



Switzerland's communication abroad

The mandate for Switzerland's communication abroad is set out in the Federal Act on the Promotion of the Image of Switzerland Abroad and is further specified in the accompanying ordinance. On this basis the long-term strategy of communication abroad is approved by the Federal Council and implemented by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, General Secretariat, and Presence Switzerland.

Mandate

As part of the FDFA, Presence Switzerland promotes the dissemination of knowledge about Switzerland, creates positive attitudes towards Switzerland abroad and stresses Swiss diversity and attractiveness.

Goals

- Dissemination of knowledge about Switzerland abroad
- Promotion of the visibility of Switzerland abroad
- Presentation of Switzerland's political concerns and positions to a foreign target audience
- Establishment and cultivation of a network of contacts between Switzerland and future decision makers and opinion leaders

Target audience

The activities of Presence Switzerland are addressed to present and future decision makers and opinion leaders from the fields of politics, business, science, education and culture, as well as to journalists, school classes and students.

Brand Switzerland

Brand Switzerland is defined by Presence Switzerland and forms the basis in terms of content and of visual presentation for all Presence Switzerland activities. It defines the messages about Switzerland that Presence Switzerland communicates abroad, it determines the nature of this communication and it specifies the visual presentation of Switzerland abroad. For further information see www.image-switzerland.ch



Analysis of the perception of Switzerland abroad

As basis for its activities, Presence Switzerland analyses and regularly surveys the image of Switzerland abroad and takes part in international debates on national communication and on image research. If Switzerland's image abroad is seriously threatened or if an image crisis has already occurred, Presence Switzerland will present an appropriate communication concept to the Federal Council.

Thematic and geographical focal points

The Federal Council has specified the priorities for the activities of Switzerland's communication abroad 2010-2011. This provides for three different levels of communication abroad: basic provision; thematic and geographical focal points; extraordinary situations (see Strategy for Communication Abroad 2010-2011 on <http://www.image-switzerland.ch/index.php?id=481&L=1>).

The thematic priorities of the FDFA, Presence Switzerland, are to promote an understanding of Switzerland's political system and approaches, and to boost the level of knowledge of Switzerland's competitiveness and innovativeness, especially in the fields of environment and transport. Presence Switzerland distinguishes between priority countries and other countries, and most of its activities focus on priority countries. The current priority countries include our neighbours Germany, Austria, France and Italy, as well as Brussels, Great Britain, USA and China. For the year 2010, Latin America with its countries Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico is an "ad-hoc" priority region.

Instruments

Presence Switzerland possesses various instruments that can be deployed depending on the situation.

In most cases Presence Switzerland combines these instruments in order to achieve the maximum and most lasting impact.

- Projects abroad: Presence Switzerland, together with Swiss representations abroad, supports and implements projects on the ground. These projects must always be connected with Switzerland and there must be a clear message in response to a demonstrable need for action. They must be addressed to a specific foreign audience, must whenever possible be long-term and should not conflict with the core competence of a sector-specific organisation that is responsible for the communication of Switzerland's image abroad.
- Project management for major events: Presence Switzerland carries out project management for Swiss presentations at major events such as world exhibitions, Olympic Games or international sports events.
- Foreign delegations: Presence Switzerland invites foreign opinion leaders from the fields of politics, business, culture, science and the academic world to Switzerland, either in the run-up to state visits or for the purpose of thematic or comprehensive study trips.
- Information about Switzerland: Presence Switzerland develops and produces printed and audio-visual information material about Switzerland that is disseminated worldwide, mainly by Swiss representations abroad. Presence Switzerland also runs the web site www.swissworld.org, which describes Swiss life and institutions. It sends teaching materials and textbooks to schools to encourage schools and teachers to focus more on Switzerland in their courses.

Training

Presence Switzerland offers training courses on Switzerland's communication abroad for staff of Swiss embassies abroad, the federal administration and partner organisations.

Evaluation

Measuring impact and efficiency of its activities is very important to Presence Switzerland. This is why clear objectives are defined for all its activities based on the general objectives of Switzerland's communication abroad. Thereafter, efficiency, effectiveness and impact are evaluated.



Legal bases	Federal Act on the Promotion of the Image of Switzerland Abroad => http://www.admin.ch/ch/f/rs/194_1/index.html (available in French only) Ordinance on National Communication => www.admin.ch/ch/f/as/2008/6419
Operative Start	Founded: 01.01.2001 Integration in the FDFA, General Secretariat: 01.01.2009
Partners	Swiss representations abroad, organisations within the federal administration as well as external organisations operating in the area of national communication, Swiss companies
Budget	CHF 9.5 million (CHF 1 m of this is earmarked for the 2010 Shanghai Expo; according to the Federal Act, presentations at Expos and at Olympic Games are financed via separate budgets)
Employees	32 (14 permanent and 18 fixed-term full-time and part-time positions)

