

ICYE Switzerland

National Profile 2019/2020



Willkommen in der Schweiz

Bienvenue en Suisse

Benvenuti in Svizzera

Beinvegni en Svizra



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1. About Switzerland...

Geography

Located almost in the heart of Europe, landlocked between Austria, Germany, France, Italy and Lichtenstein, Switzerland covers an area of 41'288 km².

The country is divided in three main landscape regions:

- Pre-Alps & Alps (south): 60% of Switzerland's territory
- Midlands (north & northwest): 30% of Switzerland's territory
- Jura mountains (northwest): 10% of Switzerland's territory

Many mountains of the Alps have altitudes higher than 2'000 meter above sealevel; the highest is the Dufourspitze with 4'634 meter above sealevel. Although the Alps are a major attraction for many of tourists both from within and outside of Switzerland, they are scarcely populated and little industrialised. The Midlands are situated north of the Pre-Alps and Alps; they are characterised by hills, lakes and pastureland. The majority of the Swiss population and industries are concentrated in this area. The Jura mountains run in a semicircle around the midlands and have altitudes up to 1'600 meter above sealevel.



State & Politics

The political system of Switzerland, or by its Latin name **Confoederatio helvetica** (hence the abbreviation CH for Switzerland), has two main characteristics:

Federalism Switzerland is a federal state with a strong autonomy for its individual member states ("cantons"). Switzerland counts 26 cantons (17 German speaking, 4 French speaking, 1 Italian speaking, 3 German/French speaking and 1 German/Italian/Rhaeto-Romanic speaking). Those 26 cantons consist of municipalities that in their turn have a strong autonomy within the canton.

Direct democracy Swiss citizens have a direct influence by vote on the workings of municipal authorities, cantonal parliaments and national parliament with people's initiatives ("Volksinitiativen") and referenda.



Bundeshaus in Bern: Seat of parliaments & government.

On national level, Switzerland is governed by a two-chamber, legislative parliament (“**Nationalrat**” and “**Ständerat**”) and executive government (“**Bundesrat**”). Although the political orientation may fluctuate after elections for the Nationalrat and Ständerat, the Bundesrat build-up has a unique system, because the division of its 7 seats are not effected by election outcomes (Concordance Principle). The 4 largest parties in the Nationalrat and Ständerat take seat in the Bundesrat and do not change after elections. The ministers, or Bundesräte, in the Bundesrat (government) are elected by the Nationalrat (parliament), taking into account that all linguistic groups/cantons are represented.

One of the Bundesräte also carries out the function of Bundespräsident (head of state), respectively for one calendar year only. In the next calendar year, another Bundesrat takes on the job as Bundespräsident for one year. In other words, the ministers take turns in being head of state.

Due to the strong federalistic system in **Switzerland**, the country **does not have an official capital**. The *de facto* capital of Switzerland is the city of **Bern** – also known as “Bundesstadt” or “**City of State**”, because here are the houses of the parliament (Nationalrat and Ständerat), the government seat, ministries as well as all other national bodies and authorities.

Also due to the strong federalistic system, there are many cities, mainly the “capitals” of the individual cantons, that have more or less equal importance for the country and also count more or less the same number of inhabitants. The two biggest cities are Zürich (410’000 inhabitants) and Geneva (200’500 inhabitants). Third is Basel (178’000 inhabitants). Bern ranks 4th on the list with only 143’000 inhabitants.

Languages

The total population of Switzerland counts a little over 8.4 million people, of whom 6.3 million have the Swiss nationality (75%). A total of 37% of the Swiss population have a migrant background. Switzerland distinguishes 4 major native linguistic groups:

- Swiss German speaking (63.5 %)
- French speaking (22.5 %)
- Italian speaking (8.1 %)
- Rhaeto-Romanic speaking (0.5 %)

All national government bodies communicate in three languages: Standard German (a.k.a. High German), French and Italian.

In meetings or informal settings, where people with different linguistic backgrounds meet, the Swiss negotiate on a pragmatic case-to-case basis what language they will use for communication: this can be Standard German, French, Italian or even English – or one agrees that everyone speaks slowly and clearly in his/her mothertongue.

Swiss German is the spoken language in the German speaking part of Switzerland. **The written language** (like in documents, newspapers, books,...) **however is Standard German!** Standard German is the German that is Germany’s official language.

Swiss German



Linguistic Tree of Indo-European & Uralic Languages by Minna Sundberg: explaining closeness and connection of speakers of different languages. Here you can see to what extent (Standard) German as spoken in Germany is different from the Swiss German dialects.

Swiss children grow up with the **Swiss German** dialect as their **mother tongue**. **From the 1st grade on they learn to speak and write Standard German in school**. Therefore people speak both Swiss and Standard German and write Standard German¹. Nevertheless, not everyone feels equally comfortable speaking Standard German.

Swiss German consists of various regional Swiss German dialects: these dialects show differences in vocabulary and accent, but their grammar system is the same. The Swiss German dialects differ in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation from Standard German (the official language of Germany).

This difference between the written German language and the spoken Swiss German dialects is one of the main challenges for an ICYE volunteer. However, **focussing on learning Standard German first and asking people to please speak Standard German with you will help you to overcome this special language barrier!**

Standard German	Swiss German (Zürich)	Swiss German (Bern)	English
Schule	Schuel	Schueu	school
Gespräch	Gschprööch	Gschprääch	conversation
Fest	Fäscht	Fescht	party
nicht	nöd	nid	not
Abend	Aabig	Aabe	evening

¹ In informal settings (Whatsapp, messenger/posts on social media) many Swiss German speaking people prefer to write in their Swiss German dialect. However, there are no standardised spellings for the dialects, although most people uniformly agree on how to write the words. Written Swiss German orientates itself completely on the actual phonetics of the words (write how you say it).

Illustrating the differences between High German and Swiss German dialects, but also the minor differences between two different Swiss German dialects (Zürich and Bern), with a translation of English. Source: B. Siebenhaar, W. Voegeli, "Mundart und Hochdeutsch im Vergleich", Universität Leipzig.

Swiss history in brief

Beginnings



Archaeological finds show that already 100,000 years BC, individual nomad hunters and collectors lived in caves. Around the year 0, the Romans became interested in nowadays Swiss territory. Under Roman rule, the Swiss midlands reached its cultural peak.

Today, in Augusta Raurica in Augst (canton of Baselland), Roman military camp Vindonissa in Brugg (canton of Aargau) and Avenches (canton of Fribourg) you can see well-preserved Roman finds. Their houses, thermal baths and amphitheatres are well worth a visit!

The disintegration of the Roman Empire opened the doors to Germanic immigration. Burgundians, Alemannians, Franks and Longobards populated Switzerland alongside and with each other until about 800 AD when Charlemagne brought the whole territory of Switzerland – including the Italian speaking part of the nowadays canton of Ticino – under his rule.

Conversion to Christianity

About 600 AD, Irish monks (Columban and Gallus) rang in the period of Switzerland's conversion to Christianity. Numerous monasteries (St. Gall, Disentis, Lucerne, Einsiedeln) were founded at this time.



The Founding of the Swiss Confederation

In the early Middle Ages the territory of Switzerland became part of the empire of Charlemagne; after his rule the territory of Switzerland was divided into Middle Francia and East Francia, until reunited along with most of the Germanic territory in Europe in the Holy Roman Empire around 1'000 AD.

Around the same time the dynasties of Savoy, Zähringer, Habsburg and Kyburg started to dominate Swiss territory. The Habsburgs (under Holy Roman Emperor King Rudolph I) continued to expand after the Kyburg line extincted in 1263, when they took over the Kyburg lands in the eastern part of the Swiss territories.

The Federal Charter of 1291 is considered to be the founding document of the Old Swiss Confederacy. On Switzerland's National Holiday on 1st of August, it is this Charter and the year of 1291 that is referred to, alongside with the mythical story of the "Rütli Schwur" (Rütli Oath).² This Confederacy was an alliance of different communities in the valleys of the Alps in nowadays Central Switzerland (Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden). It was governed by local nobles and patricians: they looked after common interests and ensured safety and peace on the important trade routes over the mountain passes.

In the following years the cantons of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden had joined the cantons of Glarus and Zug as well as the city states of Luzern, Zürich and Bern. The Old Confederacy continued to exist until the end of the 15th century. In 1499 the Old Confederacy won the Swabian War against Holy Roman Emperor King Maximilian I which led to a *de facto* independence for the Confederacy within

² Alongside with the founding of the modern state of Switzerland in 1848.

the Holy Roman Empire. After more than 100 years of internal wars, European countries recognised Switzerland's independence and neutrality in 1648 with the Peace of Westphalia.

Napoleonic period



After the occupation of Switzerland by troops of the French Directory in 1798, a centralist state was created. Switzerland became a country that abolished all privileges and granted cultural and press freedom. In 1803, Napoleon decided to end the then existing conflict between Federalists and Centralists by introducing the new constitution (Mediation Act) which created the Constitution of the Vienna Congress (1814). Then Switzerland became a loose confederation of 22 cantons. People's rights were limited in many places again to the advantage of the states and aristocrats.

The neutrality of Switzerland was again internationally recognized in 1815 at the 2nd Paris Peace Conference. The first self-made Federal Constitution – the Confederate Pact (1814–1815) – contained the rights of the individual cantons and citizens, the continued existence of the monasteries, as well as military affairs.

The Swiss Constitution and founding of Modern Switzerland

After 1830, popular movements in 12 cantons forced a liberal constitution. The decisive step of the Confederacy towards a Federal State followed in 1848 directly after the Special Federal War of 1847, where the liberal (protestant) cantons triumphed over the seven conservative (catholic) cantons. In the middle of Europe with its restored monarchies after Napoleonic rule, a Swiss nation emerged, which incorporated advanced republican ideas. The new Federal Constitution was accepted by vote in 1848.³ In 1891, the constitution was revised with unusually strong elements of direct democracy, which remain unique even today.

In 1967, the preparatory work for a total revision of the Federal Constitution was again taken up. Again in 1999 the people and cantons accepted the completely new edition of the Federal Constitution.

Switzerland in the 20th century

Switzerland kept its neutrality in both World Wars and managed to remain unoccupied. In 1920 Switzerland joined the League of Nations – which after World War II was partly replaced by the UN (United Nations), on the condition it was exempt from any military obligations towards the other members.

In World War II (1940-1945) Switzerland was able to keep its sovereignty by a combination of military deterrence and concessions to Nazi Germany. During this time Switzerland was an important base for espionage by both sides and often mediated communications between the Axis and Allied powers. But, its trade was by both the Axis and Allied Forces. Economic cooperation and credit extension to Nazi Germany varied to the perceived likelihood of invasion by Hitler's armies, as well as the availability of other trading partners. The strict immigration and asylum policies of Switzerland as well as the economic and financial relationship with Nazi Germany raised controversy, but not until the end of the 20th century.

After the war, the Swiss government exported credits through the charity "Schweizerspende" and donated to the Marshall Plan to assist in Europe's post-war recovery, which efforts ultimately benefited the Swiss economy after World War II.

Switzerland was the last country in the West to grant women the right to vote. Some Swiss cantons granted this right in 1959, while at federal level it was only granted in 1971. At last, after severe

³ The Federal Constitution documents of 1848 are considered to be the founding of the Modern Swiss State, also celebrated on the 1st of August.

resistance, the last canton of Appenzell Innerrhoden granted the right to vote to women in 1991. After obtaining suffrage on national level (1971), women quickly rose in the political ranks. The first woman in the Bundesrat (government) was Elisabeth Kopp from 1984 until 1989. Switzerland's first female president, Ruth Dreifuss, followed in 1999, 28 years after the introduction female suffrage.

In 2002 Switzerland became a full member of the United Nations. Switzerland is a founding member of the EFTA, yet not a member of the European Economic Area (EEA).

In May 1992 an application for European Union membership was drafted and sent, but stopped right there after a referendum on the EEA, in which Swiss citizens voted against membership. Since then there have been several referendums on joining the European Union; but they all turned down the wish for EU membership. As such, the draft EU membership application is now withdrawn. Yet, Swiss law is usually adjusted to EU law and there are a great number of bilateral agreements and treaties for mutual cooperation. In 2005 Swiss voters agreed on joining the Schengen Agreement, with which Switzerland acknowledges open internal borders for people and goods with other Schengen Countries.

Switzerland in a nutshell...

Humanitarian tradition

Switzerland has a long tradition in humanitarian causes. Today, it hosts numerous international organisations like the United Nations, the International Labour Organisation, the World Health Organisation as well as the International Red Cross and the World Council of Churches.



Government

Switzerland's form of government is a direct as well as representative democracy. The legislative body is the Federal Assembly, with two Chambers possessing equal rights: the Council of States (Ständerat with 46 representatives of the cantons) and the National Council (Nationalrat with 200 representatives of the people), forming the parliament. The Federal Assembly elects the seven Federal Councillors, or ministers (Bundesrat - the executive) and each year, from this group, the President of the Confederation. The highest judicial authority is vested in the Federal Court, which sits in Lausanne.

The 26 cantons of the Swiss confederation have their own constitutions, parliaments, governments and courts. The Federal Constitution grants only restricted, precisely defined powers to the Confederation. Within the cantons, the approximately 2'800 communes also have a large measure of autonomy.

Politics

Switzerland has always been proud of its neutrality in its international affairs and relations. Swiss politics are very cautious, not to say conservative. Since the beginning of the 21st century the right-wing populist party (SVP) has made huge gains within the Swiss National Council (Nationalrat).

Current issues

Switzerland is **not a member of the European Union (EU)**. Many Swiss citizens do not want to give up Switzerland's independence and are against an approximation to the EU. On the other hand an increasing number of citizens prefer a close relationship with the EU in order to prevent the risk of a "Swiss isolation" within Europe.

Economy



For a very long time Switzerland has developed its economical possibilities and strengths successfully. Today, it is a rich country due to a high degree of industrialisation in the high technology branch, a favourable trade situation and the banks and insurances. The most important income sources are the machine industries, the fabrication of watches and precision instruments, chemical industry, tourism and banking.

The currency of Switzerland is the Swiss Franc. The Swiss Franc makes out 100 Rappen (equivalent to cents). Coins come in 5, 10, 20 Rappen, ½ Franc, as well as 1, 2 and 5 Francs. Bank notes are in 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500 and 1000 Francs.

Religion

Christianity is the state religion of Switzerland; there are both Protestant and Roman Catholic churches. Various other denominations exist in minorities. Due to immigration, there is also a strong Muslim minority living in Switzerland.

As a result of the right-wing populist party SVP the federal popular initiative "*against the construction of minarets*" was successfully voted for in 2009. Since November 2009, the construction of new minarets is forbidden in Switzerland. At the same time full face cover (Burqa's) are forbidden in 2 cantons.



Swiss people consider religion a private affair. This means, religious signs or other expressions of religion remain at home, or people meet up in their religious communities (mainly churches).

Sex Roles

The Swiss constitution proclaims the equality of rights between women and men. As Swiss society is based on a patriarchal system, reality sometimes is less advanced than legislation. Swiss women are therefore still fighting for equal salaries (especially in the private sector), equal opportunities in profession, career, politics etc. Beyond that, more and more young people are calling into question the «classical» division of labour between women and men.

Good to know for ICYE volunteers in Switzerland:

Swiss girls & women:

- Expect to be treated on an equal basis as boys & men
- Pay for themselves when invited out to dine, to a movie,...
- Can easily live on their own, with friends or with their boyfriend once they are of legal age (18): couples don't have to be married in order to live together
- **Hollywood may believe** that "Western women" only care about men, weddings and shopping, but this image is very much disconnected from Swiss reality

Swiss boys & men:

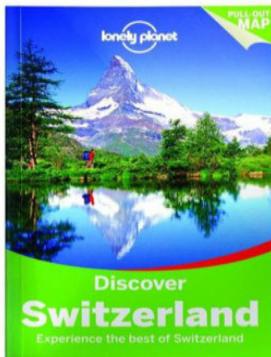
- Don't (or shouldn't...) act like heroes
- Don't dominate or decide for their female friends or girlfriends
- Can also easily live alone, with friends or with their girlfriend once they are of legal age (18)

In households it is expected from EVERY MEMBER (girls/women as well as boys/men) that they help out and share the work and chores in a family or community EQUALLY.

Admittedly, equality is better developed in households of younger generations. In many households of the older generation (over 50), women may still do "traditional" female work, but times are changing and **especially in our host families it is expected that both GIRLS/WOMEN AND BOYS/MEN help in the household; they have chores like dish washing, cleaning, cooking, doing laundry, grocery shopping, etc!**

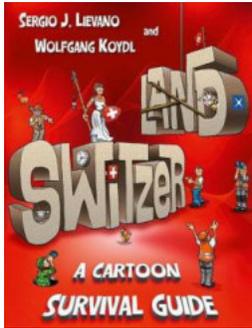
Be prepared for learning how to do these chores ☺

Recommended literature



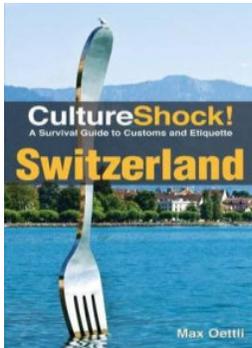
Discover Switzerland
Experience the best of
Switzerland

Lonely Planet



Switzerland: A Cartoon Survival Guide

Sergio J. Lievano
Wolfgang Koydl



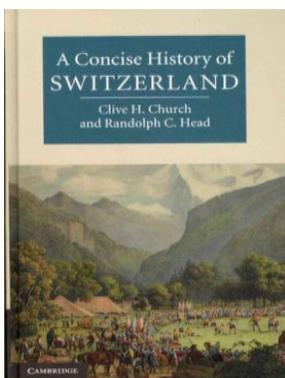
Culture Shock Switzerland: A Survival Guide to Customs and Etiquette

Max Oetli



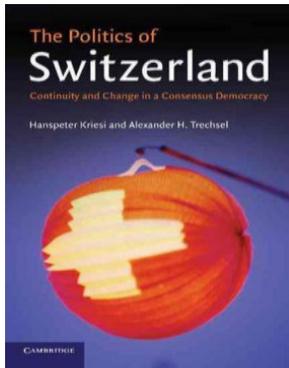
“O Switzerland!”: Travelers' accounts, 57 BCE to the present

Ashley Curtis (compilation)



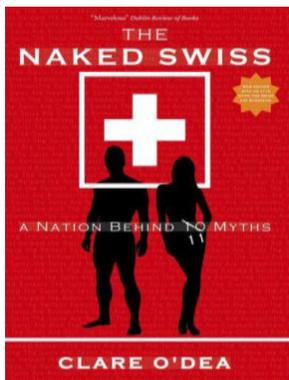
A Concise History of Switzerland

Clive H. Church
Randolph C. Head



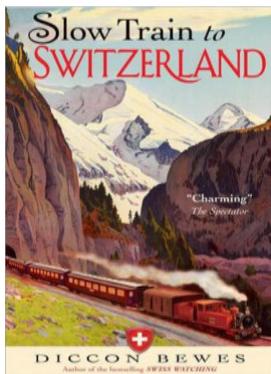
The Politics Of Switzerland:
Continuity And Change In A
Consensus Democracy

Hanspeter Kriesi
Alexander H. Trechsel



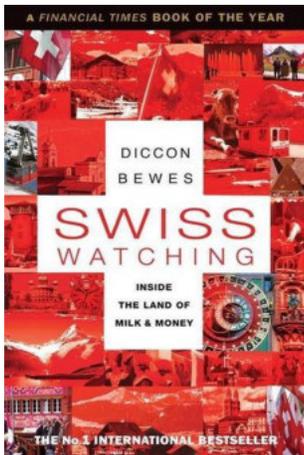
The Naked Swiss: A Nation
Behind 10 Myths

Clare O'Dea



Slow Train To Switzerland: One
Tour, Two Trips, 150 Years and a
World of Change Apart

Diccon Bewes



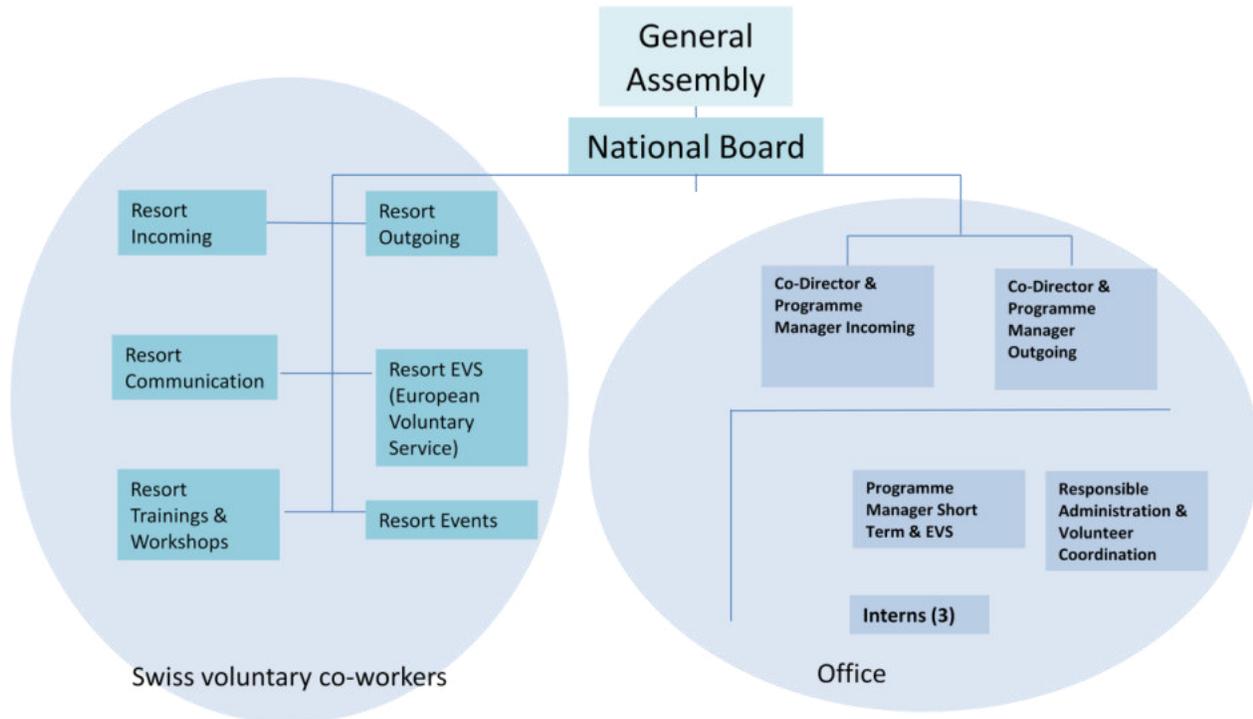
Swiss Watching: Inside The
Land Of Milk And Money

Diccon Bewes

2. ICYE Switzerland

Introduction

ICYE Switzerland joined the ICYE Federation in 1960. ICYE Switzerland is an association recognised by Swiss law; it is non-religious and non-political and as well acts independently as a non-governmental and non-profit organisation. It has no constitutional links to other organisations on national or regional level. It is an active member of the Swiss Youth Council and the Swiss Council for Youth Exchange. ICYE Switzerland receives 10-20 volunteers per year in its Incoming Programme. ICYE Switzerland has the following structure:



General Assembly

The General Assembly is the annual convention of all members of ICYE Switzerland. It approves/disapproves of actions and strategies undertaken by the National Board, it sets guidelines for further developments, elects the National Board and decides on financial reports, budget and statutes. **It is the legislative body of ICYE Switzerland.** Membership, and therefore participation in the decision-making process of ICYE Switzerland, is open to all those who are interested in or fascinated by the prospects of our specific exchange programme. A membership fee is the only qualification needed. At present, ICYE Switzerland has about 300 members.

The National Board

The **executive body** of ICYE Switzerland is the **National Board**. The National Board is responsible for the strategic lay-out of ICYE Switzerland, in matters of finances, management, development of the ICYE programmes and job positions. Its members are elected by the General Assembly, to which they are accountable. All National Board members are volunteers working in an honorary position.

Swiss voluntary co-workers

ICYE Switzerland has about 50 active voluntary co-workers that engage themselves to make the organisation dynamic, lively and thriving. Most of them have been on exchange with ICYE themselves and most of them are between 20 and 35 years old. They take on different positions as volunteers: offering their free time and competences to ICYE Switzerland without being paid. These co-workers are of incredible value to make the exchange programmes of ICYE Switzerland work.

The Swiss voluntary co-workers take on different positions, like marketing and PR jobs, candidate interviews, translations (German/French), IT and communication, graphic design, camp leaders, mentors, etc.

The Office

ICYE Switzerland has an office in Bern, with 7 paid co-workers:

Hester Kuijk Breitenmoser	Co-Director & Programme Manager Incoming
Barbara Iseli Sczepanski	Co-Director & Programme Manager Outgoing
Léa Kolzer	Programme Manager Short Term & EVS
Camille Rohn	Responsible Administration & Volunteer Coordination
Laura Bütikofer	Intern Project & Event Management / Programme Assistance Incoming
Anna Temerko	Intern Programme Assistance Outgoing
Lars Hulliger	Intern Online Communication & Marketing

The office is responsible for all matters on operational level: management, development and organisation of the ICYE programmes, support of incoming and outgoing programme participants, host families and projects, administrative matters, contacts to authorities, responsible for network development on both national and international level, coordination of the Swiss voluntary co-workers, close cooperation with the National Board and other organisations in the national field of youth exchange, cooperation with partners on national and international level.

3. The Programme

Introduction

ICYE Switzerland offers a **voluntary work programme** to its programme participants. ICYE Switzerland receives between 10 to 20 volunteers per programme year.



Age Limits

Volunteers who want to participate in the voluntary work programme of ICYE Switzerland have to be **between 18 and 30 years old**. Candidates older than 30 years can make requirements in order to find out, if we can accept them on the programme anyway.

Project placement

It is **not possible to change your project placement during the year!** This has to do with the fact that your residence permit is linked to your project. Quitting and changing your project not only involves a long and costly procedure, it also means a possibility of losing your residence permit.

For this reason it is very important to study the project possibilities in our Work Profile. We are happy to provide you with more detailed information so that you can make a good choice!

The meaning of voluntary work



The voluntary work that you carry out in your project makes up a considerable part of your time: you work between 32-35 hours per week, which is 4 to 4.5 days a week. If you wish, you can discuss with your work place to work up to 40 hours a week.

Voluntary work in Switzerland is most of all responsible work: the project counts on you. Being a volunteer does not mean non-binding: that you can chose what you do, when you do it or how you do it. **Swiss work life is very structured and organised by binding contracts – it is compulsory to organise work life like this by Swiss law.**

If you choose to volunteer in Switzerland, you will have a binding work contract, with work hours and holidays fixed, as well responsibilities clearly spelled out.

Swiss projects rely on ICYE volunteers: the more you integrate, the more responsibilities you will get and usually, the more fulfilling your voluntary work experience will be!

A volunteer has duties, but also rights. You have a right of 20 days of holidays during the 10.5 months of voluntary work. You have a right to get a precise job description as well as a weekly timetable from the employer. You have the duty to be punctual and reliable.

It is not easy to find work projects in Switzerland, because employers normally prefer qualified co-workers with a basic knowledge of German. Generally, volunteers cannot replace professionals. You will most likely be occupied as an all-rounder in different areas of work (care work, supportive work, kitchen, garden, household, office work etc.) Hierarchy is not as pronounced in Switzerland as in other countries. As all other employees, all volunteers are expected to help in cleaning tasks.



Expectations towards volunteers and employers

You will receive a thorough introduction in your project of 2 to 4 weeks, in which you also have the possibility to see which areas of work you like best. Your project and ICYE Switzerland expect you to integrate into working life as well as possible. This means that you respect the rules and the way things are done at work, show interest and initiative, assist the other staff, meet with people and learn the language. If you do not understand something or would like to change something, please talk as soon as possible to your contact person in your project: many misunderstandings and bad feelings can be solved this way 😊

You try as much as possible to familiarise with tasks that might be culturally difficult or different to you. ICYE Switzerland expects from an employer to show interest in your cultural background and to let the volunteer experience as many different tasks as possible in the project.

Please read carefully our rules and regulations. They are very important for a good and pleasant cooperation between you and ICYE Switzerland. **With your signature, you acknowledge that you have read, understood and accepted them.** Please send the document back to us with the rest of your application.

Pocket Money Pool

As a volunteer with ICYE Switzerland you receive CHF 250.00 per month as pocket money.

Due to visa regulations, it is not allowed to earn any (additional) money. CHF 250.00 is not a lot in Switzerland, but it is enough for personal expenses and to join your host family and friends every now and then on small outings and activities. Neither does CHF 250.00 allow you to make great savings. **We strictly advise against sending (part of) the pocket money to your home country, because it will make life in Switzerland difficult for you and for your host family!**

If **you want to travel** within Switzerland, and during your holidays in other European countries as well, or if **you would like to spend more money on activities, hobbies, outings or an additional language course** we advise you to **bring additional money from home.**

ICYE Switzerland will pay you this pocket money and receives it from your project. Due to the special visa regulation that the ICYE Switzerland programme is on, the projects are not allowed to pay it to you. The projects pay the pocket into ICYE Switzerland's Pocket Money Pool.

Participation in the "pocket money pool" regulation is **compulsory for all volunteers.** That is why you have to sign the Pocket Money Regulation (see annexe of this National Profile).

Restaurant		Swiss Francs
Mineral water/soft drinks		4.00
Alcoholic drinks		6.00 – 12.00
Fast Food (Mc Donald's Menu)		13.00
Full meal		23.00
Coffee		4.00
Shop		
Bread, 500g		3.00
Milk, 1l		1.80
Chocolate bar		2.00
Fruit (1kg)		3.20
Cheese (100g)		3.50
Tooth paste		3.00
Shampoo		4.00
Cigarettes		7.00
Public transport		
Bus ticket (City)		1.80-4.00
Return train ticket Zurich-Bern (130 km) with reduction 1/2		51.00
Leisure time		
Concer		80.00
Cinema		18.00
Theatre		15.00-50.00
Disco		10.00-40.00
Clothes/Shoes		
Jeans	from	50.00
T-Shirt	from	15.00
Jumper	from	40.00
Shoes	from	40.00
Various		
One night in a youth hostel	from	50.00

Priority list

ICYE Switzerland tries to get project placements, which correspond with your interests and the aims of the ICYE programme. Attached to this National Profile you will find a priority list allowing you to tick your preferences. This list will be presented to your future project as a work application form. **The priority list is not binding for ICYE Switzerland, but we will try to consider your wishes when choosing a project placement for you.**

Please note that projects also like to pick a favourite candidate!

Before filling in the priority list, please study carefully the Swiss work profile where some projects available are described. Adding a curriculum vitae is helpful for your future employer!

Application procedure

As the number of participants is limited, and the work permit procedure linked to the visa process takes a long time, ICYE Switzerland has an early deadline:

Deadline of application: 19th of March 2019

Please send **your complete documentation in English** (some of them are attached to this National Profile):

- **Project priority list (with curriculum vitae)**
- **Signed “Conditions and Exclusion Criteria”**
- **Signed Pocket Money Pool Regulation**
- **Signed Insurance**
- **Candidate’s Application (with a picture, signed)**
- **Motivation letter**
- **Introduction letter for your host family**
- **A clear picture of yourself, on which you are smiling**
- **Copy of your passport***
- **Health certificate.**

** Your passport has to be valid at least for another 3 months (90 days) after having left Switzerland in July/August 2020!*

Applications that are received after 19th of March 2019 will not be considered by ICYE Switzerland!

4. Camps and other activities during the year

Arrival / Introduction camp

You will be welcomed at the airport in Zurich by an ICYE (voluntary) co-worker.

ICYE organises an introduction camp that lasts 5 days right after your arrival in Mid-August.

During this camp, you will be prepared for your life and voluntary work in Switzerland and already make a start with learning German.

The camp is conducted by ICYE Switzerland's office staff and Swiss voluntary co-workers.



German language course



As a volunteer in the ICYE programme you are entitled to a German language course of at least 30 lessons. ICYE Switzerland organises this language course for each individual volunteer at the place of residence (project or host family).

In some cases, projects will (co-)finance the language course or agree to pay for continued language courses.

A course of 30 lessons is a great start to get acquainted with the language. Nevertheless, in order to get to a level of speaking and understanding basic things in everyday life, you will have to be prepared to do self study of at least 200 hours.

ICYE Switzerland expects

... you to already have basic knowledge of German upon arrival

... you to study and learn German independently and by yourself during your year in Switzerland

... you to have the willingness, capability and motivation to learn Standard up to a B1 level

Learning German is important for

... you: to feel comfortable and at home in a new culture

... your host family: it is a sign of respect and willingness to integrate and accept their way of life

... your project: it is an indicator of integration and adaptation with the other people in the project

All ICYE volunteers are placed in the GERMAN part of Switzerland.

Other programme parts

The **following compulsory activities** will be organised by ICYE Switzerland throughout the exchange year:

- Autumn trip to Luzern in October (1 day)
- Mid-term Evaluation camp in December (1 weekend)
- Spring trip to Bern in March (1 day)
- Evaluation camp in June (1 weekend)



Public transport



Public transport in Switzerland is expensive, but even every small village, valley and mountain top is connected to a reliable, comfortable and fast public transport network.

ICYE Switzerland provides you with a half price subscription. With this, you only pay 50-70% of the normal ticket price. Possible transport costs to the language course as well as the transport costs from your host family to your project and to the compulsory ICYE events are also covered by ICYE.

You have the possibility to buy a General Abonnement (GA) valid for 1 year to the whole Swiss train, bus and ship network:

- Around 2'700 USD for volunteers younger than 25 years
- Up to 3'850 USD for volunteers older than 25 years

5. Hosting situations

Most volunteers will be placed in a host family. ICYE Switzerland also has a few residential projects, where volunteers live on the premises of the project in their own room. Due to the cultural understanding of most Swiss people of what living in a family means, **ICYE Switzerland prefers to place volunteers older than 25 in a residential project.**

Host families

A host family offers you a room and 2 to 3 meals a day. Living in a host family can be a great experience and a good opportunity to learn about the Swiss culture. In many cases, the friendship between the host families and volunteers lasts a long time after the exchange year. On the other hand, living in a host family also means to make a sincere effort to contribute to a good family life.

Host families don't receive financial compensation from ICYE Switzerland. In that sense, **we see our host families as generous volunteers as well!**

Swiss host families do not want to give you a bed to sleep and food to eat just like that for free. **A host family expects the volunteer to become an active and interested member of the family, sharing rights and responsibilities.**

That means **helping with the daily household chores:** clean your own room, help to prepare meals, grocery shopping, do laundry, wash the dishes, etc. just like the other family members. Swiss families do not have housemaids or housekeepers.

It also means **making an intensive and sincere effort to share daily life with your host family:** join in hobbies or freetime activities and possibly sacrifice some of your freedom for the sake of the exchange experience with your host family.

Please note that neither the host family nor ICYE will pay for your expenses for shampoo, soap, toothpaste, clothes, telephone bills, etc. Therefore, **bring some money from home** (see also the enclosed price list) with you in order to be able to cover these personal expenses, if you feel the pocket money of CHF 250.00 is not enough!

Most host families live outside Switzerland's big cities: in smaller towns or villages and without children.

ICYE Switzerland accepts different constellations of host families: single persons, couples with(out) children (or whose children are already grown up and out of the house) and small communities that share a house are also accepted as host families.

The fact that housing in the big cities is much more expensive than in the countryside, people in those cities usually do not have a spare room to host an ICYE volunteer. The same can be applied to families with (young) children that still live with their parents: these families usually do not have a spare room for an ICYE volunteer.

Host families in Switzerland come from different social and economical backgrounds; some families consciously and out of free will give up on luxuries like owning a car, a tv, etc. and have a modest living standard.



Host families are not expected to take you on sightseeing trips through Switzerland or on holidays to other countries; the time and money for such activities is not at hand. However, if your host family offers you to join them for certain activities and excursions accept those offers in a grateful spirit: showing thankfulness and saying “Thank You” is very important for Swiss families 😊

Living in your project

ICYE Switzerland also offers residential projects. These are projects where you both do your voluntary work and live in the project at the same time. Residential projects offer you a room within the institution or an independent room in a student's or nurses' campus, for example.

Staying in a residential project means that you have to take care of many daily issues yourself, but most of all means that you have to make additional efforts to go out and meet people.

The more effort you make in learning the language, getting in contact with people and the more initiative you take in your project and your host family, the more positive and enriching your experience here in Switzerland will be 😊



6. Application, visa and registration procedure

General remarks

Volunteers from the following continents or countries need a visa to enter Switzerland: **Africa, Latin America, Asia (exception: Japan) and USA**. Volunteers who do not need a visa only need a passport which is valid for at least three months after ending temporary residence in Switzerland.

Application and placement procedure

After the application deadline of 19th of March 2019, ICYE Switzerland will contact you to find a date for a **Skype video interview conducted in English**; it will take place **between 20th of March and 31st of March**. The aim for this Skype video interview is to get to know you better and discuss your motivation, project wishes, ideas and expectations of the ICYE Switzerland programme. It is also an opportunity to ask your questions. After the Skype video interview, ICYE Switzerland will let you know, if it will definitely accept you on the programme and start the placement and visa procedure.

You will receive detailed instructions from ICYE Switzerland after the Skype video interview of how to apply for your visa to Switzerland, which you should do preferably **between Mid-April and Mid-June** at the Swiss embassy in your country of residence. Simultaneously, ICYE Switzerland will start a visa application procedure in Switzerland for you. Only after approval by the authorities in Switzerland, you can continue with the visa application procedure at the Swiss embassy in your country of residence! Normally, this procedure takes 2 to 6 weeks.

The authorisation of your visa is solely based on your volunteer work in your project. Therefore, ICYE Switzerland will first complete the placement in a project. Please be patient regarding this: **Some projects also wish to do a Skype video interview with you, before they decide.** After having decided which volunteer they would like to have in their project, both the project and ICYE Switzerland have to finalise a work contract, which is needed for your visa application. ICYE Switzerland will try to **finalise the project placements by Mid-May** latest.

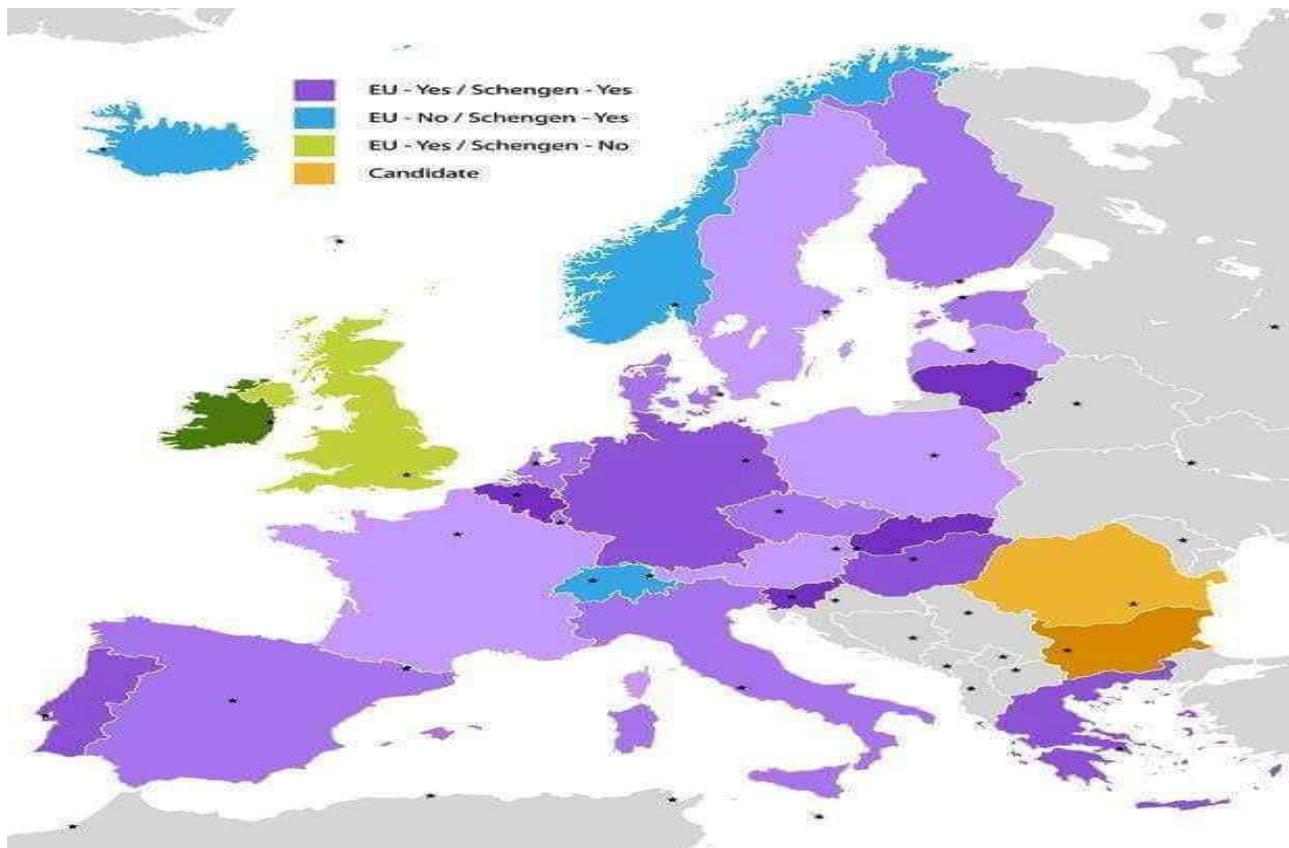
After having placed you in a project, ICYE Switzerland will start with the host family search, if you are not in a residential project. Finding a host family is a time-consuming process; most of all because host families offer you a home without being financially compensated by ICYE Switzerland.

It may be that we will find you an arrival host family: a host family that can only host you for the first 2 or 3 months. It may be that we will only find you a host family just before you arrive to Switzerland in Mid-August. It may also be that your commute between your project and host family takes a little more than one hour.

ICYE Switzerland would like to remind you that due to unforeseen circumstances somewhere in the visa application procedure it may take longer than 6 weeks to receive your visa or we can only start the visa procedure after Mid-June. Therefore, it may happen that you will only receive your visa in the week before your arrival to Switzerland.

Transit visa: if you do not come to Switzerland by direct flight, you may need a transit visa for the country where you make a stopover. **Please inform yourself before leaving your country about the regulations and make sure that you have all transit visas you need!**

Switzerland is part of the Schengen Area. The Schengen Area comprises 26 European countries that issue common visas and do not carry out internal border checks. Your visa is a Schengen visa, which means that you can travel to, from and within Schengen countries without having to apply for additional visa or transit visa: www.schengenvisainfo.com/schengen-visa-countries-list/.



If you wish to travel to other European/Schengen countries, please check beforehand the visa requirements, as well as an updated list of Schengen countries: policies may change and some countries have open borders for Schengen visas without being part of the Schengen Area!

Residence permit

Please note that **the visa issued in your passport by the Swiss embassy is just an entrance visa that is only valid for 1 to 3 months!** As soon as you are in your new hometown (either your host family's or your residential project's) you have to register at the community centre within 14 days. **Your new hometown will issue a residence permit for you that is valid for one year.**

Every town in Switzerland has its own procedure of registration. You will be informed about it, when you go to the community centre. Some towns invoice one fee for both the registration and the residence permit; other towns invoice two fees: one for the registration and one for the residence permit.

7. Costs for visa and permits, other costs

Your visa and your residence permit consist of various documents that are organised and paid for by either you yourself, ICYE in your country of residence (according to your contract), ICYE Switzerland or your project. The costs differ per canton and per community, because Switzerland is a confederational state that allows its cantons and communities a very high standard of self-determination and self-regulation. **Please refer to the overview below and make sure to bring enough money to cover the expenses:**

Document	Costs (CHF)*	Organised by	Paid by
Visa authorisation in Switzerland	95.00 – 200.00	ICYE Switzerland	ICYE Switzerland
Work permit in Switzerland	180.00 – 400.00	ICYE Switzerland	Your project
Entrance visa at the Swiss embassy (in your passport) in your country of residence	unknown	You	You (or ICYE in your country of residence)
Registration in community in Switzerland	35.00 – 70.00	You**	You
Residence permit	50.00 – 200.00	You**	You

* Swiss francs (CHF) → CHF 1.00 = € 0.90 / USD 1.02 (approximately; January 2019)

** Your host family or your mentor will gladly assist you in this procedure.

In case you are placed in an arrival host family and your new host family lives in another town, you will have to de-register in the community of your arrival host family and register in the community of your new host family. This will lead to registration costs again, but those will be covered by ICYE Switzerland.

In case of a host family change to another community that is out of your control, ICYE Switzerland will cover the registration costs. If the host family change is partly or completely for your own account, ICYE Switzerland expects you to pay the registration costs in the community of your new host family.

Other costs

Item	Costs (CHF)*	Organised by	Paid by
German language of at least 30 lessons	300.00 – 500.00	ICYE Switzerland / your project	ICYE Switzerland / your project
Additional German language courses	depends	You / your project	You / your project
Public transport subscription for 30-50% discount on public transport in all of Switzerland	165.00	ICYE Switzerland	ICYE Switzerland
Public transport subscription host family – project commute	400.00 – 1000.00	ICYE Switzerland	ICYE Switzerland
Contributions to free time activities / clubs	80.00 – 400.00	You	You
Personal items like shampoo, notebook, stamps, birthday presents	depends	You	You

8. Health insurance

Please read the following information carefully as it is essential for your stay in Switzerland!

Sign the document "Additional insurance", attached to this National Profile and send it with all your application documents to ICYE in your country of residence.

Health insurance is compulsory for all residents of Switzerland. You will be a resident of Switzerland for one year and therefore a **health insurance is also compulsory for you.**

You are insured by Dr.Walter with the Pro Trip World Volunteer policy, which seats in Germany for the whole duration of your exchange programme with ICYE in Switzerland.

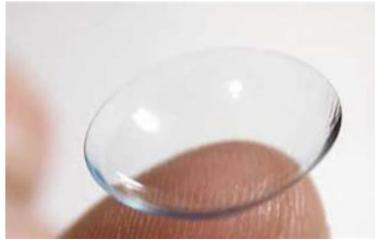
In the past, the Swiss cantons accepted the Pro Trip World Volunteer insurance. In recent years ICYE Switzerland made the experience that **some Swiss cantons decided NOT TO ACCEPT THIS INSURANCE.** The reason for this is the fact that **Swiss health insurance law is stricter than in other European countries in regard to pregnancy/birth-giving, pre-existing illnesses and conditions, psychological/psychiatric illnesses, cures at rehabilitation and other health resorts, etc.**

ICYE Switzerland was not alone in experiencing these rejections: other Swiss youth exchange organisations were affected as well. The Swiss youth exchange organisations share the opinion that rejections depend on how thoroughly and precisely a community or canton looks into the papers and policy of the Pro Trip World Volunteer insurance. **Rejections of the Pro Trip World Volunteer insurance forces ICYE Switzerland to cover another, additional insurance that fully complies with the Swiss health insurance law.**

Rejections happened to 5 volunteers in programme year 2015/16 and to one volunteer in 2018/2019. Since we cannot be entirely sure whether the insurance will be accepted in programme year 2019/2020, **we ask you to be prepared for possible additional insurance costs of approximately CHF 70.00 per month.**

Personal medication with a doctor's prescription as needed, contact lenses, spare glasses, etc.

(The insurance does not cover medication or doctor's visits for illnesses, etc. you already have!)



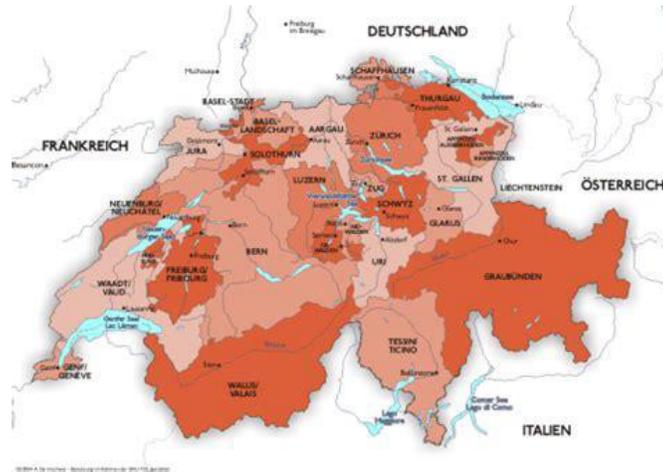
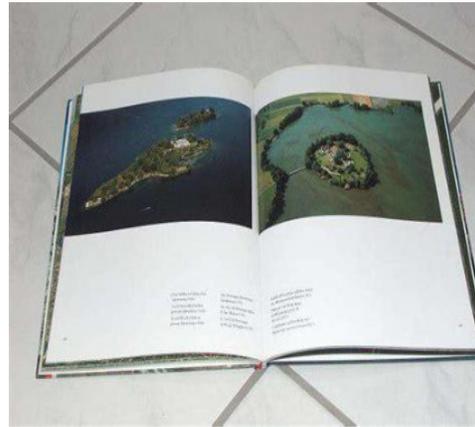
Hello / Thank You Gifts: for your host family members, your project, ...



Typical objects and foods from your country to show at International Events, to your host family...



Photos, games, music, information about your home country, family and friends to show in Switzerland



Deadline of application: 19th of March 2019

Please **fill out and sign all documents on the following pages and forward them to ICYE in your country of residence.**

They are an integral part of your application for the ICYE programme 2019/2020 in Switzerland.

- **Priority project list**
- **Pocket money pool**
- **Conditions and exclusion criteria for ICYE volunteers to Switzerland 2019/2020**
- **Additional insurance coverage**

We are looking forward to meeting you in Switzerland!

Priority project list for ICYE volunteers to Switzerland

Name of volunteer:

.....

Date of birth:

.....

Country of residence:

.....

Educational background:

(schools, vocational/higher education that you completed or attending at the moment)

.....

Interests, hobbies, skills:

.....

Work experience

(voluntary and professional work), please describe as detailed as possible

.....

Describe your reasons and expectations for volunteering

.....

Work field preferences:

1 for your first priority, 2 for your second priority, etc. If there are fields in which you don't want to work in at all leave them empty. You have to choose at least two work fields. The choice of work fields is more important for the placement process than the choice of specific projects.

Work with disabled people

- Disabled children
- Disabled adults

Projects: e.g. work in a home for disabled people, work in a school for disabled children.

Tasks/opportunities: caring or animation tasks, housekeeping, manual work, very rewarding work.

Demands: Interest in disabled persons, patience, good physical condition, and psychological stability, sometimes work on weekends or in the evening.

Care for old people

Projects: work in a home for elderly people.

Tasks/opportunities: Possibility to get in touch with the older generation, caring tasks, household tasks and animation tasks.

Demands: Basic knowledge of the language (the older people usually don't speak foreign languages), sometimes work on weekends or in the evening, sometimes close physical contact (washing the people).

Work with children/adolescents

Projects: work in a kindergarten or day-care centre (age 1-6), in a school (age 6-16) or in a youth centre (age 12-18).

Tasks/opportunities: educational tasks, different activities like games, handicraft, painting, cooking meals etc., learning how to handle children/adolescents, good opportunity to learn the language quickly.

Demands: Ability in handling with children, patience, creativity

Work in an organisation or cultural project

ATTENTION! Generally it is very difficult to find work placements in this area!!

Projects: Work in an international or humanitarian organisation.
 Work in fair trade shops selling goods from African, Latin-American and Asian countries.
 Work in a cultural project like theatre or museum.

Tasks: you work as an all-rounder.

Demands: The applicant should be qualified in the field and/or send an additional motivation letter

Other specialized social work like work with drug addicts, work in a psychiatric clinic or else can be found only if you have a professional background in this field and a basic knowledge of German.

Please indicate 3 projects from our Work Profile in which you are interested to work in:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

We will try to place you in one of the three projects selected or at least to a similar project. We cannot guarantee you a placement in your priority project but we will try to find a project in a similar work field.

I agree to carry out voluntary work during my exchange year with ICYE according to the regulations that have been described in this National Profile:

Signature:

Please send

1. this priority list
2. your application form
3. a motivation letter
4. the signed "pocket-money-pool" form and the signed rules
5. a passport copy
6. your health certificate
7. a nice photograph of you

to ICYE Switzerland (via the ICYE committee in your country)

Deadline: 19th of March 2019 at the latest!

Pocket-money-pool (PMP) – Regulation

1. Principles

- 1.1 The goal of the pocket money-pool (PMP) is to equalize volunteers' salaries.
- 1.2 All volunteers must participate in the PMP.
- 1.3 The principles of the PMP provide for an equalization: i. e. the salaries earned by the volunteers will be divided among all volunteers. All volunteers get the same amount.

2. Organisation

- 2.1 The PMP will be organized on the national level.
- 2.2 Employers must pay the salaries directly to the PMP account of ICYE. They are not allowed to pay any money directly to the volunteer. Volunteers have to inform ICYE in case they receive salaries directly from the employers and pay this money back to the PMP.
- 2.3 Each month the volunteers will receive at least the minimum amount of pocket money based on the list "minimum amount of pocket money" published by the office of the International Federation of ICYE.
- 2.5 During the exchange year, the National Committee can dispose of up to 10% of the incomes paid into the PMP account. For this a special fund is created, the PMP-fund. This money must be used only concerning the volunteers.
- 2.5 The final balance will be paid at the end-year-evaluation-camp before the departure of the volunteers. Volunteers who have left before will have no claim to this sum. Volunteers who didn't participate at the end-year-evaluation-camp without any excuse have no claim to this sum.
- 2.8 Expenses for account management such as bank charges are covered by the PMP
- 2.9. Costs that are linked to the earnings of the volunteers are covered by the PMP. This concerns e.g. costs for work permit fees after a change of work placement during the exchange year etc.
- 3.0 Costs for activities of the incoming volunteers that don't belong to the official program (such as skicamp, excursions etc.) can be co-financed by the PMP.

Signature of volunteer to Switzerland:

Date:

CONDITIONS AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA FOR ICYE VOLUNTEERS IN SWITZERLAND 2019/2020

- volunteer must be between 18 and 30 years
- being in excellent physical AND psychological health
- basic knowledge of German **upon arrival**
- willingness and capability of learning German during the program up to level B1/B2*
- Willingness and motivation to work continuously on integration in the local Swiss culture (host family, project, local activities, sport clubs).
- If you are placed in a host family you are obliged to participate actively in your host family's daily life
- Willingness and capability of working up to 35 hours per week
- Understanding that the conditions of the work contract between volunteer and project are binding (i.e. working hours, holiday slots, flexibility, tasks)
- Understand that the projects count on the reliability and the presence of the volunteer at work
- Understand that changing project is not possible due to visa regulations and Swiss law.

ICYE Switzerland's international cultural exchange programme does not imply the following activities:

- Spending nights or weekends away from your host family
- Excessive partying including alcohol consumption
- Using the programme for travelling to other European countries
- Using the programme for visiting family members/ relatives or friends within Switzerland or any other European countries

EXCLUSION CRITERIA OF THE ICYE SWITZERLAND PROGRAM

- If the volunteer leaves the host family *on his own initiative* and without prior consultation with the ICYE Switzerland office, if the volunteer fails to integrate in the host family, the volunteer will be excluded from the program **with immediate effect**.
- If the volunteer fails to meet the requirements of the project/ work contract, the volunteer will be excluded from the program **with immediate effect**.
- If the project decides to dissolve the contract based on misbehaviour of the volunteer, the volunteer will be excluded from the programme **with immediate effect** as the visa is connected with the work permit and will become invalid if the volunteer loses his/ her project.
- If the volunteer **is certified unfit for work by a doctor for more than 4 weeks** due to accident, illness, etc. or if he/she is unable to work for more than 4 weeks, the ICYE volunteer **will be excluded from the ICYE exchange programme and must return home**.

- **Upon discovery of pre-existing physical or mental illnesses that are not mentioned in the health certificate**, the volunteer will be excluded from the programme **with immediate effect**.
- When violating the law – depending on how severe the violation is – the consequences will be a warning **or** an immediate exclusion from the programme.
- If the volunteer goes underground, the volunteer will be excluded from the programme with immediate effect. He/she will be reported to the national police department and immigration police and will lose his/ her residence permit with immediate effect. His/ her status will turn into illegal. Any rising costs will be forwarded to family of the volunteer in his/ her home country.

ICYE Volunteer

Sending Organization

Country:

Name_____

Name_____

Signature_____

Signature_____

Date_____

Date_____

Additional Insurance Coverage (to be signed by volunteer & sending organization)

- *I herewith confirm to be aware of the possible additional insurance costs (as explained in Chapter 7, Swiss National Profile, p. 17), which may occur to some volunteers of the programme year 2019/2020.*
- *I understand that I might have to pay additional insurance costs of about **CHF 70.00 per month**.*

ICYE Volunteer

Sending Organization

Country:

Name_____

Name_____

Signature_____

Signature_____

Date_____

Date_____