



COUNCIL OF THE SWISS ABROAD: DELEGATE REPORT SPRING 2021 MEETINGS

The Council of the Swiss Abroad met twice in early 2021. Normally we meet in person in the Rathaus in Bern for our spring meeting. One year ago, the march 2020 CSA meeting was one of the first cancellations of the pandemic. Unfortunately, we had to continue this in 2021. Both spring meetings were virtual only and well organised. For some of us it was just another zoom meeting on a Saturday. The first of these meetings took place in the afternoon of 6th February 2021. This was the first time the Council of the Swiss Abroad met after the launch of the new website of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA). Previously OSA ran two websites, one for the organisation and SwissCommunity. In addition, the Swiss Revue, which is now fully part of OSA business, had also its own website. A decision was taken to merge all three websites. This was a lengthy process which started two years ago, but at the beginning of 2021 <https://www.swisscommunity.org/en/> was finally launched. Whenever an organisation changes its web presence, decisions need to be taken and some features will be discontinued; e.g. the SwissCommunity launch featured a new logo. Unsurprisingly some council members who had not been following this closely, felt that one should not have changed the ASO logo. A long discussion ensued and left some of the UK delegates bemused that people were trying to resist change after it had happened. The first meeting of the year traditionally has lots of statutory business on the agenda. In 2020 the role of OSA Treasurer (Quaestor) was taken on by Lucas Metzger, who, very competently, got the OSA budget for 2021 approved. He also instigated changes and Council approved proposals for a three-person finance committee and for guidelines for risk management and for expenses of the executive committee.

The second meeting of the Council of the Swiss Abroad took place on the afternoon of Saturday 20th March 2021. A major item on the agenda were the ongoing elections for the new Council for 2021 to 2025. At the time of the meeting there was still hope that the newly elected delegates would be able to meet at the Congress of the Swiss Abroad in Lugano in August 2021, but meanwhile the Congress had to be postponed to 2022. This Council meeting prominently featured the UK delegates. Franz Muheim delivered the final report of the task force on the “Representativity of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad” which he was leading. Over a period of two years, this task force spent a considerable amount of time discussing and developing procedures of how to enlarge the link between OSA and the Swiss communities world wide, with many of these now being virtual groups. The task force also proposed procedures of how to elect the delegates to the Council from all Swiss Abroad in their respective countries leading to new election guidelines. The proposals of the task force had been accepted by Council at previous meetings, but the report nicely put an endpoint to a significant piece of work. UK delegate Vincent Croset was leading a task force on “Representation of the Swiss Abroad in the Swiss national parliament” and their report was presented by one of his colleagues. This was the final Council meeting with the current UK delegates Nathalie Chuard, Vincent Croset, Sarah Grand-Clément, Loredana Guetg Wyatt and Franz Muheim as their term is ending.