione per i giovani svizzeri all'estero

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



Excitement and anticipation

You have signed up for one of this summer's youth camps run by the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad. What are your thoughts? And what do you want to get out of your trip to Switzerland? Here are some of the answers you gave us.

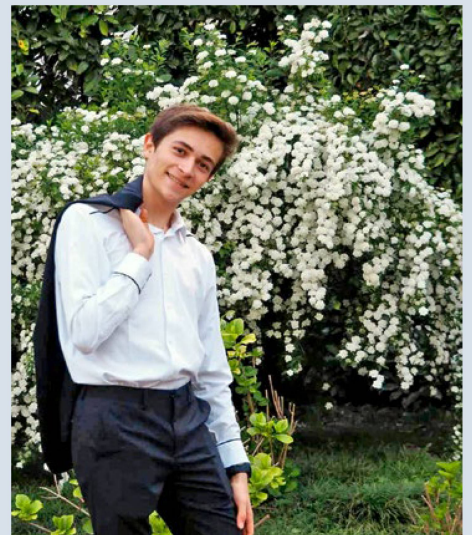
Why did you choose to go on one of this summer's camps in the first place? This year's participants gave us a variety of answers. One of our respondents, Luna, has good memories of her last camp. "My first camp was the Swiss Trip 2022. I enjoyed it so much that I just had to go on a youth camp as well," she says. Charles-Antoine, meanwhile, has his own future plans in mind: "The camp I chose gives me the chance take part in the 100th Congress of the Swiss Abroad, which is a key event for me ahead of my degree course in politics." For Aurelio and Sanja, on the other hand, the camp dates, the travel route and the number of participants were the main considerations.

How did participants feel when they heard they had been accepted? Aurelio, for one, was delighted. "I couldn't sleep for a few nights," he says. "We only have 24 participants in our Swiss Challenge 1 camp, which is perfect. I am looking forward to getting to know the culture and languages of my native country. It's really exciting." Luna was just as euphoric: "I'm so grateful for the opportunity. And so happy and relieved that my friends will also be at the camp with me!"

"It's all about diving into our Swiss culture and the languages of Switzerland."

The response from a participant as to what she was expecting from the 2024 summer camp.

And finally, what expectations, experiences or thoughts do they want to share with future camp participants? Here are a few examples from our mixed bag of answers. "It's about immersing yourself in Switzerland's culture and language. I now want to continue learning French and also start learning Italian." – "I would like to learn how to cook a traditional Swiss dish so that I can make it for my friends in Thailand." – "I'm grateful



For Charles-Antoine, the Youth Service's summer camp is synonymous with intercultural encounters and experiencing the diversity of Switzerland. Photo provided

for this amazing opportunity and can hardly wait to go! À bientôt!" We'll leave the last word to Charles-Antoine: "I cannot stress enough how important it is to meet people from other cultures and explore your own country. Taking part in a camp like this offers us a valuable opportunity to celebrate our Swiss identity while widening our horizons and developing a deeper appreciation of our country's rich heritage and cultural diversity. The experience promises to be both enriching and unforgettable."

YANNICK ACTIS, YOUTH SERVICE

www.revue.link/youthoffers

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Back in Switzerland and no job. How do I find work?

Question: I plan to return to Switzerland shortly. I don't have a job at the moment and I haven't started looking yet. What do I need to know regarding my job search in Switzerland?

Answer: As a Swiss Abroad, you don't need a work permit to seek employment in Switzerland. You can start the job search directly, even before you return to the country.

The first thing is to apply. So you need to access the right job adverts. The State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) is the Swiss labour market authority and it hosts a good platform for job seekers, www.arbeit.swiss, including a jobs portal and practical tips for applying.

When looking for a job, it's important to use as many channels as possible. Use your personal network or ask other contacts in Switzerland, and look at online job portals and newspaper adverts. You can also send speculative applications to companies and organisations that interest you. A further option would be to enlist the services of a professional HR consultant.

From outside Switzerland, the easiest way to see what jobs are available is via online job portals by creating a job search subscription, or via an employment or temping agency (subject to a fee). We have compiled a useful overview on our website.

Remember when applying that Swiss employers expect a full dossier. That includes your CV with a photo, a covering letter explaining your motivation for applying, plus copies of your employment references and qualifications, in-



The employment situation in Switzerland is good. This is shown by the commuter flows, as in Berne main station for example. Photo: Keystone

Webinar on finding work

Tip for job applicants: take part in our webinar on "Work and the labour market in Switzerland" on 10 December 2024 held in cooperation with the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) and the Soliswiss cooperative. You can find further information on this and other webinars at www.revue.link/webinare. The next webinar is on 15 October 2024. It is on the topic of "The challenge of returning to Switzerland at retirement age". (SL)

www.revue.link/webinars

If you are returning to Switzerland and looking for a job, it is important to use as many channels as possible.

cluding any additional education and training. You may need to clarify whether your professional qualifications gained outside Switzerland are recognised in the country (e.g. school-leaving certificates as well as additional education and training). Our partner organisation [educationsuisse](http://www.educationsuisse.ch) can help you with that.

In any case, you should contact the regional employment centre (RAV) in your area on your return. The agency responsible for you depends on your new place of residence. The RAV will also provide you with professional and personal advice relating to your job search.

STEPHANIE LEBER, OSA LEGAL DEPARTMENT

www.revue.link/jobsearch
www.revue.link/rec
www.work.swiss
www.educationsuisse.ch

A secure e-voting system for the 2025 CSA election

Many countries are using the UniVote e-voting system for the 2025 election to the Council of the Swiss Abroad. How secure and verifiable is its voting process? Professor Eric Dubuis, an e-voting expert, shares some insights on the complex subject.

ERIC DUBUIS

UniVote is a modern e-voting system that is secure, transparent and verifiable. It was developed in 2017 to ensure a secure and transparent procedure for electronic votes and elections – such as the election of the Council of the Swiss Abroad members. To that end, UniVote uses advanced cryptographic techniques and a dispersed infrastructure.

The votes posted by the voters are encrypted directly in their browser. That way no unencrypted data is transferred to UniVote. When the election is over, the encrypted votes are mixed up by UniVote via a cryptographic process, without their having to be encrypted in advance. This mixing ensures the votes cannot be connected with the identities of the voters. It is also possible to check that the process was performed correctly in accordance with voting secrecy requirements.

At the start of the voting process, Univote generates a pair of keys, consisting of a private and an anonymous public key. This is

About the author

Eric Dubuis is an established e-voting expert. In his more than 30 years at Bern University of Applied Sciences, his main interest was in cybersecurity and verifiable e-voting systems. Eric Dubuis is also a founding member of the Swiss E-Voting Competence Center.

done via a personal identification number (PIN) entered in the browser by the eligible voter. The private key stays with the voter while the public key is used anonymously in the system to validate the vote and ensure the integrity of the process.

UniVote uses a decentralised infrastructure whereby different independent components distribute the tasks among themselves according to the rules of an e-voting protocol. At the end of this process, no component



Eric Dubuis says that e-voting systems must always be “transparent, secure and verifiable”. Photo: Marc Lettau

can determine which vote comes from which person. After the mixing, the components jointly decrypt the votes and publish the result on the UniVote public bulletin board. The bulletin board is a transparent platform where all the important information on verifying the voting process is displayed. Voters and independent auditors can review the

entire voting process there. That includes both reviewing all the votes cast and allowing every eligible voter to confirm that their vote was correctly registered and counted.

UniVote ensures via these confidence-building measures that the entire voting process is transparent, secure and verifiable. The system enables voters to place their vote in an electronically secure manner, in the knowledge that the process conforms to exacting data protection and security standards.



Eric Dubuis at the March 2024 exchange with CSA delegates at the Federal Palace. Photo: Marc Lettau

Discussion



Cartoon: Max Spring

Discussion: “Rich Switzerland and its cost-of-living crisis” (edition 3/2024)

RUDOLF MEGERT, RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

From an international perspective, it is not only the Swiss who are increasingly struggling to make ends meet. The same applies to people in places like Canada, Germany and Brazil. No great surprise, but it shows one important thing: that broad sections of the population are now reaping the grim consequences of what the powers that be

have sown over the last couple of decades. And the latest people in the corridors of power are still doing nothing to correct those serious mistakes of the 2000s and 2010s.

VERENA SCHNEEMANN, LANGEAC, FRANCE

Cost-of-living crisis in Switzerland? Talk about first-world problems.

ARYE OPHIR, ISRAEL

Does that mean the Swiss are struggling to make ends meet because Switzerland is a wealthy country? Or have I missed something?

JOACHIM HEIDRICH, PHILIPPINES

You omitted to talk about the pensioners with considerably lower pensions than you mention in your article. Who, in the end, have to choose to emigrate to a lower-cost country to live a decent life.

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MARC LETTAU, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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Circus tent to host Nat Cartier’s final performance

Multi-instrumentalist Nathaniel “Nat” Cartier from Edinburgh is currently in Switzerland, or Brunnen (canton of Schwyz) to be precise, courtesy of the Area for the Swiss Abroad Foundation, which appointed Cartier as its Artist in Residence for 2024. His five-week residency ends in August. Following a number of appearances in July, the musician, who has Swiss roots, is also due to perform live in August. Cartier will appear on the main stage in Brunnen at an event celebrating Swiss National Day on 1 August. He makes his final bow on 18 August from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the Circus Monti tent, also in Brunnen, as part of the annual “Spettacolo” street performance

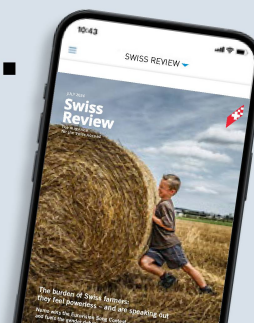
festival (www.revue.link/spettacolo), where he will present the results of his creative sojourn in Switzerland. As Artist in Residence, Cartier has been commissioned by the Area for the Swiss Abroad Foundation to produce three songs. He has also been asked to do four paintings – with help from people attending his act. The pictures will be auctioned as part of Cartier’s final curtain call. The proceeds will help to fund the next Artist in Residence project.

(PD/MUL)

www.auslandschweizerplatz.ch

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