



Portrait of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad

The Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) is a centre of expertise for all issues concerning Swiss citizens living abroad and the international mobility of Swiss people. It is a non-political, non-denominational and independent non-governmental organisation. It is made up of the Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA) and the administrative office and has links worldwide with Swiss associations and institutions abroad as well as the Swiss schools abroad.

In accordance with Article 40 of the Swiss Federal Constitution, the OSA aims to maintain close relations between Switzerland and its citizens abroad. It supports the cross-border mobility of Swiss citizens and encourages exchange between Switzerland and its Diaspora. It also focuses in particular on young Swiss people abroad.

The OSA represents the interests of the Swiss living abroad vis-à-vis the authorities and the public in Switzerland. The Council of the Swiss Abroad, elected by the Swiss communities abroad, acts as a representative of the Swiss Diaspora.

The OSA keeps Swiss citizens abroad informed about major events and developments in Switzerland. It provides citizens abroad who are eligible to vote with the basic information they require to exercise their political rights in Switzerland.

The OSA creates links between the Swiss abroad themselves and between the Swiss abroad and the authorities, institutions and public in Switzerland. In this respect, it collaborates with the Swiss associations and institutions abroad in particular.

The OSA provides Swiss citizens with advice on issues relating to emigration, stays in foreign countries and returning to Switzerland. Together with its partner organisations, it provides a wide range of services for the Swiss abroad.

To perform its duties on behalf of the Swiss abroad (or the "Fifth Switzerland" as they are also referred to), the OSA relies on volunteers as far as possible. It works closely with the federal, cantonal and communal authorities and partner institutions.

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