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# Communications from the Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad



## PRO JUVENTUTE

The Foundation Pro Juventute is indefatigable in its efforts to help young people. Please do not hesitate to appeal to us if you wish your children to spend a holiday in Switzerland.

Summer 1974 (beginning of July to beginning of September):

Swiss children from abroad between 7 and 15 (born between 1959 and 1967) whose parents are unable to pay anything towards the cost or can only send a token payment, will be given hospitality by families in Switzerland.

Swiss children between 7 and 11 years, exceptionally 12, whose parents pay all or part of the cost, will spend their holidays in children's homes.

Swiss children from abroad between 12 and 15 years, whose parents are able to pay all or part of the cost, will be sent to various holiday camps. For the older ones amongst them, holidays are planned in groups so as to allow consideration of the various ages.

Children who have been invited to families and friends (7-16), may join the accompanied travel groups.

Swiss children from abroad who need a holiday in Switzerland for reasons of health, will be accommodated in

homes and preventive sanatoria, if necessary under medical care. The costs are borne partly or fully by Pro Juventute if neither parents nor private institutions are able to participate.

The registration fee is 10 Swiss francs, the actual cost of a stay in a home or camp varies between S.Fr.15 and 27 per child a day, all inclusive. The price of the journey is very favourable, as the children fly to Switzerland by charter aircraft. If necessary, Pro Juventute makes a contribution towards the cost of the journey (maximum S.Fr.300 or as per agreement). The children travelling in groups, will be met at the frontier stations and those from overseas at the airports. They will then continue their journey accompanied by helpers.

Applications must reach Zurich via the Swiss Consulates and Embassies abroad not later than 20th April, 1974. Application forms and further information may be had from Embassies and Consulates or from Pro Juventute, Seefeldstrasse 8, 8022 Zurich.

Possibilities and various services throughout the year:

For Swiss children abroad of any age: The Holiday and Relief Organisation for Swiss Children Abroad, together with public services and private institutions,

look after children for whom a longer stay in Switzerland is necessary for reasons of schooling or preparing for vocational training; as well as problem children and those from bad homes.

Such cases will only be taken on if, after careful examination, no solution within the family can be found. When a financial plan is set up, one must remember that our means at the moment only allow us to cover a deficit and to carry insurance and sickness insurance premiums, seeing that such stays usually last several years. In addition, we gladly give you advice and secure suitable places for the children. Where the parents are unable to bear the costs, application for financial help must be addressed first of all to the Commune of origin or to private funds.

## RELIGIOUS BROADCASTS for the Swiss in Europe, North Africa and the Near East

Every Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, the Swiss short-wave service broadcasts Catholic, Protestant and Free Church services in French, German and Italian alternately on 3985, 6165 and 9535 kHz.

On Easter Sunday (14th April, 1974), for example:

10 to 10.42 a.m.: Roman Catholic service, in French

10.48 to 11.09 a.m.: Roman Catholic service, in German

11.09 to 11.30 a.m.: Protestant service, in French

11.45 a.m. to 12 noon: Roman Catholic service, in Italian

Further details of these religious broadcasts, and a schedule of all Swiss radio programmes for foreign countries, can be obtained direct from the Service suisse des Ondes courtes  
Giacomettistrasse 1  
CH-3006 Berne 16

## Military Service Exemption Tax

On 14th December, 1973 both houses of the Swiss parliament approved the Federal Act concerning the Military Service Exemption Tax levied on Swiss abroad, who will henceforth be subject to the tax for three years, instead of eight years in the case of those liable for service in the "Auszug" (20–32 years of age) or five years in the case of those liable for service in the "Landwehr" (33 years of age onwards). The Act is subject to the optional referendum until 28th March, 1974, after which date the Federal Council will put it into force if no referendum has been requested. This measure will release from the tax those Swiss who are permanently settled abroad; the unified three-year system will mean that at least 7,000 Swiss abroad will henceforth be exempt. The decrease in revenue is estimated at about 1.5 million Swiss francs.

# Switzerland's New Adoption Legislation

On April 1st, 1973, the new legislation on adoption came into force. The numerous and significant changes are aimed at creating a relationship as "normal" as possible between the child and its parents.

The changes in the legislation approved by the Swiss Parliament therefore put the adopted child on the same legal level as the legitimate child.

## The legal situation

The new adoption legislation determines that the hitherto prevailing relationship between the child and its natural parents ceases to exist and the child becomes a legitimate child of its adoptive parents. The child acquires their family name, their right of origin and consequently also their nationality. Its succession rights also correspond completely to that of the legitimate child. (The rights of succession in relation to its natural parents cease to exist). A legally completed adoption can be annulled in exceptional instances only.

## Who can adopt?

Two of the most important changes from the previous legislation intend to create a normal relationship between child and parents, as mentioned above, and concern the minimum age of the adoptive parents which was lowered from 40 to 35 years. This age limit does not apply to couples who have been married for at least five years. However, it does apply to single parents.

Contrary to the previous legislation, adoptive parents are no longer required to be childless. The attitude of existing children towards the adoption, nevertheless has to be taken into consideration. In cases where the adoption concerns a child of age, the requirement that the adoptive parents have no descendants, still applies. The names of the adoptive parents may not be re-

leased to the natural parents without the consent of the former.

Other important points of this new law prescribe that the child has to be at least 16 years younger than its adoptive parents and that a two year "foster period" has to precede an adoption.

## Protection of the natural parents

According to the new law, an adoption is a "definite step" and therefore the rights of the natural parents have been reinforced as well. Consent to an adoption cannot be given before a period of six weeks has elapsed after the birth of the child. Also, an adoption can be revoked within another six weeks. This direction does not preclude the possibility that a child can be given in foster care with his future adoptive parents immediately after birth. The six weeks waiting period is to insure that the consent to the adoption is not given in a precipitate manner. As a rule, both parents have to consent to the adoption.

The Cantons supervise the placement of children for adoption. Adoption agencies have to obtain a federal licence which is only granted to persons with proper professional background.

## Transitory rules

For a period of five years after the new legislation has come into force, adoptions concluded under the old legislation may, upon formal demand, be changed to conform to the new legislation.