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## Concerns over insurance for the Swiss Abroad

The Council of the Swiss Abroad met in Brunnen on Lake Lucerne on 16 April. The main issues discussed at the meeting were voluntary old-age and survivors' insurance (AHV) and health insurance for the Swiss Abroad. The 25th anniversary of the Area for the Swiss Abroad was also celebrated in Brunnen.

MARKO LEHTINEN

There were 67 members of the Council of the Swiss Abroad eligible to vote present at the Hotel Waldstätterhof in Brunnen when Remo Gysin, the new President of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad, opened the meeting.

The delegates elected Isabelle Moret, a National Councillor from the canton of Vaud, to the Council and the OSA's Executive Board. Davide Wüthrich was also elected to the Council of the Swiss Abroad. He is President of the Youth Parliament of the Swiss Abroad and lives in Italy. Two new members were also elected to the "Swiss Review" editorial committee, Claudia Iseli and Gaëlle Courten.

The following societies were granted recognition by the Council of the Swiss Abroad: Asociación Suiza de Beneficencia de Madrid, Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Schweizerklub Südschweden and Comunidad Suizo Boliviana.

### Contribution shortfalls upon returning

In addition to the statutory part of the meeting, the delegates addressed the issue of social insurance for the Swiss Abroad. This is the problem area of old-age and survivors' insurance (AHV) – anyone who leaves Switzerland withdraws from mandatory in-



surance. People not insured abroad face contribution shortfalls when they return to Switzerland. However, voluntary admittance to social insurance schemes is not always possible. The main problem concerning health insurance schemes is that anyone residing abroad is not covered by mandatory insurance under the Swiss health insurance schemes. So what next? Questions concerning these issues were answered by Jürg Brechbühl from the Federal Social Insurance Office, Patrick Schmiel of the Central Compensation Office and Oliver Peters of the Federal Office of Public

**President of the Swiss Confederation Schneider-Ammann visited the OSA in Brunnen.**

Photo: Ariane Roulet

Health. The Swiss banks were again a talking point in the discussion forum. The Swiss Abroad have difficulty in opening bank accounts and obtaining credit cards in their native country. They also often pay higher charges.

It was not only the meeting of the Council of the Swiss Abroad that took place in Brunnen as the 25th anniversary of the Area for the Swiss Abroad was also celebrated. The Area for the Swiss Abroad Foundation celebrated the anniversary in the presence of the President of the Swiss Confederation Johann Schneider-Ammann. A poster exhibition also took place on the site.

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