

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 86 (2020)
Heft: [5]

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News from Swiss Abroad | Nachrichten aus der Schweiz im Ausland

Possible legal aid for Swiss abroad

Many Swiss living abroad are unaware of the free legal service the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) provides. This free service advice is available regarding emigration, as well as Swiss wishing to return to Switzerland. Further information and links are available on the OSA webpage.

The OSA has also taken on the secretarial function for several independent foundations and funds for the benefit of the Swiss living

abroad. All enquiries have to be addressed to the OSA:

•E.O. Kilcher Fund:

This Fund is available for possible start up aid for returning Swiss in need, as well as additional scholarships for Swiss students abroad in Switzerland.

•Fund Freiburghaus:

This Fund might be available for additional scholarship for Swiss students abroad in

Switzerland.

•Heinrich Hubert Fund:

With this Fund the OSA has limited options at its disposal to assist and help Swiss living abroad in need who have been affected, for example, by natural disasters such as hurricanes, bushfires or earthquakes etc.

Peter Ehrler

Elected Council Member of the Swiss Abroad representing New Zealand

Switzerland to clarify F-permit rights

At the end of August the government announced, people in Switzerland holding an F-permit are facing restricted travel options but better access to the Swiss job market.

The F-permit provides temporary or provisional residency status for people who have not been granted asylum, but who also cannot be repatriated, usually for health or security reasons.

The new rules would prohibit F-permit holders – ‘provisionally admitted foreigners’ – from visiting their country of origin, unless it's to prepare a permanent move back. Travelling without authorisation would lead to a loss of the permit and status.

The rules also prohibit travel to other countries, though case-by-case exceptions would be possible for the death of a family member, a school trip, or a training or professional visit.

The pending changes to the Federal Act on Foreign Nationals also state that F-permit holders would be able to move from one canton to another for a job or educational purposes if they or their family are not receiving social aid.

The F-permit has been debated and criticised by some as leading to a situation ‘in limbo’, while others have said it is granted too easily to people who should be sent home sooner.

The government has also said that the term ‘provisionally admitted foreigners’ – which has been criticised as misleading as such people often spend many years in Switzerland – is not going to be changed.

Parliament will have to ratify the modifications before they come into force.

swissinfo.ch

Cover: Jet d'eau, Lake Geneva

The Jet d'eau (water jet) fountain is to Geneva, what the Sky Tower is to Auckland: an unmissable symbol and icon. Visible from just about everywhere, you can't miss it during a stay!

Originally, in 1886 the fountain was a mere safety measure to control and release the excess pressure from the city's hydraulic plant. As workers left the site in the evening, they would shut off the valves to the plant, this resulted in pressure growing dangerously and placing the turbines at risk of damage. So to avert a disaster at the plant, a pressure release jet of water was created, reaching 30 meters high.

Five years later in 1891, after it rapidly became an interest for many, the city started to use its famous symbol as an attraction for the city. Celebrating the 600th anniversary of the Swiss confederation, the city decided the tourism potential was immense and so the Fountain was improved, made larger and was relocated to the centre of the Lake and the end of the Eaux-Vives jetty.

Soon after being moved and upgraded, the fountain became the symbol of strength, ambition and vitality of Geneva and Switzerland. Its strong engines pump 500 litres of water per second, at 200 km/h, to a height of 140 meters and is now one of the tallest fountains in the world.

To get an up-close and personal view of the fountain, you can walk the pathway going straight to the fountain, and if you're feeling a little hot and need cooling off, you can continue around it... but be prepared to get a little wet!

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