



Dear Swiss compatriots,
Dear friends of Switzerland!

After so many activities were suspended due to the pandemic, we can be pleased about several events in 2022:

First of all, we have seen the resumption of high-level visits, in particular the official visit of the

Speaker of the Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Switzerland on 9-11 May and a new round of political consultations in Bern on 3 June 2022.

These visits and meetings are of particular importance this year, as we celebrate 30 years of diplomatic relations. Diplomatic relations were established on 21 January 1992 between Switzerland and the Republic of Azerbaijan and on 13 July 1992 between Switzerland and Turkmenistan.

In 2022, another important event was the launch of the new Swiss Regional Cooperation Programme for the South Caucasus Region 2022-2025. In Azerbaijan, building on the activities carried out in recent years, Swiss-funded projects will continue to focus on strengthening public finance management and further improving the business environment, as well as on women's economic empowerment.

Last but not least: A new chapter in the history of the Swiss Embassy in Baku will open on 1 August 2022. On this day, the Embassy will start operating in new premises. After 14 years in the beautiful Old City, we will move to modern, visitor-friendly offices in the Landmark complex.

You might wonder: Is it a coincidence that the date of our move falls on the Swiss National Day, or did we plan this from the start? I would like to keep the answer a secret... What I can say, however, is that as in recent years, the [website "Mission August 1st"](http://www.missione1agosto.org) will offer a digital version of the Swiss National Day. Have a look on 1 August and discover the Embassy's video, which will be broadcast at 2:50 pm (Baku time)! Due to the relocation works, the official Swiss National Day reception will be organized in September.

The whole team of the Swiss Embassy wishes you a wonderful summer and a nice celebration of the Swiss National Day!

Yours sincerely,

Muriel Peneveyre
Ambassador

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30 years of diplomatic relations with Azerbaijan

 **SWITZERLAND & AZERBAIJAN**

COOPERATION

Switzerland's International Cooperation currently focuses on **public finance management, framework conditions for the private sector and women's economic empowerment.**

Membership in joint constituencies in the **Bretton-Woods Institutions** (International Monetary Fund, World Bank) and the **Global Environment Facility**

DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

21.01.1992: establishment of diplomatic relations
2008: opening of the Swiss Embassy in Baku

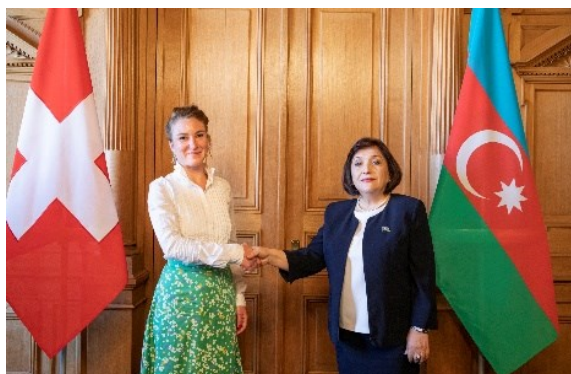
Two matches of the Swiss national football team in Baku in the framework of the UEFA European football championship in 2021



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News

Official visit of the Speaker of the Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Switzerland, 9-11 May 2022



Mrs Irène Kälin, President of the Swiss National Council, and Mrs Sahiba Gafarova, Speaker of the Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Bern, 10 May 2022

From 9 to 11 May 2022, the Speaker of the Milli Majlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Mrs Sahiba Gafarova, made an official visit to Switzerland. A wide range of topics were discussed during the official meeting with the President of the National Council, Mrs Irène Kälin.

The previous high-level meeting between chairpersons of the Swiss and the Azerbaijani parliaments took place in October 2019 in Baku, when Mr Jean-René Fournier, who was then President of the Council of States (= Senate), made an official visit to Azerbaijan.

Political consultations in Bern, 3 June 2022



A new round of political consultations between the Foreign Ministries of Switzerland and of the Republic of Azerbaijan took place on 3 June 2022 in Bern. The Swiss delegation was led by Ambassador Anna Ifkovits Horner, Head of the Eurasia Division of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, and the Azerbaijani delegation by Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov.

A wide range of bilateral and international topics were discussed. Moreover, on the occasion of the political consultations, an agreement on remunerated labour activities by accompanying persons of members of diplomatic missions was signed.

*Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov
and Ambassador Anna Ifkovits Horner*

Constituency meeting in Bad Ragaz, 4 July 2022



*Participants at the Constituency meeting in Bad Ragaz,
4 July 2022*

At Switzerland's invitation, a meeting of the members of the Swiss constituency in the Bretton Woods institutions, i.e. International Monetary Fund and World Bank, took place in Bad Ragaz (canton of St. Gallen) on 4 July 2022.

Along with Switzerland, the constituency consists of **Azerbaijan**, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Poland, Serbia, Tajikistan, **Turkmenistan** and Uzbekistan.

At the meeting in Bad Ragaz, the constituency members discussed cooperation within the group, as well as the short- and long-term challenges for the global economy, for the financial and trading system, for sustainable development and poverty reduction, and for constituency members in general.

Swiss business lunch, 5 May 2022



Participants at the Swiss business lunch, 5 May 2022

On 5 May 2022, Ambassador Muriel Peneveyre hosted representatives of Swiss companies in Azerbaijan for a "Swiss Business Lunch" at her residence. After the break due to the pandemic, it was a welcome opportunity to network and exchange information.

On this occasion, Mr Alberto Hernandez, Head of cooperation, gave a presentation of the Swiss Cooperation Programme for the South Caucasus Region 2022-2025 (*regarding the new Regional Cooperation Programme, see below*).

Swiss International Cooperation

New Swiss Cooperation Programme for the South Caucasus Region 2022-2025



Press event at the Swiss Residence, 13 December 2021

On 13 December 2021, Ambassador Muriel Peneveyre and Head of cooperation Alberto Hernandez held a press event to present the new Swiss Cooperation Programme for the South Caucasus Region 2022-2025.

At this event, which was attended by more than 20 representatives of print and electronic media, as well as TV channels, Ambassador Peneveyre provided information about the fruitful bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and Switzerland, whose 30th anniversary is celebrated in 2022. She highlighted that these relations cover a wide range of areas, from political and economic relations to the joint membership in Bretton Woods constituencies and people-to-people exchanges.

Alberto Hernandez informed about the new Regional Cooperation Programme, which will focus on four key areas: a) promoting civic engagement and cooperation in the region, b) strengthening democracy and public institutions, c) improving economic development and creation of decent jobs, and d) strengthening climate resilience and sustainable resource management.

Switzerland's support to Azerbaijan will continue to focus on strengthening public finance management, further improving the business environment, as well as supporting women's economic empowerment. Apart from these thematic focuses, Switzerland will further finance small initiatives by local NGOs on topics such as gender equality, inclusiveness, environment and climate change. Moreover, Switzerland will further support the local Azerbaijani art scene by financing cultural projects, as part of a regional art and culture program.

On 25 January 2022, a reception was organized at the Swiss Residence to mark the launch of Switzerland's new Regional Cooperation Programme.

For more information and a copy of the *Regional Cooperation Programme*, please visit: [Swiss Cooperation Programme for the South Caucasus Region 2022-2025](#)

Launch of the Agent Banking pilot project



Azerpost branch

With the aim of increasing access to financial services for the population and businesses in Azerbaijan, the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO financed a pilot project in Azerbaijan on so called "agent banking".

It envisages to provide banking products and services to customers located in areas with a lesser number of bank branches, through a third party organization.

This pilot project was launched by the Central Bank of Azerbaijan, Access Bank CJSC and Azerpost LLC, with the advisory support of the International Finance Corporation (IFC) in March 2022. It will enable the population and business located in the Aghdash region to use financial services of Access Bank through the Azerpost branch in this region.

The demand for the agent banking services provided by Azerpost are on rise and the pilot has already been expanded to Gabala and Masalli regions too.

Medium Term Expenditure Framework Project starting in Azerbaijan



As part of Switzerland's international cooperation engagement in Azerbaijan, the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) has started a project related to Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). SECO allocates CHF 5 million (approx. USD 5.4 million) to this project, that will run until 2025 and be implemented by the World Bank.

This project provides technical assistance to several ministries in Azerbaijan, such as the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economy, as well as the Chamber of Accounts by enhancing capacities in different areas such as macroeconomic planning and budgeting. Two on-site missions of the World Bank consultants took place in Baku in spring and summer 2022 regarding the MTEF project.

World Bank's mission to Baku, summer 2022

Resumption of technical assistance missions



Economic statistics

Following the loosening of COVID related restrictions in Azerbaijan, technical assistance missions in the context of projects financed by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) resumed again, starting from April 2022.

Project managers and consultants from the World Bank visited Baku regarding the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and Government Debt and Risk Management (GDRM) projects, as well as from UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) regarding the Debt Management and Financial Analysis System (DMFAS) project.

These projects are related to reforms in the area of public financial management in Azerbaijan.

Visit to the Women Resource Center in Gusar



Participants at the visit to Gusar, 26 April 2022

Ambassador Muriel Peneveyre and Head of cooperation Alberto Hernandez visited Gusar on 26 April 2022 to familiarize themselves with the Women Resource Center (WRC) located in this town. This WRC was inaugurated in 2019 as part of the Swiss-financed Women's Economic Empowerment project.

The WRC provides trainings to women, enabling them to become self-employed or to enter the labour market. Apart from the WRC in Gusar, the Women's Economic Empowerment project also allowed the establishment of a second Center in Baku/Khazar and the support of third one in Sabirabad. Since the start of this project in 2018, 115 women-led businesses, including 30 in Gusar, were created in Azerbaijan. Nearly 700 women received trainings in these three WRCs.

The visit to Gusar was conducted jointly with the State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the UN Development Programme (UNDP). UNDP is the implementing organization of this project, which is financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

Taking into account the positive results of this project, SDC decided to finance a second phase of it. During this second phase, which started at the end of 2021 and will last until 2024, a new WRC will be established in Horadiz/Fuzuli, while work on the other three WRCs will continue. The objective is to allow additional 130 women entrepreneurs to start a new or expand their current businesses.

Women's Economic Empowerment projects in Nakhchivan and in Sheki/Zaqatala



Project visit in the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, 1 March 2022

Representatives of the Swiss Cooperation Office, which is part of the Swiss Embassy in Baku, attended the launch of a project in the field of women's economic empowerment in Nakhchivan on 1 March 2022.

The project aims to enable women from different regions of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic (NAR) to attend courses on financial planning and business development. It will support selected business ideas with seed capital. The project is implemented by the Azerbaijan Micro-Finance Association (AMFA) in close cooperation with the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs of NAR.

Later, on 24-25 May, representatives of the Swiss Cooperation Office visited Sheki and Zaqatala to attend conferences to support local women in their business endeavours through presenting to them role model business women from Baku.

The conferences were organized by the Azerbaijan Women Entrepreneurs Development Association (AWEDA), which implements this project on women's economic empowerment in the Sheki-Zaqatala economic zone.

These projects are funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The Swiss Cooperation Office is planning to issue the next call for proposals for new project ideas in the second half of 2022. The call will be published on the Embassy's website and Facebook page: [Swiss Embassy on Facebook](#)



Conference in Zaqatala, 25 May 2022

Culture & Education

Art and culture projects



The Swiss Cooperation Office continued to support "small art and culture projects" throughout 2022, following a call for proposals issued in December 2021. The selected projects address issues such as promoting gender in filmmaking, fashion design for disabled people, gender and graphic design as well as an animation film festival for children with a focus on climate change.

The Swiss Cooperation Office will announce another call for proposals for "small art and culture projects" by the end of 2022. It will be published on the Embassy's website and Facebook page: [Swiss Embassy on Facebook](#)

Disabled couple performing at the Disability Fashion Show 2022 supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). Within this project, disabled participants were taught to design disabled-specific clothes.

Consular Affairs

Updated civil status webpages – in 4 languages



All civil status events that mark a Swiss citizen's life, from birth to death, are recorded in the Swiss civil status register.

Swiss citizens abroad and their spouses or registered partners have to report all civil status events to the Swiss representation responsible for their place of residence – i.e. the Embassy in Baku, for Swiss citizens in Azerbaijan and in Turkmenistan. For this purpose, various civil status documents are required.

In order to constantly improve the services they offer to Swiss citizens living abroad, Swiss representations – including the Embassy of Switzerland in Baku – have recently updated their webpages devoted to civil status affairs.

Please find more detailed information, in 4 languages (German, French, Italian, English), on the [Embassy's website](#), "Civil status" chapter. It's easy, just click on the pictograms devoted to the main civil status events!

Important reminder for Swiss citizens:

Please also do not forget to always keep the Embassy (baku@eda.admin.ch) updated about any changes of addresses, e-mail addresses, phone numbers, etc. Many thanks!

Embassy News



President Pascal Couchepin inaugurating the Embassy in Icheri Sheher on 12 May 2008

This year, the date of 1 August – Swiss National Day –, will have a very special significance for the Embassy of Switzerland in Baku. On that date, our Embassy will move to new premises, located at 96E Nizami Street (Landmark I building).

Until now, the Embassy has been located in Icheri Sheher. It was inaugurated on 12 May 2008 in the presence of Mr Pascal Couchepin, then President of the Swiss Confederation.

After 14 years in the beautiful Old City, where the Ambassador's residence is still located, we are delighted that a new chapter in the history of the Swiss Embassy opens in 2022, which marks the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Switzerland and the Republic of Azerbaijan.

In the new premises, visitors and the Embassy's staff will benefit from modern, visitor-friendly premises equipped with up-to-date technology.

The opening hours of the Embassy and of its visa section will not change (see [website](#)). However, due to relocation works, the Embassy will be closed to the public from 28 July to 2 August 2022.



The Landmark complex

Media

Interviews of Ambassador Muriel Peneveyre:

Azernews, 16 June 2022:

<https://www.azernews.az/nation/195460.html>

Modern information agency, 13 April 2022:

<https://modern.az/musahibe/342984/iceriseherde-yasamaqla-zumu-imtiyazli-hiss-edirem-sefirle-shbet/>

30 years of diplomatic relations with Turkmenistan

SWITZERLAND & TURKMENISTAN

30 YEARS OF COOPERATION

Membership in joint constituencies of:

- the **International Monetary Fund**
- the **World Bank**
- the **European Bank for Reconstruction and Development**
- the **Global Environment Facility**

DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

13.07.1992
establishment of diplomatic relations

11.04.2011
opening of the Embassy of Turkmenistan in Geneva

2014: Launch of the Blue Peace Central Asia Initiative in Basel

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Useful Swiss links



ch.ch

Swiss authorities online: www.ch.ch



Switzerland.

Discover Switzerland: www.aboutswitzerland.ch



House of Switzerland: www.houseofswitzerland.org



Switzerland Tourism: www.myswitzerland.com



Auslandschweizer-Organisation
Organisation des Suisses de l'étranger
Organizzazione degli Svizzeri all'estero
Organisaziun dals Svizzers a l'ester

Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA): www.aso.ch

... and please visit the Embassy's Facebook page to stay informed:

<https://www.facebook.com/SwissEmbassyBaku/>

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