

Newsletter

Embassy of Switzerland in Hanoi
Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City
April 2024

Ambassador's message

Dear Swiss Compatriots in Viet Nam,
Dear Friends of Switzerland,

I am delighted to share herewith the latest news from our Embassy, the General Consulate in HCMC and our vibrant community. It was particularly inspiring for me to participate in the Christmas Reception of the Swiss Business Association (SBA) organized in HCMC on 9 December 2023. The atmosphere was wonderful, the music great and the food delicious. A huge thanks to the committee and organizers for bringing us all together again and again, and my encouragement to all members of the community, who are not yet active members of the SBA to join.

On the 5th of January, I was also delighted to welcome many of you at the Swiss Residence for our Community Raclette Evening. Having a dynamic Swiss community in Vietnam makes my job very pleasant.

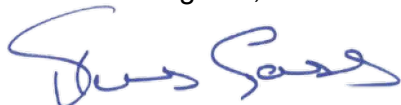
As you will see in this Newsletter, one of the recent highlights of the cooperation between Vietnam and Switzerland is the publication of a second call for research proposals to receive funding by Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and the Vietnamese National Foundation for Science and Technology Development (NAFOSTED). I look forward to informing you about the results of this call in the near future.

Together with our Consul General, Werner Bardill, we have also continued our visits of Swiss companies in Vietnam, have participated in the celebrations of their establishment or jubilees, and are committed to continue to raise their visibility and explain to the public that Swiss companies play an important role in the booming Vietnamese economy. If you haven't seen our video clip on this topic, do check it out: [Swiss businesses in the Vietnamese economy](#).

Another highlight, was a recent workshop on the Mekong Basin, which the embassy organized in March 2024. The objective of this meeting was to convene representatives of Swiss embassies and cooperation offices, as well as Swiss researchers in the Mekong Region, together with representatives of FDFA and SECO from Bern, to strengthen our understanding of the challenges and opportunities of this the region, as well as our cooperation and synergies.

As we move on in this year of the Dragon, please stay in touch with us through our social media channels on X (formerly Twitter) at @SwissAmbVietnam and on Facebook at SwitzerlandVietnam, and do join us at this year's 1st of August celebration organized by the Swiss Business Association will take place on Saturday, 3 August 2024 in Ho Chi Minh City.

With warm regards,



Thomas Gass
Ambassador of Switzerland to Viet Nam

[Deutsch](#)

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Message de l'ambassadeur

Chères et chers compatriotes suisses au Viet Nam,
Chers amis de la Suisse,

Je suis ravi de partager ci-dessous les dernières nouvelles de notre ambassade, du consulat général à HCMC et de notre dynamique communauté suisse. Ce fut particulièrement inspirant pour moi de participer à la réception de Noël de notre Swiss Business Association (SBA) organisée à HCMV le 9 décembre 2023. L'atmosphère était merveilleuse, la musique excellente et la nourriture délicieuse. Un immense merci au comité et aux organisateurs de nous réunir ainsi année après année, et mes encouragements à tous les membres de la communauté, qui ne sont pas encore membres actifs de la SBA, à le devenir. Le 5 janvier, j'ai également eu le plaisir de vous accueillir nombreux à la Résidence suisse à Hanoï, pour notre Soirée-raclette communautaire. Avoir une communauté suisse dynamique au Vietnam rend mon travail très agréable.

Comme vous le verrez dans cette lettre circulaire, l'un des faits marquants récents de la coopération entre le Vietnam et la Suisse est la publication d'un deuxième appel à propositions de recherche financé par le Fonds national suisse (FNS) et la Fondation nationale vietnamienne pour le développement de la science et de la technologie (NAFOSTED). Je me réjouis de pouvoir vous informer prochainement sur les résultats de ce concours.

En collaboration avec notre Consul général Werner Bardill, nous avons également poursuivi nos visites d'entreprises suisses au Vietnam, participé aux célébrations de leur établissement au Vietnam ou de leur jubilé. Nous nous engageons à continuer à accroître leur visibilité et à expliquer au public que les entreprises suisses jouent un rôle important dans cette économie vietnamienne en plein essor. Si vous n'avez pas vu notre clip vidéo sur ce sujet, jetez-y un coup œil : [Swiss businesses in the Vietnamese economy.](#)

Un autre moment fort a été un récent atelier sur le Bassin du Mékong, organisé par l'ambassade en mars 2024. L'objectif de cet atelier était de réunir des représentants des ambassades et des bureaux de coopération suisses, et des chercheurs suisses de la région du Mékong, ainsi que des représentants du DFAE et du SECO depuis Berne, pour renforcer notre compréhension des défis et des opportunités de cette région, ainsi que notre coopération et nos synergies.

Alors que nous avançons dans cette année du Dragon, restez en contact avec nous via nos réseaux sociaux sur X (anciennement Twitter) à @SwissAmbVietnam et sur Facebook à SwitzerlandVietnam, et rejoignez-nous à la célébration du 1er août organisée par la Swiss Business Association le samedi 3 août 2024 à Ho Chi Minh Ville.

Avec mes salutations les plus cordiales,



Thomas Gass
Ambassadeur de Suisse au Viet Nam

Ein Wort des Botschafters

Liebe Schweizer Mitbürgerinnen und Mitbürger in Viet Nam,
Liebe Freunde der Schweiz,

Ich freue mich Ihnen nachfolgend die neuesten Nachrichten aus unserer Botschaft, dem Generalkonsulat in HCMC und unserer lebendigen Schweizer Community mitzuteilen. Besonders inspirierend war für mich die Teilnahme am Weihnachtsempfang der Swiss Business Association (SBA) am 9. Dezember 2023 im HCMC. Die Atmosphäre war wunderbar, die Musik ausgezeichnet und das Essen köstlich. Ein grosses Dankeschön dem Komitee und den Organisatoren, die uns Jahr für Jahr auf diese Art zusammenbringen, und meine Ermutigung an alle, die noch keine aktiven Mitglieder der SBA sind, es zu werden.

Am 5. Januar hatte ich ausserdem das Vergnügen, viele von Ihnen zu unserem Community-Raclette-Abend in der Schweizer Residenz in Hanoi begrüßen zu dürfen. Eine dynamische Schweizer Gemeinschaft in Vietnam zu haben, macht meine Arbeit sehr angenehm.

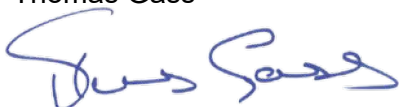
Wie Sie in diesem Rundschreiben sehen werden, ist einer der jüngsten Höhepunkte der Zusammenarbeit zwischen Vietnam und der Schweiz die Veröffentlichung einer zweiten Ausschreibung für Forschungsprojekte, die vom Schweizerischen Nationalfonds (SNF) und der Vietnamesischen Nationalstiftung für die Entwicklung von Wissenschaft und Technologie (NAFOSTED) unterstützt werden. Ich freue mich Sie bald über die Ergebnisse dieser Ausschreibung informieren zu können.

In Zusammenarbeit mit unserem Generalkonsul Werner Bardill setzten wir auch unsere Besuche bei Schweizer Unternehmen in Vietnam fort und nahmen an den Feierlichkeiten zu deren Gründung in Vietnam oder ihren Jubiläen teil. Wir setzen uns dafür ein, deren Sichtbarkeit weiter zu erhöhen und der Öffentlichkeit zu vermitteln, dass Schweizer Unternehmen in dieser boomenden vietnamesischen Wirtschaft eine wichtige Rolle spielen. Sollten Sie unseren Videoclip zu diesem Thema noch nicht gesehen haben, schauen Sie sich ihn an: [Swiss businesses in the Vietnamese economy](#).

Ein weiterer Höhepunkt war ein von der Botschaft organisierter Workshop zum Mekong, der im März 2024 stattfand. Ziel dieses Workshops war es Vertreter von Schweizer Botschaften und Kooperationsbüros, Schweizer Forscher aus der Mekong-Region sowie Vertreter des EDA und SECO aus Bern zusammenzubringen, um unser Verständnis für die Herausforderungen und Chancen dieser Region sowie unsere Zusammenarbeit und Synergien zu stärken.

Während wir in diesem Jahr des Drachens voranschreiten, lade ich Sie ein mit uns über unsere sozialen Kanäle in Kontakt zu bleiben und im Sommer an der Ersten-August Feier teilzunehmen, die von der Swiss Business Association am Samstag, den 3. August 2024 in Ho-Chi-Minh-Stadt organisiert wird.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen,
Thomas Gass



Botschafter der Schweiz in Viet Nam

Messaggio dell'Ambasciatore

Care cittadine e cari cittadini svizzeri in Vietnam
Care amiche e cari amici della Svizzera,

Sono lieto di condividere con Voi le ultime novità della nostra Ambasciata, del Consolato Generale a Ho Chi Minh City e della nostra vivace comunità svizzera. È stato per me particolarmente stimolante partecipare al ricevimento natalizio della Swiss Business Association (SBA), tenutosi a Ho Chi Minh City il 9 dicembre 2023. L'atmosfera era splendida, la musica eccellente e il cibo delizioso. Ringrazio il Comitato e gli organizzatori per averci riunito, come ogni anno, in questa occasione e vorrei anche incoraggiare tutti i membri della comunità svizzera che non sono ancora membri attivi dell'SBA a diventarlo. Ho anche avuto il piacere di accogliere molti di voi alla serata Raclette della Comunità Svizzera presso la Residenza Svizzera il 5 gennaio. Poter contare su una comunità svizzera dinamica in Vietnam rende il mio lavoro molto piacevole.

Come potrete vedere in questa newsletter, uno dei recenti punti salienti della cooperazione tra il Vietnam e la Svizzera è stata la pubblicazione di un secondo bando per la presentazione di proposte di progetti di ricerca finanziati dalla Fondazione Nazionale Svizzera per la Scienza (SNSF) e dalla Fondazione Nazionale Vietnamita per lo Sviluppo della Scienza e della Tecnologia (NAFOSTED). Spero di essere in grado di informarVi presto sui risultati di questo bando.

In collaborazione con il nostro Console Generale a Ho Chi Minh City Werner Bardill, abbiamo anche proseguito le nostre visite alle aziende svizzere in Vietnam, partecipando alle celebrazioni in occasione del loro insediamento in Vietnam o dei loro anniversari. Continueremo a impegnarci per aumentare ulteriormente la visibilità di queste aziende e per far scoprire al pubblico il ruolo importante che le aziende svizzere svolgono nell'economia vietnamita in piena crescita. Se non avete ancora visto il nostro video clip su questo argomento, vi invito a darci un'occhiata: [Swiss businesses in the Vietnamese economy](#).

Un altro momento saliente è stato il recente workshop sul bacino del Mekong, organizzato dall'Ambasciata nel marzo 2024. L'obiettivo di questo workshop era quello di riunire i rappresentanti delle ambasciate e degli uffici di cooperazione svizzeri, i ricercatori svizzeri che svolgono ricerche sulla regione del Mekong, così come i rappresentanti del DFAE e della SECO a Berna, per rafforzare ulteriormente la nostra comprensione delle sfide e delle opportunità in questa regione, nonché la cooperazione e le nostre sinergie.

Mentre ci addentriamo in questo Anno del Dragone, Vi invito a rimanere in contatto con noi attraverso i nostri canali social su X (ex Twitter) all'indirizzo @SwissAmbVietnam e su Facebook all'indirizzo SwitzerlandVietnam, e a unirsi a noi in occasione della celebrazione del 1° agosto organizzata dalla Swiss Business Association sabato 3 agosto 2024 a Ho Chi Minh City.

Cordiali saluti,
Thomas Gass



Ambasciatore di Svizzera in Vietnam

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Spotlight and looking back

Swiss Regional Workshop on Sustainable Development in the Mekong River Basin

The Embassy successfully organized a Swiss Regional Workshop on Sustainable Development in the Mekong River Basin in Cần Thơ, Vietnam on 12-14 March 2024.



During the workshop, we took stock of the knowledge and experience of the staff of Swiss embassies and cooperation offices in the region, as well as the expertise of implementing partners, academia and key external experts. The workshop was useful in strengthening Swiss cooperation and coordination regarding sustainable development in the Mekong River Basin and in better understanding the compounding effects of hydrology and climate change on the environment, population and economy on the Mekong region. The various cooperation offices as well as representatives of SDC and SECO in Bern, exchanged experiences and best practices. The workshop was very timely, as it provided an opportunity to discuss the narrative for Swiss cooperation in the Mekong Basin as the Swiss Parliament enters a year of negotiations on the future strategy for international cooperation.

On Wednesday, participants had the opportunity to take part a field visit in the Mekong Delta to better understand the concrete challenges faced by the region's inhabitants. Our implementing partner GIZ organized the field visit. Together, the Swiss and German governments are supporting Vietnam in its fight against climate change through the Mekong Delta Climate Resilience Programme (MCRP). This project helps cities in the Mekong Delta, a region of 17 million people that is highly vulnerable to climate change, become more resilient and sustainable. The program focuses on making these cities stronger against climate change, smarter in reducing climate impacts while benefiting the economy, and more mindful of water use and management. A key aspect of the MCRP is its work on urban flood and drainage management, which aims to reduce flood risks and ensure the effective and safe disposal of rainwater and wastewater. Through these efforts, we are helping to create safer, more sustainable cities in the Mekong Delta and demonstrating the impact of Swiss economic cooperation and development in Vietnam.



Building stronger ties between Vietnamese and Swiss Universities and Researchers

As this Newsletter goes “to press”, a second call for research proposals is being concluded jointly by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) and the Vietnamese National Foundation for Science and Technology Development (NAFOSTED). Since 2020, the two national research promotion agencies have been working in close partnership to build stronger ties between Vietnamese and Swiss Universities and Researchers through the funding of joint projects between both scientific communities. This program enables researchers in Switzerland to carry out joint projects with research partners in Vietnam, for durations of three to four years. In this year’s call 10 joint projects can each receive funding up to CHF 400,000 per project for the Swiss part, and 100’000 for the Vietnamese part.

Revitalizing and strengthening the research and academia partnerships between Vietnam and Switzerland has been a priority for the Embassy since January 2023 and the arrival of Amb. Gass, who is himself a former researcher. Highlights of this engagement, included dedication of a part-time Swiss staff to this priority, in the person of Ms Mirjam Uhlmann; discussions with the Vietnamese Ministry of Science and Education and NAFOSTED; visits to universities in Hanoi (including Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam, International Trade University and VinUniversity) and in Ho Chi Minh City (including University of Science, University of Technology and the School of Biomedical Engineering); and in October 2023, meetings in Switzerland with the SNSF and universities and institutes, such as ETHZ, EAWAG, Swiss-TPH, Wyss Academy, Bern University and EPFL.

We were also delighted to host at the Swiss Residence, on 28 March 2024, a second cohort of students from the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland (FHNW) as part of their ExploreAsean programme



Swiss TPH Director Prof Utzinger and Amb Gass discussing public health research partnerships between Vietnam and Switzerland, in the new SwissTPH Building in Basel, 10 Oct 2023



Ambassador Thomas Gass met with Dr. Phạm Đình Nguyễn, Director of NAFOSTED, 29 Sept 2023



Students of the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland (FHNW) interacting with experts from UNIDO and UNDP at the Swiss Residence on 28 March 2024, as part of their ExploreASEAN Programme.

Swiss Innovation in IT Meets Vietnamese Talents

Everyone is talking about the information technology (IT) and its potential. Swiss companies have been invested in and building this sector in Vietnam for several decades. They are combining Swiss innovation with Vietnamese talents and resourcefulness to provide the world with top-of-the-line IT services, from their company locations in Da Nang, Hanoi, HCMC or Can Tho.

In January, Ambassador Gass and Consul General Bardill visited some of these companies in the HCMC region.



At Axon Active, Swiss innovation meets Vietnamese talent. Markus Baur is the passionate and visionary CEO of Axon Active Vietnam

It was inspiring to meet Markus Bauer, passionate and visionary CEO of Axon Active Vietnam. Through agile project development and uncompromising investment into staff development, Axon Active serves public mobility, banks and logistic companies – globally. Another Swiss company that is getting increasing attention in Vietnam is AdNovum, which is specialized in security and fin-tech software. Back home in Switzerland, you’ve probably been in contact with AdNovum products if you used services such as TWINT, UBS Mobile Banking, Postfinance, Mobility and many others.

Another Swiss pioneering company in IT development is ELCA. Its name stems from the French name « Electro-Calcul » given by its founders, a team of engineers from EPFL in 1968! Their first mandate was the creation of a control system the hydro-electric dam la Grande-Dixence, in the Canton Valais. Already in 1998, ELCA opened an office in Ho chi Minh City. If you’ve ever been to a very large concert or sport event, you’ve likely used the ticketing platform SecuTix360°, developed by ELCA.



Ever been to a large concert or sport event?
You’ve likely used the ticketing platform
SecuTix360°, developed by ELCA

The list is incomplete without SPS, which celebrated 20 years in Vietnam in January this year, and provides real-time strategic outsourced IT solutions and services to numerous prestigious companies in Europe, in industries as diverse as finance, logistics, insurance and telecom. Ambassador Gass was invited to the 20-year celebration and particularly impressed by SPS’s investment in and commitment to its Vietnamese staff.

"She Leads Here"

A timely and stimulating discussion with students of the Foreign Trade University

The "*She Leads Here*" discussion with students, organised by the Embassies of the G4 (Canada, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland), took place on 7 March at the Foreign Trade University. The panelists, all energetic, courageous, bright and talented women who have succeeded in their chosen fields despite seemingly insurmountable initial obstacles and prejudices, included Ms Đỗ Thị Thanh Nhân, Programme Manager of a Norwegian-funded de-mining programme in Thừa Thiên Huế Province, who presented her achievements in the chapter on "Women in Peace and Security". Ms Nguyễn Hoàng Điệp, a prominent and award-winning representative of Vietnamese cinema who has made a name for herself as a director, film producer and influential industry leader, who shared her success story in the "Women in Cinema" section. Ms Katie Nguyễn, Ho Chi Minh City Representative of Sunwah Group and Deputy General Manager of Sunwah Vietnam, who shared insights into her career in the "Women in Business" category. Finally, Ms Thạch Thị Chal Thị, founder of Sokfarm Coconut Nectar in Trà Vinh, shared her amazing experience of creating sustainable livelihoods for coconut farmers and integrating disadvantaged workers into the production chain in the "Women in Innovation" section.

The event, which was opened by the University Council, was very well received by the audience, as evidenced by the packed auditorium, and the discussion was very lively, as reflected by the many pointed questions posed by students to the panelists. The event was also well covered by the media, with many journalists in attendance.

Two Swiss humanitarians – a century apart – and their formidable love for Vietnam

In 1993, nearly 100 years after the arrival of Alexandre Yersin on the shores of what was then Indochina, Aline Rebeaud arrived in Vietnam and started the inspiring journey of Maison chance. Over time, the organization grew from a single house to four centers: The Shelter, the Take Wings Center and Village Chance in HCMC, and the Maison Chance Social Center in Dak Nong. Just like Yersin before her, Aline who is known here by her Vietnamese name Tim (heart), has poured her competencies and talent, her love and her passion into her country of adoption and into vulnerable

or marginalized people. She has positively impacted the lives of hundreds of individuals living with severe disabilities, empowering them and nurturing their self-esteem.

On September 21 2023, Ambassador Gass returned to Nha Trang for the second time after his initial trip in March 2023. This time, to participate in the commemoration celebrations of the 160th anniversary of Alexandre Yersin: A Swiss by birth, a Vietnamese by adoption, and a true Global Citizen. In his speeches Amb. Gass underscored that Yersin's humanity, scientific rigor, and visionary spirit continue to inspire many https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexandre_Yersin. Accompanied by Edgar Dörig, OIF's Asia-Pacific Representative, their respective spouses, and Ms Tran Thi Khanh Van, he travelled from Nha Trang (by electric vehicle) to Dak Nong to "connect with the spirit of Yersin" through Tim Aline Rebeaud, the founder and CEO of Maison Chance (<https://maison-chance.org/>).

During his journey from Nha Trang to Dak Nong, the travelers had a pleasant surprise: the Swiss House by the Lake, a welcoming place owned by Swiss compatriot Peter Jenni and his wife Hiep, at Krong Buk Ha Lake. Peter and Hiep are also very active in charity activities amongst minority groups in their region.

The connection between #Yersin and #Tim is undeniable and continues to resonate...



Amb. Thomas Gass in front of the Yersin altar at the Linh Son Pháp Ân pagoda (Nha Trang)



Tim Aline Rebeaud et ses enfants at Maison Chance Dak Nong



At House by the Lake, with Peter and Hiep

Culture

Concert: Swiss Jazz in harmony with Vietnamese Traditional Music



Let's remember that amazing evening back in October 2023 when the Swiss Embassy organized an amazing concert at Daewoo Hotel: the vibrant fusion of jazz melodies and Vietnamese rhythms echoing through the air, creating an atmosphere of pure magic.

Led by Swiss percussionist Reto Weber, alongside the talents of saxophonist Chico Freeman, guitarist Christy Doran, and bassist Heiri Känzig, the stage came alive with their smooth jazz jams. Adding to the enchantment was the captivating performance of Phong Lan, a Vietnamese traditional music band featuring the esteemed talents of People's Artists Vũ Thị Mai Phương and Thế Dân, along with Artists of Merits Nguyễn Thị Thu Thủy and Triệu Tiến Vượng.

But this wasn't just any ordinary concert—it was a joyful celebration of cultural diversity and unity. As the music filled the air, people of all backgrounds came together, grooving to the beat and enjoying in the shared experience. It was a powerful reminder of how music has the incredible ability to transcend barriers and connect us all.



Lunar New Year 2024: A Message of Inclusivity and Empowerment from G4's Ambassadors

This Year of the Dragon, the G4 proudly presented a special video message from our ambassadors, celebrating the New Year of Dragon with a focus on inclusivity and empowerment.

The clip highlights the contributions of all individuals in building a better, more inclusive society. Together with G4, we emphasize the fundamental human right to decent work and spotlight the crucial role of street vendors in our city's economy.

We promote fair income, workplace security, and social protection for all workers, recognizing these as fundamental components of decent work.

Shared on our Facebook and widely embraced by local media, our message resonates: let's unite for a brighter, more equitable future for all.

Click here to watch the video:

<https://www.facebook.com/SwitzerlandVietnam/videos/393841516660735>



Francophonie 2024 : Prix du GADIF à Tim Aline Rebeaud, Film "La voie Royale" et Stand suisse



Chaque année, l'Ambassade de Suisse s'engage pleinement dans les célébrations de la Journée internationale de la Francophonie le 20 mars.

Cette année, le 20 mars 2024, l'Ambassadeur Thomas Gass et son équipe ont participé à une cérémonie spéciale organisée par le Ministère des Affaires étrangères et le Bureau régional de l'Asie-Pacifique de l'Organisation internationale de la Francophonie au Vietnam. Le prix d'honneur du GADIF a été décerné à Aline Rebeaud (connue sous son nom vietnamien Hoàng Nữ Ngọc Tim), une citoyenne suisse et vietnamienne, fondatrice et directrice de Maison Chance, en reconnaissance de ses contributions exceptionnelles aux valeurs de la Francophonie. Nous sommes extrêmement fiers d'elle et la félicitons chaleureusement pour cet honneur bien mérité!



Ambassadeur Gass et l'équipe Suisse à la Célébration officielle de la Journée internationale de la Francophonie (20.03.2024)



Remise du Prix d'honneur du GADIF 2024 à Tim Aline Rebeaud

En outre, l'Ambassade et le Consulat général de Suisse à Ho Chi Minh-ville ont participé au 14^e Festival du film francophone, qui s'est tenu à Hanoï et à Ho Chi Minh-ville du 22 au 27 mars 2024. Le film suisse "La voie royale", réalisé par Frédéric Mermoud et sorti en 2023, a été présenté lors de cet événement cinématographique de renom.

À Hanoï, le dimanche 24 mars, l'Ambassade a également tenu un stand suisse lors de la course de la Francophonie autour du lac Thiền Quang, devant le parc Thống Nhất. Notre stand a attiré de nombreux visiteurs, offrant aux jeunes francophones l'opportunité de découvrir la Suisse à travers des jeux animés par notre équipe. L'atmosphère festive et l'enthousiasme des participants ont fait de cet événement une véritable célébration de la diversité et de la richesse de la Francophonie. Il convient de souligner que la Suisse est fière de devenir membre actif de l'Organisation internationale de la Francophonie depuis 1996 et se classer 3^e contributeur.



Small Action in Development Aid

BridgeFest 2023



On December 9th, 2023, the Swiss Embassy co-organized BridgeFest for the second time, following the previous edition held in 2022 in Da Nang. The Embassy played a significant role in supporting the organization of this major public event, which garnered media attention and marked its debut in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam's largest city.

The event witnessed a record number of visitors, estimated at 15,000, and featured 40 NGOs, each showcasing their work and projects through stands manned by young people. This highlighted their dedication to fostering the development of Vietnamese society. The stand operated by the Swiss Embassy and Consulate General was particularly popular, offering young attendees an opportunity to explore Switzerland through interactive games led by the Swiss team.

In the evening, a large concert, predominantly featuring Vietnamese groups, was held for the people of Ho Chi Minh City. Ambassador Thomas Gass delivered a brief speech alongside co-organizers, including the embassies of the United States, Canada, and the Netherlands, as well as the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism.



BridgeFest 2023 successfully achieved its three main objectives:

- To create a festive and joyful musical event that resonates with the spirit of positive living and healthy communities.
- To inspire youth and stakeholders from all walks of life to champion a future where people and the planet take precedence over profits.
- To showcase and celebrate the impactful changes initiated by individuals and social organizations, fostering a deeper understanding of their vital role in shaping Vietnam's future.

BridgeFest (<https://www.facebook.com/LehoiamnhacBridgeFest>) is an activity aimed at supporting Vietnamese civil society and promoting civic engagement, featuring a music festival and an exhibition of booths representing 40 social organizations. It primarily focuses on empowering Vietnamese youth and advocating for a people-centered economy that prioritizes prosperity, social justice, and sustainable development.



Leadership and Gender Mainstreaming Initiative in Trạm Tàu District, Yên Bái Province

In collaboration with FEMMA (Ethnic and Mountainous Areas Research and Development Center of Thai Nguyen University), the Embassy spearheaded a comprehensive program aimed at enhancing leadership capacity and promoting gender mainstreaming among ethnic minority communities in Trạm Tàu District, Yên Bái Province, Northern Vietnam.

As a result of the initiative, 30 female leaders gained enhanced skills, increasing their chances of promotion. Additionally, 15 action plans were presented, addressing issues such as underage marriage and gender violence. Among these, five were selected for implementation.

The initiative indirectly benefited approximately 1,500 individuals from ethnic minority groups, fostering understanding of women's societal roles, gender equality, and the importance of education and healthcare. Furthermore, the network of female leaders in ethnic minority areas was expanded, aiming for representation in each commune.

Our Deputy Head of Mission, Aldo de Luca, engaged with local authorities and attended the final workshop, held on October 13th, 2023, receiving updates on planned action plans. This initiative not only promoted gender equality but also eradicated stereotypes about ethnic minority women's leadership capabilities.



Articles about the project:

- ✓ <https://www.baoyenbai.com.vn/13/302266/FEMMA-to-chuc-Hoi-thao-tong-ket-va-bao-cao-ke-hoach-hanh-dong-cua-hoc-vien.aspx>
- ✓ <https://giaoducthoidai.vn/boi-duong-nang-luc-lanh-dao-va-ky-nang-long-ghep-gioi-cho-can-bo-nguoi-dtts-post657529.html>

Winter Appeal 2023

KOTO's Winter Appeal programme is designed to offer a comprehensive education to young Vietnamese individuals, equipping them for life beyond the programme. The programme encompasses various components such as hospitality training, English classes, computer courses, preparation for daily life challenges, extra-curricular activities, and community service initiatives.

In a supportive gesture, the Embassy sponsored the 2023 edition of the Winter Appeal, extending assistance to students and residents from three villages in Lũng Cao commune, Lũng Cú district, Thanh Hóa province—an area nestled within the mountainous region of northern Vietnam.

As part of this sponsorship, two meaningful initiatives were organized. Firstly, a cookery course was tailored for 40 women from the Thai minority community, many of whom are involved in managing existing holiday homes or aspire to establish their own. This initiative aimed to equip participants with skills specifically aligned with the sustainable development of the local tourism sector, empowering them to contribute positively to their community's economic growth. Additionally, personal hygiene and hand-washing training sessions were conducted for over 200 children. These sessions were designed to enhance awareness about preventive healthcare practices and health promotion among all participants. Through practical lessons, children were

encouraged to adopt and share good hygiene habits with their families and communities, fostering a culture of well-being and collective responsibility.

KOTO (<https://www.koto.com.au>) is a non-profit enterprise in Vietnam providing positive, permanent change for at-risk and disadvantaged youth in a 2year hospitality training programme that incorporates both vocation training and life skills.



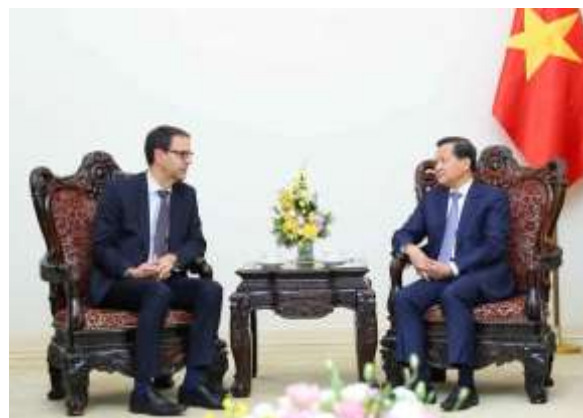
Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, (SECO) Economic Cooperation and Development

Visit of Ambassador Dominique Paravicini and delegation to Vietnam



During his one-week visit to Vietnam in October 2023, Ambassador Dominique Paravicini, Head of the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) Economic Cooperation and Development, has met with several government counterparts, the Swiss business community, and economic development partners to enhance bilateral economic relations and promote sustainable economic growth.

Fruitful exchanges with Deputy Prime-Minister Le Minh Khai and other high-ranking government officials have bolstered the bilateral economic relationship between Switzerland and Vietnam. Both sides are committed to concluding the ongoing Free-Trade Agreement negotiations between the EFTA states and Vietnam soon. This would provide a sound legal framework for Swiss businesses and further boost trade and investment for the benefit of both countries.



Meetings with economic development partners and site visits to Swiss-funded projects offered interesting insights into Swiss funded activities related to Economic Cooperation and Development in Vietnam. Key highlights were, among others, the launching of the Swiss-funded Fintech Program with The State Bank of Vietnam and Asian Development Bank (ADB) to promote the further digitalization of Vietnam's financial sector, the meet-up with Vietnam's vibrant startup ecosystem Swiss EP - Swiss Entrepreneurship Program, as well as the visit to Hiep Phuoc Industrial Park followed by the signing of a

Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Planning and Investment, Vietnam expressing the joint interest in continuing the UNIDO-led Global Eco-Industrial Park Programme for an inclusive and sustainable industrial development in Vietnam.

Switzerland remains a trusted and committed partner to support Vietnam in achieving market-oriented, sustainable growth!

Consular Affairs

Aging abroad

Ruhestand im Ausland

Wir möchten Sie darauf aufmerksam machen, dass wir auf unserer Webseite eine neue Kategorie eingeführt haben, die sich dem Thema "Ruhestand im Ausland" widmet. Eine sorgfältige Vorbereitung ist von entscheidender Bedeutung für einen gelungenen Ruhestand im Ausland. Deshalb haben wir diese Rubrik erstellt, um Ihnen eine Vielzahl von Themen rund um den Ruhestand sowie weitere hilfreiche Informationen anzubieten. Diese Inhalte sollen Ihnen dabei helfen, fundierte Entscheidungen zu treffen und Ihren Ruhestand im Ausland optimal zu planen. Besuchen Sie gerne unsere [Webseite](#), um auf diese relevanten Themen und weitere wertvolle Ressourcen zuzugreifen.



Prendre sa retraite à l'étranger

Nous tenons à vous informer que nous avons introduit une nouvelle catégorie sur notre site web dédiée au thème "Prendre sa retraite à l'étranger". Une préparation minutieuse est essentielle pour une retraite réussie à l'étranger. C'est pourquoi nous avons créé cette rubrique afin de vous fournir une variété de sujets liés à la retraite, ainsi que d'autres informations utiles. Ces contenus sont conçus pour vous aider à prendre des décisions éclairées et à planifier au mieux votre retraite à l'étranger. N'hésitez pas à visiter notre [site web](#) pour accéder à ces sujets pertinents et à d'autres ressources précieuses.

Pensionamento all'estero

Vorremmo informarvi che abbiamo introdotto una nuova categoria sul nostro sito web dedicata al tema "Pensionamento all'estero". Una preparazione accurata è fondamentale per una pensione di successo all'estero. Per questo motivo abbiamo creato questa sezione per fornirvi una varietà di argomenti legati alla pensione e altre informazioni utili. Questi contenuti sono pensati per aiutarvi a prendere decisioni informate e pianificare al meglio la vostra pensione all'estero. Non esitate a visitare il nostro [sito web](#) per accedere a questi temi rilevanti e ad altre preziose risorse.

Swiss National Day – Save the date

The Swiss National Day 2024 will be organized by the Swiss Business Association as follows:

Date 19:00 on Saturday, August 3th, 2024 (door opening 18:00)
Location Sofitel Saigon Plaza
17 Le Duan, District 1
Ho Chi Minh City



More details to follow, but please mark your calendars!

SBA Board

New counter opening hours of the General Consulate in Ho Chi Minh City

Fridays by appointment only from May 1st

Neue Schalteröffnungszeiten Generalkonsulat

Ab dem 1. Mai 2024 gelten in Ho-Chi-Minh-Stadt neue Schalteröffnungszeiten.

Montag - Donnerstag

09.00 - 12.00

Freitag

09.00 - 12.00 nach Vereinbarung

14.00 - 16.00 nach Vereinbarung

Für Termine am Nachmittag und am Freitagvormittag bitten wir Sie daher, uns per E-Mail oder Telefon zu kontaktieren.

Nouveaux horaires d'ouverture du guichet Consulat général

À partir du 1^{er} mai 2024, de nouveaux horaires d'ouverture du guichet seront en vigueur à Ho-Chi-Minh-Ville.

Lundi - Jeudi

09h00 - 12h00

Vendredi

09h00 - 12h00 sur rendez-vous

14h00 - 16h00 sur rendez-vous

Pour les rendez-vous l'après-midi et le vendredi matin, nous vous prions de nous contacter par e-mail ou par téléphone.

Nuovi orari di apertura al pubblico Consolato Generale di

A partire dal 1° maggio 2024 saranno in vigore nuovi orari di apertura al pubblico a Ho-Chi-Minh-City.

Lunedì - Giovedì

09.00 - 12.00

Venerdì

09.00 - 12.00 su appuntamento

14.00 - 16.00 su appuntamento

Pertanto, per appuntamenti nel pomeriggio e il venerdì mattina, vi preghiamo di contattarci via e-mail o telefono.

New address Visa Application Center, VFS Global

We would like to inform you that [VFS Global's Visa Application Center](#) in Ho Chi Minh City has moved. Visa applications will now be accepted at the following address:
REE Tower, 3B Floor, 9 Doan Van Bo, Ward 12, District 4, Ho Chi Minh City 70000 Vietnam

News from the staff

New Head of Cooperation Sibylle Bachmann

I took the position as Head of Cooperation at the Swiss Embassy in Hanoi as of April 1st replacing Werner Gruber, who went back to Switzerland after almost three years. In this role, I oversee the implementation of Switzerland's economic development cooperation program in Vietnam together with the team. As you might know, I have already been in Vietnam since August 2021 in the position of Deputy Head of Cooperation. Accordingly, I am happy to have more time to discover the country together with my husband Max and my two small daughters.



Laure Ray – consular attaché, Ho Chi Minh City

As a new employee, I am honored to be able to join the FDFA this year. From June 2024, I will begin my training as a consular attaché with the team at the Consulate general in Ho Chi Minh City. I'm already looking forward to discovering and learning how to carry out the multiple tasks of the function, as well as being able to support my new colleagues by responding effectively to the varied demands of consular affairs. Together with my husband and our two children, we're really looking forward to discovering the many facets of Vietnamese culture, and can't wait to make all the wonderful encounters that await us. See you soon!

Hoa Ta – Political Officer, Hanoi

I started at the embassy in November 2023 as a political officer. Although I have worked in international organizations for many years, this is the first time I work for an embassy. It's really interesting to look at politics from a neutral perspective. I really like it and hope to continue to learn and bring added values to the Swiss mission in Vietnam.



Duong Hoang Le – Junior Assistant and Translator, Hanoi



As Switzerland has always been among the top 10 happiest countries in the world since the first edition of the World Happiness Report in 2012, I'm so proud to say if I am not the happiest person on the planet right now then I really don't know who else is! It's nearly impossible for me to articulate how grateful I am for joining the Embassy of Switzerland in Vietnam. Words can not describe the joy to be able to speak both French and English with my polyglot and brilliant colleagues at the office day in day out. Being the youngest member in the Team, I'm truly lucky for my supportive colleagues, it is such a gift to feel so seen and held by you.

Thank you for your unwavering support! I honestly look forward to savoring every second of this brand new chapter of my life with you all!

Impressions

New Year's Reception with the Swiss Community and the Embassy Team

On 5 January, as every year, all Swiss nationals living in Vietnam were invited to the New Year's Reception at the Ambassador's residence in Hanoi. The invitees gathered in the beautiful garden around the stunning buffet, savoring tasty typical Swiss dishes, and mingling with each other for a lively exchange.



Run for Zero Violence against Women and Girls, UNFPA 2023

3 December 2023 the Embassy staff gathered as the SWISS TEAM to run for Zero Violence against Women and Girls. The participation of the SWISS TEAM was a powerful demonstration of our commitment to say NO EXCUSE to all forms of gender-based violence. We were enthusiastic about running for a violence-free future and enjoying the beautiful scenery of Hoan Kiem Lake together with the 1,700 participants. The Event was held annually in 2022 and 2023 and is an initiative of CSAGA and UNFPA to attract the attention of the community on preventing and responding to violence against women and girls in response to the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence and the National Action Month for Gender Equality.

