

REGIONAL NEWS

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Editorial



Dear readers,

The tight and controversial outcome of the mass immigration initiative in February in Switzerland has shown me something clearly: it is crucial that all Swiss living abroad vote regularly. The more than 700000 Swiss citizens living outside of the country's borders – making up about ten percent of the total population – can make a difference.

Now it has to be determined how the outcome of this specific voting will affect the Swiss living abroad, specifically in the EU...

All the best,
GISELA PIERCEY

A big question mark after the mass immigration voting

How will the outcome of the mass immigration initiative affect Swiss living abroad? The consequences will be discussed at large this year..

By the time you read this article the first ASO meeting for 2014 has taken place in Bern, on 22nd March 2014. A report back to you will be published in the June issue of Swiss Review. Some of the main and most important topics that have been discussed are:

- Personenfreizügigkeit
- Altersvorsorge
- Auslandschweizergesetz
- Banken

Looking back at the first quarter of 2014 I must admit Switzerland made some interesting reading!

Ramifications of 1st voting of 2014

2013 is being labeled as "Auswanderungsjahr". Approximately 10 000 Swiss

packed their bags and went looking for greener pastures. According to statistics more than 715 000 Swiss are living abroad and more than half live in the neighboring EU countries. Whatever the outcome of the voting on the limitation of mass immigration one can only speculate about the

consequences. The real question here is; what will the actual and true significance be for the Swiss living abroad?

Following the results of the voting on February 9th where 50.3% of the voters backed the initiative, the media was covered with analysis of the pros and cons of the initiative. A protest in Bern early March attracted more than 10'000 people, all showing support for immigrant's rights, free movement of people and good relations with the European Union. One of the main concerns of the organizers of the event is to prevent discrimination against Swiss workers and Swiss living in EU countries. A known fact is that Switzerland will have to re-negotiate its bilateral accord with the EU of the free movement of people within the next 3 years, or revoke it. Swiss Interior Minister Alain Berset said during an interview the decision by Swiss voters to limit immigration was "neither the

end of the world nor necessarily the end of bilateral treaties – but there will be consequences, that's clear".

E-voting

Together with four other European countries, Switzerland is pushing the e-voting technology. The aim is to introduce e-voting by the next parliamentary elections in October 2015. Ongoing test periods are being done and currently half of the country's 26 cantons have been participating in trials using three different systems. Security forms a big part of the trials and despite ongoing criticism the trials will continue giving priority to cyber security over speed.

Embassy closure

Parliamentarian and leading member of the Swiss Abroad Council, Roland Büchel, expressed the concern about the decline in benefits for the more than 700'000 Swiss living abroad. With this Büchel is referring to the closure of consular services and representation

WHERE DO THE SWISS ABROAD LIVE?

Total: 732,183



Design: Kai Reusser Data: Daniele Mariani

services. Büchel's motion to freeze the reorganization of the consular network was thrown out unanimously, ending discussion for the time being.

However Filippo Lombardi, leading representative of the Swiss Abroad, is putting pressure on the government through a legal amendment whereby he wants the cabinet to consult the foreign affairs committees before decisions on Swiss abroad issues are taken. This could also lead to greater awareness amongst the cabinet members with regards to the important issues concerning Swiss abroad.

According to Foreign Minister Didier Burkhalter, Switzerland was still well-represented with about 170 embassies. More than 60 Swiss consulates, consulates general and consular units mainly in Europe have been closed since 1990. Among them are 25 consular units in embassies that have been

replaced by 13 regional hubs.

Till next time, best wishes from your ASO representatives.

MARCIE BISCHOF &
HANS-GEORG BOSCH

Consular visits of the Regional Consular Centre Pretoria during 2014

After the visits to Durban and Mauritius last year, the Regional Consular Centre Pretoria (RCC) will be holding Consular meetings in Harare and Luanda this year.

Please take note of the following schedule:

Harare, Zimbabwe
12.-14.08.2014
Luanda, Angola
09.-10.09.2014

Swiss citizens will have the opportunity to apply for a Swiss passport and can also attend to any other consular business. Please use this opportunity to make direct contact with a representative of the RCC.

Check if and for how long your current Swiss passport is

valid. We will try to visit the two countries every three years.

If you wish to order a new passport in Luanda or Harare this year, you will have to present yourself in person on one of the above mentioned days due to the biometric data that has to be registered. If you are not available during these days to see us, you also have the possibility to attend to the formalities during your visits to Switzerland at any Swiss passport office. Please take note that some of the Swiss passport offices have long waiting lists and it is, therefore, useful to plan a few months ahead by informing the RCC about your intentions. The passport office of your choice has to be contacted by the RCC.

Swiss citizens registered in Angola and Zimbabwe will receive a letter with detailed information to make an appointment (appointments are compulsory) and about the venue a few weeks before

the visit. It is important that you register your current e-mail address and/or your postal address in order to receive the information. Please update your contacts by e-mail to: southernafrica@eda.admin.ch .

We are looking forward to seeing you soon.

Contact details:
Regional Consular Centre in Pretoria: E-mail: southernafrica@eda.admin.ch
Tel. +27 (0)12 452 06 61
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Energy Efficient Clay Brick Project launched

The introduction of the Vertical Shaft Brick Klin (VSBK) technology for clay brick-making in South Africa will result in a 10 percent reduction in the carbon emitted by the industry by 2017. Swisscontact director Mr. Juancho Hagnauer, said this at the launch of the



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IMPRESSUM

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Number	Deadline Date	Date of distribution
03/2014	7 May 2014	11 June 2014

Dear readers, for address changes please contact the official Swiss representation in your country.

Energy Efficient Clay Brick (EECB) in Pretoria, South Africa. The Government of Switzerland, through the Swiss Development Cooperation's Global Programme on Climate Change (GPCC) is funding the project and Swisscontact is the implementing partner.

"This is a substantial contribution to CO2 emission reduction in South Africa, and will help to meet the country's commitment at the 15th United Nations COP17 Summit to reduce emissions



by 34 percent in 2020," said Hagnauer.

South Africa has a high carbon intensive economy and with 90 percent of electricity generated from coal, industry contributes the most to CO2 emissions. In order to curb emissions growth, the Government has introduced several policies and regulations, among which include regulations and standards for air quality, and the imminent carbon tax for industries.

Faced with regulatory pressures, the clay brick industry is exploring the use of new technologies and measures to reduce energy consumption and CO2 emissions in the production process. In the previous phase, SDC and Swisscontact have supported the clay brick sector by introducing the energy efficient firing technology, the VSBK. To

date, 6 energy efficient VSBK shafts have been constructed and 18 more are currently under construction in Langkloof Bricks in Jeffrey's Bay.

By the end of this phase (October 2017), the project expects EE technologies and practices to be effectively transferred to a critical mass of clay brick producers. The project expects to reach more than 50 producers and will increase their annual profitability by up to R5 million. In so doing, the producers will also reduce their CO2 emissions by an estimated 320 000 tons annually, with a 10 reduction in input energy.

"We will continue to forge partnerships between various government departments, clay brick producers, service providers, financial institutions, private and public sector stakeholders to achieve favorable regulations that support the transition to energy efficient production," said Hagnauer.

For more information about the project, visit www.swisscontact.co.za. (SDC)

Switzerland presents a new website and App on Women's Human Rights

Nelson Mandela once said "To deny people their human rights is to challenge their very humanity". There is much wisdom in these words. The promotion of Human Rights is a priority of Swiss Foreign Policy.

The Swiss Government is convinced that sustainable development and inclusive economic growth can be achieved only by associating development and respect for human rights, says Switzerland Federal Councilor, Didier Burkhalter.

The new Women's Human Rights (W'sHR) App is a practical tool for easy access to relevant international legal instruments as well as agreed language contained in 128 UN documents on women's human rights adopted by UN bodies. In addition, it also comprises a range of regional documents. This new innovative tool serves stakeholders as a basis for strong argumentation and allows for more coherent and efficient negotiation processes. It helps to safeguard negotiated achievements and to make further progress in the field of women's human rights and gender equality.

W'sHR App has a clear and user-friendly structure based on over 100 keywords. For each keyword it provides an overview, keyword-related legal basis and agreed UN language.

Over the last decades, great progress has been made at the international level by

establishing a coherent human rights system with an integrated approach to human rights and development. However, human rights, and in particular the human rights of women and girls, are often challenged, threatening the progress achieved. Worldwide gender disparities and discrimination against women and girls persist. Yet, the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment would unleash the full potential of half the world's population. It is a prerequisite and driver for poverty eradication, sustainable development, peace and security, and human rights.

The United Nations as well as subregional and regional organisations play a central role in establishing international norms and standards to advance development and human rights. They provide a platform to States to defend their interests through the negotiation of international texts such as resolutions, declarations or outcome documents of international conferences.

Visit www.womenshumanrights.ch to download the app. (SDC)

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We had to start 2014 on a sad note as our long standing and honorary member Kurt Scheurer passed away on the 13th of January after a short illness. Most of you would remember that Kurt was involved with the Club and Subsections and particularly the Swiss Choir for decades – may he rest in peace.

A few dates which you can already diarise now are the Metzgete on the 19th July, the Swiss National Day celebrations on the 3rd August and the year end Christmas lunch on the 7th December. Remember also that the Soccer World Cup is happening in Brazil from the 12th June to the 13th July and we will of course have our big screen and other TV's available for you to enjoy this spectacle! We will make sure that Wolfgang will have some specials on his menu for you during that period. All the Subsections would have had their AGM's by now with the Skittling Club and the Choir being the most recent on the 21st and 27th February respectively. The Skittling Club's new season is scheduled to start in the middle of March and it will be a full calendar again as always, whereas the Swiss Choir is busy with earnest preparations and rehearsals for this year's Eidgenössische Jodlerfest in DAVOS in which they will take part from the 3rd to the 6th July. They still have a couple of gigs lined up in the meantime which they

can use as kind of mini dress rehearsals with one of them already having been at a recent function for the Swiss Company Bühler – but in no time the trip to Switzerland will be upon them – Good Luck for this prestigious competition. Our Clubs of Society: Afro Gugge, Amicale Suisse Romande, Boccia, Skittling Club. Associated Groups: Swiss Choir, Swiss Rifle Club, Swiss Golf, G.S.N.A Senior Swiss Circle meets every 2nd Saturday of the month for Lunch Swiss Ladies meet every 4th Thursday of the month for lunch; Swiss Rifle Club Johannesburg: We shoot every 4th Sat of the month, from 09h00. We normally shoot two different programs. This is done with Swiss rifles, provided by the club. For more info visit our Facebook site or call Daniel on 082-5699146.

SWISS CLUB PRETORIA:

Swiss Society Alpina, Hans-Georg Bosch, President, T 0123478310, C 0825510222, swissclub.pta@hbosch.com, Biffy van Rooyen, Secretary Facebook group: Swiss Club Alpina

SWISS CLUB CAPE TOWN:

Swiss Social&Sports Club, Bill Peters Road, Green Point, www.swissclub.co.za . PRESIDENT : Stefan Pflöcksch, stefanp@execsonthemove.co.za T 021 715 2703, C 082 920 9351 VICE PRESIDENT: Nicky Rodrigues nicky.rodrigues@za.sabmiller.com T 021 658 7276, C 072 218 5759 SECRETARY: Marcie Bischof mwbischof@telkomsa.net T 021 554 0176, C 082 925 2280 The club remains open every Wed and Thu for dinner. If you are not on the data base to receive the "catering newflash" please contact the club at catering@swissclub.co.za or on +27 21 4348405. Active sub-sections are the Rifle Club, Cycling Club & Tennis Club. The ladies meet

monthly – last Wed of every month. For more info contact info@swissclub.co.za or André Häberli, Membership & Advertising, Phone +27 (0)21 551 48 98 , Skype andre.haberli, Fax +27 (0)86 532 80 02 , Cell +27 (0)76 933 03 04 . Our newsletter is distributed via email and postage, regular updates can be obtained on www.swissclub.co.za

SWISS CLUB NATAL:

President Philippe Lanz C 082 4932673, T 031 765 1625, pl@swisscontact.za. Secretary Jolanda Wolf, C 082 696 5996 For more up-to-date information please visit our website www.swissclubnatal.org.za. JASS EVENINGS: Westville Country Club, Link Rd, Westville (first road on the left when travelling from the Pavilion exit towards Westville). As before the Jass evening takes place every second Friday evening of the month 18.00 for dinner.19.00 start Jassen: 9.5., 13.6., 11.7., 8.8., 12.9., 10.10., 14.11., 12.12.2013 (Price Jassen), . TARGET SHOOTING: Dave Nicol Shooting Range, Nottingham Road, KZN Midland starting at 9.30 am: 30.5., 27.6., 25.7., 29.8., 26.9., 31.10, 28.11., 12.12.2013 . OTHER EVENTS: 18.5. 9.00 am Beach Breakfast Amanzimtoti, 22.6 10.00 am Botanical Garden Pietermaritzburg, Lunch, 19.7 7 pm Cheese Fondue evening, Ridley Park Bowling Club, 2.-3.8 Swiss National Weekend, venue to be finalised, October Baynesfield/ Lunch at Byrne, 16.11 10.00 am Ten Pin Bowling at the Dolphin Bowl Amanzimtoti, 7.12 11 am Years End Function, Krantz kloof, 24.1. 6 pm, Swiss Film Evening, Westville Country Club, 8.3 10.30 am AGM, Kearsney College Grounds.

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