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Educational offers for young people aged 14 and above

In addition to the traditional camps, OSA has been offering a wide range of educational trips to Switzerland to young Swiss abroad for around ten years now. The seminar on the forthcoming young people's session merits particular mention..

Seminar on the Swiss young people's session from 9. to 15.11.2009

OSA has developed a strong partnership over many years with the organisational committee of the young people's session. More than 200 young people gain a direct insight into what goes on in Swiss politics each year thanks to the young people's session. This provides young people with an opportunity to find out about political processes and involvement in politics without any obligation. It also motivates young people to undertake further political activity or to take part in civil society affairs.

Around 125,000 Swiss people abroad are now registered on electoral rolls and want to take part in referenda and elections in Switzerland. Swiss people abroad have therefore become key political players.

OSA's seminar on the young people's session aims to make taking part in politics easier for future voters and young citizens already eligible to vote. OSA gives them an introduction to the Swiss political system, discusses the issues on the agenda of the young people's session with the participants and answers their questions.

This ensures that the Swiss abroad are ready and able to take an active part in

the national Youth Parliament from 13 to 15 November.

Appeal for host families

Young people stay with Swiss host families during OSA's educational trips. Families interested in hosting a young person for two weeks and enjoying a fascinating intercultural exchange should contact OSA.

Another step towards e-voting

On 15 June, the cantons of Geneva and Basel-City signed a hosting agreement, which will enable Basel's Swiss citizens abroad to vote via the Internet using the Geneva system. OSA welcomes this agreement, which will send out a signal to the other cantons and represents an important step towards enabling Swiss citizens abroad to participate in federal referenda via the Internet.

OSA has campaigned for many years for the cantons to introduce electronic voting for their voters abroad as soon as possible. The aim is to make it easier for the 125,000 Swiss people living abroad registered in the electoral rolls to exercise their political rights via the Internet.

No fewer than 13 referenda have been held this way since 2003 in the cantons of Neuchâtel, Zurich and Geneva. Only the three pilot cantons currently possess the technology required. The agreement between the cantons of Basel-City and Geneva is therefore symbolic and will undoubtedly pave the way for other cantons to sign a hosting agreement with Geneva, Zurich or Neuchâtel.

Federal government welcomes and supports the introduction of electronic vot-

ing. This is why the signing of the hosting agreement by the cantonal chancellors of Geneva and Basel-City took place in Berne and was attended by Federal Chancellor Corina Casanova. OSA Director, Rudolf Wyder, was also present at the signing. This is a strong signal that the political weight of the Swiss abroad and the need for rapid introduction of e-voting for citizens outside of Switzerland are being recognised. OSA is delighted and hopes other cantons will follow the example set by Basel-City.

Emigrants on Swiss television

How about giving up everything in Switzerland to start a new life abroad? Around 30,000 Swiss people do precisely that each year. The five-part documentary series "Auf und davon" follows families and individuals on their adventure of moving abroad.

"Auf und davon" follows the emigrants through their preparations and the first weeks and months of their foreign adventure, showing their departure, the problems they encounter and the highlights. The camera is always there to capture all the key moments. Observation over a long period provides an insight into foreign countries and cultures and shows how Swiss people cope with them.

"Auf und davon" starts on 4 September 2009. The programme can also be downloaded as a podcast at www.sf.tv/podcasts.

ORGANISATION OF THE SWISS ABROAD

Our services:

- Legal Department
- Youth Service
- Association for the Promotion of Education for Young Swiss Abroad (AJAS)
- Committee for Swiss Schools Abroad (CSSA)
- Foundation for Young Swiss Abroad (FYSA)

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SURVEY

ON "SWISS REVIEW"

At www.revue.ch, you will find the link to an electronic survey on "Swiss Review" and your habits with regard to visiting Switzerland. The "Swiss Review" team and our

partner, Switzerland Tourism, hope as many Swiss abroad as possible complete this survey and take the opportunity to assess our work. We greatly value your opinion. This will enable us to find out what you enjoy reading and what you

think could be improved. We would appreciate it if you could spare us a few minutes and answer the questions. You might even win a weekend in Switzerland if you are lucky.