



PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR THE 56th AGM OF FEDERATION OF SWISS SOCIETIES IN THE UK (FOSSUK)

Dear fellow Swiss in the UK

I feel very honoured to write this year's President's Report, as I took over this role as of last December. It has been a short period for me as president of FOSSUK, nevertheless I am very proud of what we already achieved together:

One of the highlights was the organisation of the elections for the new Delegates to the Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA). Massive thanks to Camilla Ghislanzoni and Ane-Marie Peter who led the entire process. With the ongoing trend of digitalisation, it was truly a massive win that we offered the option of online voting for the first time ever! We received over 320 voting slips and over 1110 votes, every single one of them validated by the Embassy. We achieved the highest participation rate since we introduced the public vote and 90% of votes came through the online channel.

To kick off the elections, we organized in collaboration with Ariane Rustichelli (Director of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad) a webinar to drive awareness of the CSA and the current delegates where present to share their personal experiences over the last four years.

8 strong, and what I appreciate the most, diverse candidates stood for election. A great mix of existing Delegates re-running for another term and 6 "new-to-CSA" Swiss nationals that are keen to bring a fresh, new perspective. I am eagerly awaiting the FOSSUK AGM, where the five CSA Delegates for the next term will be announced.

Alongside the election, we also launched a survey to learn more about the interests and needs of the Swiss expats: We got almost 200 responses from all over the country, different age groups and interests. The final analysis will be published shortly, but what was very clear is that regardless of demographics, the vast majority is still very attached to Switzerland and wants to stay connected to our home country. Based on those results, we will also present an action plan to ensure we respond to those extremely valuable insights and incorporate them into our FOSSUK agenda for 2021+.

We also want to understand from the survey, how to future proof the concept of "clubs", as there has been a decline in formal clubs over the last few years. Nonetheless, we are very proud that FOSSUK secured the membership of five clubs (New Helvetic Society, Swiss Club Edinburgh, Unione Ticinese, Swiss Club Manchester and East Surrey Club) and the Swiss Church as associate member due to their charitable status. There is clearly some headroom to increase the number of memberships in the next couple of years further, but it's already a step forward versus previous years.

Without any doubt, FOSSUK wouldn't exist without you.

Hence, I would like to thank you all for your continuous support and collaboration.

Thanks to the FOSSUK committee members (Ane-Mari Peter, Franz Muheim, Gioia Palmieri, Joelle Nebbe-Mornod, Loredana Guetg-Wyatt, Sarah Grand-Clément, Vincent Croset), thanks to all (corporate & associate) members, friends and sponsors of FOSSUK, thanks to our friends at the Embassy, especially Manuela Ferrari and Simona Regazzoni, and thanks to everyone else who is passionate about keeping FOSSUK alive and I unintentionally forgot to mention here.

Your commitment to the Swiss community is remarkable and all your hard work (for most of you on top of your day-to-day job) is appreciated and valued.



Looking ahead, 2021 is another year of change:

- The term of the current CSA delegates (Alexandre Tissot, Franz Muheim, Loredana Guetg-Wyatt, Nathalie Chuard, Sarah Grand-Clément, Vincent Croset) comes to an end. Thanks for your passion and perseverance to represent us Swiss in the UK in Berne and push for very important topics. We clearly celebrated some small wins but there is still a lot to do, especially to facilitate e-Voting which is very close to our heart.
- Sarah Grand-Clément and Vincent Croset will both leave the FOSSUK committee:
 - o Sarah who joined as CSA Delegate in 2019 replacing Alexandre Tissot, is repatriating to Switzerland as she secured a fabulous job at the United Nations. Well done, we are very proud of you and wish you just the best. Thanks for your support and especially bringing to life the recently launched survey and its analysis, which leads to very valuable insights to shape the future of FOSSUK.
 - o Vincent who got elected as CSA Delegate in 2017 secured last year a role as Assistant Professor at Durham University. And if that's not challenging and time-consuming enough, he is also a proud dad of a cute toddler that also requires his attention. Vincent led a task force within the CSA to explore the opportunity of a mandatory seat for Swiss Abroad in the parliament, which led to fruitful and thought-provoking discussions. Thanks for your passion and all your hard work. You will be missed.
- H.E. Ambassador Alexandre Fasel and his wife Madame Nicole Fasel-Rossier left London for their next adventure back in Switzerland. We wish them all the best and would like to thank them for a strong collaboration over the last four years. We are extremely grateful for their support and generosity. It clearly wasn't easy to navigate us Swiss living in the UK through those turbulent and unprecedented times, first Brexit and then a global pandemic. Nevertheless, H.E. Ambassador Alexandre Fasel always found time for FOSSUK initiatives and never missed an event. It's with great sadness that we say our farewell.
- We are looking forward to welcoming H.E. Ambassador Markus Leitner as new Ambassador of Switzerland to the United Kingdom. We wish him a fabulous start here in London after concluding his duties as Ambassador of Switzerland to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "N. Chuard". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a light-colored background.

Nathalie Chuard