



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR THE 57<sup>th</sup> AGM OF THE FEDERATION OF SWISS SOCIETIES IN THE UK (FOSSUK)

Dear fellow Swiss in the UK

Although 2021 has been another challenging year due to the pandemic, it was also a year of new beginnings and marked the start of OSA's (Organisation of the Swiss Abroad) new legislative period (2021-25).

### ***Election and ratification of OSA delegates for the new term***

Due to the hard work of our Elections Committee, chaired by Ané-Mari Peter and Camilla Ghislanzoni, and a fabulous collaboration with our friends at the Embassy, it was possible (for the first time ever!) to vote for OSA delegates online. The hard work paid off: we doubled the number of voting slips compared to the last election. The results of the election were announced, and the new delegates were officially ratified at the FOSSUK AGM on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June, 2021:

- Franz Muheim (198 votes, re-elected)
- Andreas Feller-Ryf (190 votes, new)
- Loredana Guetg-Wyatt (171 votes, re-elected)
- Michelle Hufschmid (158 votes, new)
- Lakshmi Sundaram (137 votes, new)

As you can see, we have a great mix of re-elected experienced FOSSUK members, and new delegates who are already making a strong impact in their first year with their fresh ideas, enthusiasm, and drive.

### ***First in-person committee meeting since the beginning of the pandemic***

On 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021 the new delegates met in person at the Swiss Embassy to discuss FOSSUK's plans for 2022. This was a big step, as it was our first in-person meeting after a long while. The main points of discussion were the organisation of the AGM and the appointment of new roles within the committee: Ané-Mari Peter as Vice President, Joelle Nebbe-Mornod as Secretary, Michelle Hufschmid as Treasurer and Andreas Feller-Ryf as Club Liaison Officer. A newly created role to put more focus on the relationship with our members and the Swiss community in the UK. I wish you all the best in your new roles and want to thank everyone who contributed to a smooth transition with fabulous handovers.

### ***Representation at OSA congress***

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the 97<sup>th</sup> OSA congress on 20<sup>th</sup>/ 23<sup>rd</sup> of August was held online. Filippo Lombardi was elected as the new president of OSA, replacing Remo Gysin. We were delighted that our UK delegate Franz Muheim was successfully re-elected into the executive committee. Congratulations!

Whilst our activities continued to take place online throughout 2021, I am beyond excited that we will be trialing a new hybrid model for the AGM 2022: meeting our dear Swiss friends in person at the Swiss Embassy in London while also maximising accessibility for those who cannot travel to London by offering an online option as well.



We are currently working on developing an extensive events calendar, with the next big one being the Swiss National Day celebration on the 17<sup>th</sup> of July at the German School in Richmond. Special thanks to Andreas Feller-Ryf who has been putting so much effort into the organisation of this event and within record-speed managed to come up with super exciting plans – we hope that you will all be there.

Furthermore, we are looking forward that the next OSA congress, which will be held in Lugano in July. After more than two years of "Zoom fatigue" we can't wait to meet fellow OSA members from around the world in person again and to work together to champion the interests of the Swiss Abroad!

Regardless of how and where we connect, FOSSUK wouldn't exist without such a dedicated team. I am extremely lucky to be President of an association that has such supportive and driven members; whilst all of us serve the Swiss community in the UK on top of our day jobs, I am impressed by the committee's commitment in their personal time! Massive thanks to Andreas Feller-Ryf, Loredana Guetg-Wyatt, Michelle Hufschmid, Franz Muheim, Joelle Nebbe-Mornod, Ané-Mari Peter and Lakshmi Sundaram.

Thanks to all FOSSUK members – corporate and associate, friends and sponsors of FOSSUK. A special "thank you" goes to our friends at the Embassy, especially Manuela Ferrari and Simona Regazzoni. Both will leave London in the summer as they move to their next professional adventures. On behalf of the FOSSUK committee we would like to wish you both the very best. It has been an immense pleasure working together and we are very grateful for your continuous support over the last 4 years.

We would also like to thank Ambassador Leitner, who has taken the time to get to know FOSSUK since his arrival in the UK, provided us with a place to hold our meetings, and is graciously hosting our AGM at the Embassy. We look forward to working closely with you in the future as well!

On a personal level, it's with mixed feelings that I am stepping down as President and leaving the FOSSUK committee after the AGM 2022. I moved back to Zurich last summer as I got offered an exciting job opportunity.

As I move on to my next chapter, I wanted to extend my sincere thanks for your support and your friendship over the last few years. When I moved to London 7 years ago, I remember that it felt like a scary step to start a new life in a foreign country. For me, FOSSUK played an integral part in finding a new home away from home, staying connected to Swiss nationals and accelerating my own personal growth. That's why I deeply appreciate associations like FOSSUK and the people who are driving it.

Please rest assured that, even from the other side of the channel, I will be constantly peeking over to see how this very capable team will push FOSSUK to new heights.

All the best and I look forward to our paths crossing again in the future.

Nathalie Chuard