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Making new friends, enjoying the scenery, and experiencing lasting memories – camp participants sitting near a Roman bridge by the Verzasca river.

Photo: Leonie Eyer, "Swiss Challenge"

## Holiday camps in 2024 for Swiss Abroad aged 15 or over

With wonderful memories of this year's summer camps, we at the Youth Service of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) are now preparing our camps for 2024. As always, we look forward to starting the registration process for the next set of summer and winter camps in Switzerland.

A wealth of experiences, adventures, fun and encounters with fellow young Swiss Abroad from various continents awaits. We look forward to seeing many new and familiar faces next year. Here is an overview of our holiday camps in 2024:

- 6.7.24–19.7.24** Sport and leisure camp in Flüeli-Ranft (canton of Obwalden), including a visit to the 2024 Congress of the Swiss Abroad
- 6.7.24–19.7.24** "Swiss Challenge" covering various Swiss regions, including a visit to the 2024 Congress of the Swiss Abroad
- 20.7.24–2.8.24** Sports, leisure and language camp in Flüeli-Ranft (canton of Obwalden), including German or French course
- 3.8.24–16.8.24** "Swiss Challenge" covering various Swiss regions
- 27.12.24–5.1.25** New Year ski camp in Davos (canton of Grisons)
- For further information, visit [revue.link/events](https://www.sjas.ch/revue.link/events).

You can sign up online from 9 January 2024, 2 p.m. (Swiss time) to 15 March 2024 for the summer camps, and by 30 September for the New Year ski camp. (FS)



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## Summer camps for children aged 8 to 14

Swiss children living abroad will have an opportunity to get to know Switzerland and its culture – and have a great time with around 40 other children from around the world – at a series of two-week summer holiday camps from the end of June to the end of August 2024. Registration for these camps begins on 9 January 2024. Here are the camp dates:

- Saturday 22 June – Friday 5 July 2024:** Two holiday camps for 12 to 14-year-olds – one in Flüeli (canton of Lucerne); one that criss-crosses Switzerland ("Swiss trip").
- Saturday 6 July – Friday 19 July 2024:** Three holiday camps – one for 8 to 11-year-olds; one for 12 to 14-year-olds; one that criss-crosses Switzerland ("Swiss trip").
- Saturday 20 July – Friday 2 August 2024:** Two holiday camps – one for 8 to 11-year-olds; one for 12 to 14-year-olds.
- Saturday 3 August – Friday 16 August 2024:** Two holiday camps – one for 10 to 14-year-olds; one that criss-crosses Switzerland ("Swiss trip").

Further details on the various offers (locations, age groups, etc.) will be available online from mid-December 2023 at [www.sjas.ch](http://www.sjas.ch). The registration deadline is 15 March 2024.

The Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad (FYSA) aims to give all Swiss children living abroad the chance to get to know Switzerland in this way at least once. We therefore offer price reductions whenever these are justified. The relevant fee reduction application form is available to fill in when you sign up to a camp. For further details, please do not hesitate to contact the FYSA. (DR)

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

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## Together across borders

The 100th Congress of the Swiss Abroad will take place in the magnificent setting of Lucerne, against the backdrop of Lake Lucerne and the majestic Alpine peaks. And that's not all – we will be celebrating three anniversaries, and enjoying an interesting exchange of ideas.



The Chapel Bridge and its water tower – one of the most iconic sights in Lucerne. Photo: Lucerne tourist board/Anina Fässler

The 100th Congress of the Swiss Abroad, scheduled for 11-13 July 2024 in Lucerne, is a historic occasion for the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA), SwissCommunity. Under the theme “Together across borders”, this congress will celebrate the enduring, often invisible and yet profound link between the Swiss Abroad and their home country.

We also have two other big anniversaries to celebrate in 2024: 90 years of organising holiday camps for young Swiss Abroad, and 50 years of the “Swiss Review”, a vital information source for the “Fifth Switzerland”. These anniversaries emphasise once again the importance of cross-border connections and the key role of the OSA, SwissCommunity, in maintaining ties with Switzerland.

Since the first congress in 1918, Swiss migration has undergone a remarkable evolution, with more than 800,000 of our compatriots living abroad in 2023, equivalent to more than 10 percent of the Swiss population. There was a time when people left intending never to return as they searched for a brighter future elsewhere. Today, we are seeing a more dynamic international mobility of shorter duration, often prompted by

career opportunities or a quiet retirement in another country. The needs of the Swiss Abroad have also evolved over the decades.

The history of the OSA Congress also reflects societal developments. The Second World War saw the cancellation of four con-

gresses, while the 2020 and 2021 editions could not take place as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. These 105 years have seen major transformations in mobility and means of communication. We have progressed from writing the occasional letter home, which took months to arrive, to instantaneous hyperconnectivity from anywhere.

The 100th Congress of the Swiss Abroad will be a memorable occasion. It will address the past, present and future of the Swiss diaspora and will enable us to celebrate this



The Lion Monument commemorates the Swiss Guards who fell during the Storming of the Tuileries in Paris in 1792.



Boats are a common sight in Lucerne – vintage paddle steamer “Uri”, moored at Bahnhofquai.

Photo: Lucerne tourist board/Elmar Bossard

## The Swiss Abroad, ambassadors of cross-border philanthropy



View from the slopes of Mount Pilatus down to Lake Lucerne and the city of Lucerne. Photo: Lucerne tourist board/Elmar Bossard

connection to our homeland which is reflected in the spirit of unity among the Swiss wherever they may live.

The event will feature the active participation of over 60 young Swiss Abroad who have participated in the holiday camps, with a Swiss government representative also in attendance. Moreover, the presence of the business and research communities will offer numerous networking opportunities. The festivities will include official speeches, entertainment and much more besides, all in two iconic locations: Lucerne and the Square of the Swiss Abroad in Brunnen, enabling attendees to discover or rediscover a region rich in tradition and the characteristic Swiss experience.

Reserve the dates so we can all attend the 100th Congress in a festive, convivial and welcoming ambience.

MAYA ROBERT-NICOUD, OSA



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For more information: [revue.link/congres24](https://revue.link/congres24)



Generosity is deeply engrained in the Swiss DNA and the Swiss Abroad are no different. A survey conducted by gfs.bern for the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) and mediating body Swiss Philanthropy Foundation (SPF) shows that over 90% of the Swiss Abroad make charitable donations.

A total of 2,583 Swiss Abroad living in 123 countries worldwide took part in this survey between 26 June and 26 July 2023. More than half of them regularly donate between 50 and 499 Swiss francs in support of different causes; the average donation in Swiss households is 350 francs.

Three-quarters of respondents said they considered philanthropy important. Among the main drivers of this generosity are knowing exactly where the funds are going and how those funds will make a difference. Solidarity is another major motivating factor in people deciding to make charitable donations. The survey also shows how people from families with a tradition of giving are more likely to donate, emphasising the importance of preserving philanthropy through the generations. The main causes supported by the Swiss Abroad are combating poverty and supporting development, followed by health, the environment and education.

The OSA commissioned this survey to determine whether charitable giving, like the exercise of political rights, is a means of staying connected to Switzerland. The results showed that only 13 percent of Swiss Abroad make donations in Switzerland and that a mere 9 percent have already made provisions for legacies in their will. So, although there is still work to be done, avenues are also in place to promote the philanthropy of the Swiss Abroad in Switzerland.

SPF, as the mediating foundation, works with donors living in and outside Switzerland on a daily basis. One of SPF's main objectives is to give more support to the philanthropy of the Swiss Abroad, particularly through providing solutions to structure their donations in a framework of good governance, for example by creating sheltered funds where people can donate during their lifetime as well as through their estate. The cross-border donation network Transnational Giving Europe also facilitates donations to Switzerland from Europe.

CONSTANCE CHAIX, SWISS PHILANTHROPY FOUNDATION

For more information:  
Link to the report in German or French: [revue.link/generosite](https://revue.link/generosite)  
Swiss Philanthropy Foundation: [www.swissphilanthropy.ch](https://www.swissphilanthropy.ch)



# An apprenticeship in Switzerland opens up prospects for the future

Do you know exactly what a plastics technologist or an arboriculturist does? These are just two of around 245 professions in which young people, and also adults, can complete an apprenticeship in Switzerland. Last August, more than 70,000 young people, that is about two thirds of all school leavers, started an apprenticeship.

## Why a vocational apprenticeship

An apprenticeship is very varied, and allows the apprentice to plunge straight into the working world. The training takes place three to four days a week in a private or public company and one to two days a week at vocational school. There are also a few full-time vocational schools.

A plus point is the small wage that the apprentice earns throughout the training.

## Prospects after the VET vocational diploma

An apprenticeship lasts three or four years, depending on the profession. Those who complete their apprenticeship and gain the Federal VET Diploma are well prepared for



An enormous range characterizes the 245 professions for which apprenticeships are offered in Switzerland – from arboriculturist ...

work in their chosen profession. The Swiss labour market is constantly on the lookout for people with expert skills. There are numerous in-service training opportunities for professionals, including federal examinations and diplomas.

During or after the apprenticeship, it is possible to complete the vocational baccalaureate, which opens the way to universities of applied sciences. Like the “traditional” universities, these offer Bachelor’s and Master’s degree programmes and are very practice-oriented.

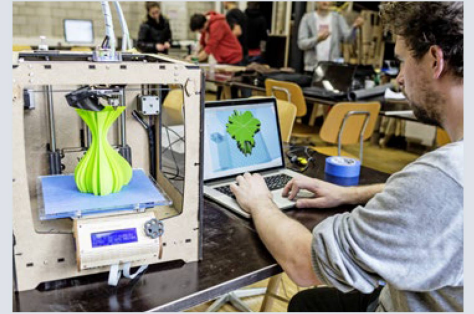
## Required language skills

Depending on the language region, knowledge of French, German or Italian is required. Usually, for an apprenticeship a B2 level is required, and for skilled trades a B1 level.

## How and where to find an apprenticeship

You can find out how and where to find apprenticeships on the official website of the Swiss vocational, educational and career guidance service [www.berufsberatung.ch](http://www.berufsberatung.ch). All professions are presented there in detail alongside a list of vacant apprenticeship positions. In addition, many companies publish vacancies on their websites or on job portals.

Your application must be prepared with care. The dossier should contain a CV, a let-



... to plastics technologist. What all apprenticeships have in common is that they combine practical training in a company with theoretical training at a vocational school. Photos: Keystone

ter of motivation and other documents such as certificates, relevant diplomas and grades from the last school year. The letter of motivation should be clearly formulated, but not too long, and it should make clear why you are seeking this particular training.

On the above-mentioned website you will find many useful tips for compiling your dossier. Some companies also require an aptitude test such as the Multicheck (more about the Multicheck at: [revue.link/multicheck](http://revue.link/multicheck)).

## Finances

The salary an apprentice earns is not enough to ensure financial independence. However, if parents are not able to support their children financially, there is the possibility of applying for scholarships.

The staff at [educationsuisse](http://educationsuisse.ch) will be happy to advise you on this as well as on all other topics related to education in Switzerland.

## Scholarships for vocational training or university studies in Switzerland

The “Foundation for the Swiss Abroad” has been managing funds since 1961 to support young Swiss abroad who wish to complete a vocational apprenticeship or university studies in Switzerland and whose families do not have sufficient resources.

For further information and to submit a scholarship application, please contact

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## Discussion: an order of merit – and calls for more democracy

We recently wrote about a Holocaust survivor who has devoted her life to honouring the memory of her rescuer. This woman has now been awarded one of the highest honours in Hungary. The latest articles in our magazine have also prompted many of you to write in from around the world.



Agnes Hirschi  
Photo: Danielle Liniger

### Agnes Hirschi receives the Hungarian Order of Merit

The May edition of “Swiss Review” contained an article about Agnes Hirschi from Berne. On 30 October 2023, Hirschi was awarded the Order of Merit of the Kingdom of Hungary at the behest of the Hungarian president, Katalin Novák. Agnes Hirschi escaped the Holocaust in Hungary as a child – thanks to Swiss diplomat Carl Lutz, who later became her stepfather. Since retiring 20 years ago, she has made it her vocation to tell others about what Lutz did in saving her and thousands of others from the Holocaust. Hungary has now honoured her in recognition of her work. For more information, visit [www.carl-lutz.com](http://www.carl-lutz.com). (MUL)

### More democracy for the “Parliament of the Fifth Switzerland”

#### MAYA NERINI, EVIAN, FRANCE

The majority of Swiss Abroad have done fairly well in life, I would say, hence they deserve to be elected into the Council of the Swiss Abroad and have their say as members of the “Parliament of the Fifth Switzerland”. Unfortunately, delegate positions have only ever gone to people who belong to Swiss associations. Many of these delegates are retired and blocking the way for others. You hear of people who have been in the Council for 30 years and keep getting

elected! Swiss Abroad who are not affiliated to any Swiss association should also be able to get elected.

#### GÉRALD BOREL, FLORIANOPOLIS, BRAZIL

Regarding political participation in general, it is absurd that Switzerland is still unable to make e-voting available to all expatriates. And I mean everyone – including those who live in remote corners of the world or in countries with unreliable postal services. The frequently cited “security concerns” no longer hold water given the technology at our disposal.

### “Fifth Switzerland” voting behaviour

#### ALEJANDRO LEMP PAVEZ, SANTIAGO, CHILE

The “Swiss Review” article on expatriate voting behaviour in the last 36 popular votes was an outstanding analysis of how much political influence we as voters abroad actually have. [revue.link/abstimmen](http://revue.link/abstimmen)

### Benches – a ubiquitous piece of Swiss outdoor furniture

#### RUDOLF MEGERT, LEIPZIG, GERMANY

The humble (park) bench is the height of culture! Places without benches are not quite as inviting. Being able to sit on a bench in peace on my own – and enjoy nature – is my idea of bliss.

Visit the online edition of “Swiss Review” at [www.revue.ch](http://www.revue.ch). Read the latest comments on our articles and join the conversation yourself. You can also share your opinions on the community discussion forum of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA).

Link to the SwissCommunity discussion forum: [members.swisscommunity.org/forum](http://members.swisscommunity.org/forum)



## The print edition of “Swiss Review” remains reliant on donations

Now for the hard truth: the print edition of “Swiss Review”, particularly appreciated by many readers in the “Fifth Switzerland”, will continue to rely on monetary donations in 2024. The rise in energy and raw material prices has hit us hard financially – and mailing costs are set to increase sharply next year too. This is a huge challenge for a magazine available to read for free.

Not only do you, our readers, want to read the magazine, you also want a tangible and physical reminder of Switzerland to hold in your hands. And we want to be able to offer you this. We would, therefore, be extremely grateful if you were able to pay a voluntary subscription to help fund the print edition of “Swiss Review” in 2024. All donations to the magazine are a great source of motivation for us.

**Voluntary subscriptions from our readers are, therefore, an important and much-appreciated way to ensure the print edition’s long-term survival. We hope you agree that this latest magazine illustrates our unwavering commitment to the hard-copy format, as we believe that we have put together another content-packed, stimulating and highly readable “Swiss Review”. And we would really like to continue doing this in future - for you, our readers.**

MARC LETTAU, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

How to contact “Swiss Review”:  
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