



Università  
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## THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS NEWSLETTER “COME AND GO”

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### WHY THIS NEWSLETTER

“Come and go” is the International Relations and Study-abroad newsletter which aims at keeping our readers up-to-date on the latest news and events related to our activities. It is published 4 times per year and reaches approx. 4'000 readers, in particular USI students, faculty and staff, incoming students and staff from our many partner universities and other collaborators. We do hope you will enjoy reading it!

### NEW INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS WEBSITE

The website of the [International Relations Office](#) has been reorganized and it is now online. Particular attention has been devoted to the core of our service: our incoming and outgoing students. We do hope that you will find the information structured in a better and more efficient way, and your feedback is most appreciated.

We would also like to announce that from now on a special section called “News board” will be accessible from the homepage and will contain news related to staff and teaching mobility offers, summer schools or other special programmes organized by our partner universities, as well as general information related to our activities. At present, information about summer schools organized by Copenhagen Business School, Technische Universität Munchen and University of Jyväskylä and few Staff Week proposals is available.

### IRUS MEETING IN LUGANO

On October 21, 2013, the International Relations Office teams of the Swiss Universities met in Lugano for the usual bi-annual meeting. Prof. Martinoli, President of USI, officially welcomed the sixteen guests from all over Switzerland. During the day, themes very dear to the IR offices have been addressed and discussed. A special place has been reserved for the [Egracons project](#) (European Grade Conversion System), presented by Ms. Madeleine Linard from the University of Lausanne. Egracons is a Lifelong Learning project co-funded by the European Commission and the project partners, aiming to facilitate exchange mobility by working out a conversion system based on ECTS grade conversion tables, for which the University of Lausanne is full partner. The meeting also served the purpose of sharing ideas, best practices, problems and concerns related to the mobility activity within the Swiss Universities. The next IRUS meeting will take place on April 10, 2014 at the EPFL in Lausanne.



Marisa Clemenz



Peggy Fumagalli

## DOUBLE INTERVIEW: MARISA CLEMENZ AND PEGGY FUMAGALLI, USI STAFF

Enjoy the double interview to two USI staff members who have participated in the staff mobility programmes: Marisa Clemenz and Peggy Fumagalli.

*How long have you been working at USI and what is your position?*

**Marisa:** “I have been working at USI for 8 years. During the first 4 years, I worked at the Dean’s office of the Faculty of Informatics and partially at the Institute of Finance. From January 2010 I have been working at the Institute of Economics, where I am coordinator of an Executive Master’s program, administrative assistant of the Summer School in Public Health Policy, Economics and Management and secretary of the Institute.”

**Peggy:** “I started working at USI in 2005 within the Human Resources unit.”

*How did you learn about the staff mobility programs?*

**Marisa:** “I learned about the staff mobility program thanks to our International Relations and Study-abroad Office, which sent a message to the university staff, giving different options for staff mobility courses abroad.”

**Peggy:** “Through our International Relations Service.”

*Where did you go?*

**Marisa:** “I went to Amsterdam, where I could learn more about how to deal with international students (how to help them before arriving, which services are appreciated on site, which are the benefits and challenges of international classes, etc.). We also had sessions about Summer Programs (goals, target groups, benefits and fun). Moreover, we had a very interesting lesson about the use of social media for study abroad, where we could receive interesting advice related to the promotion of programs and events using social media (facebook, twitter, etc.).”

**Peggy:** “I spent my international staff exchange week in Finland, at the University of Helsinki (UH). The University of Helsinki has 11 faculties and about 20 institutes. It operates on 4 campuses in Helsinki and 17 other locations. It counts a community of 36’000 students and 5’000 academic staff. Founded in 1640, the University of Helsinki has a long story and is one of the world’s leading multidisciplinary research university.

I decided to go there because of its reputation of high quality in teaching and also because the program of the week was very interesting: besides getting to know each other (15 participants coming from 10 countries),



Amsterdam and its famous canals



Amsterdam's floating houses



The University of Helsinki



A recreational moment during the Staff Week

we got some general information about the University of Helsinki, followed a crash course of Finnish, spent a day in a department of our choice and visited some faculties of UH (Biomedicum for example) and services (the new library and the learning center).“

*Why have you decided to take advantage of this opportunity?*

**Marisa:** “The majority of the topics of this week in Amsterdam had a connection with my work, especially for the organization of our Summer School, that every year hosts more than 100 people from more than 20 countries.”

**Peggy:** “I was curious about doing such an experience abroad and meet other people working in different services of other universities. It was a great chance to exchange experiences, compare opinions, ideas and points of view. I was very enthusiastic about this great opportunity.”

*Please tell us a bit more about your experience during the week abroad.*

**Marisa:** “This study week was a really great opportunity to exchange information and ideas with people working in other universities. The target group activities allowed us to learn more about how other universities work, and to collect ideas on how to improve our work.”

**Peggy:** “I had an intensive week. We spent all the time together from early morning until night, sharing experiences and talking about similarities and differences UH has compared to our home universities. During the week, I had the chance to spend one day in a department, hence I exchanged experiences with my counterpart of the Human Resources in UH and took back to USI some interesting ideas. The organizers of the International Staff Exchange Week planned several round tables during the week, at least once per day, where to share everyone’s experience. Since we were from different countries and different departments, it has been an enriching experience discussing and discovering how the same topics are managed. Furthermore: 24 hours a day full immersion in English!

Last but not least, we have been delighted every day tasting Finnish food and had the unique experience of the real smoke sauna followed by binding bath in a chilly lake!”

*Would you recommend your colleagues to do a similar experience, and why?*

**Marisa:** “Yes, I strongly recommend it! It is a great opportunity to learn new working skills, to realize what could be improved or changed in our work activities. Besides, it is also a pleasure to know new people and to discover a new city. I had never been to Amsterdam before.”

**Peggy:** “Of course. First of all this experience is a balm to be open-minded and it is also the occasion to create a net of new contacts.”

*Sum up the staff mobility program you have attended in three words.*

**Marisa:** “Useful, interesting and fun!”

**Peggy:** “Enhancing, thrilling, refreshing.”



International Students' Fair at the foyer  
Aula Magna



The University of Bern



Bosco Gurin by night

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' FAIR

On November 12, 2013 the International Relations Office has organized the International Students' Fair, where a number of partner universities were represented by current incoming or past mobility students, or simply throughs information material. Two representatives of the [EF](#) (Education First) were also there with an informative booth to present the several possibilities of language courses abroad.

Many bachelor and master students have participated in this event to browse through information material or talk directly to the representatives, in order to find out more about a desired destination for mobility. We would like to take the chance to express our gratitude to the students for their availability.

## ERASMUS CONTACT SEMINAR BETWEEN SWITZERLAND AND GERMANY

On October 30, Ilaria Juon attended the Erasmus contact seminar between Switzerland and Germany. The event was hosted by the University of Bern and jointly organized by the [ch Foundation](#) and the [DAAD](#) (the German Academic Exchange Service). The day was divided into informative sessions on the Erasmus+ program, best practices and future collaborations, and networking moments in order to meet other universities, discuss potential partnership and share ideas. In the evening, a guided tour of the city of Bern and a dinner to continue the conversations have been kindly offered to the participants. We do hope that future collaborations will emerge from this event.

## DISCOVER TICINO: BOSCO GURIN, SKI DESTINATION AND THE ONLY WALSER VILLAGE IN CANTON TICINO

The temperature in the whole Canton Ticino has dropped, days are shorter, and the first touches of snow are visible on top of the mountains. It is now time to enjoy winter and snow sports, for which Switzerland is very famous.

Today we would like to present you a very special place in Vallemaggia with unique characteristics: BOSCO GURIN, not only a ski destination, but also the only Walser village in Ticino. Who was the Walser population?

The Walser name derives from "Walliser", inhabitant of the Canton Wallis. They are a population of Germanic origins initially established in the Monte Rosa area. They speak a form of German dialect called "Titsch", similar to the current Swiss German.



The ski slopes of Bosco Gurin

Around the VIII century, the Walser people arrived and settled down in the Wallis region, but frequent conflicts with the local population forced them to live above 1500 m. During the XII-XIII century, part of the Walser population crossed the Alps and settled down in different area of the Alpine region, namely Italy, Lichtenstein and Austria. At present, there is still uncertainty among historians regarding the reasons for the emigration, but there are some shared hypothesis: the overpopulation of Canton Wallis, the favorable climate conditions and the incentive offered to Walser people by the local property owners, in exchange for new colonization.

Bosco Gurin is the only Walser settlement in Canton Ticino. The first information on the foundation of the village have been traced in a document dated 1253. During the medieval time, the village was named Lu Bosco de Quarino, from which the current name derives.

Today, Bosco Gurin offers some 30 km of ski slopes, a snow park and trails for snowshoes and cross-country ski. All of this in a unique and charming environment. In summer, it is a very popular destination for daily hiking.

The particular location does not makes it particularly easy to access, but once in a season it is definitely worth the trip. In order to reach Bosco Gurin with public transportation, you will need to take the train from Lugano to Locarno and then continue to Bosco Gurin with the Autopostale (approx. 30 SFr.).

More information about this destination and how to get there:

Bosco Gurin official website [bosco-gurin.ch](http://bosco-gurin.ch)

Vallemaggia Tourism [vallemaggia.ch](http://vallemaggia.ch)

Bosco Gurin Fan Page on Facebook [facebook.com/Bosco-Gurin/](https://facebook.com/Bosco-Gurin/)

Swiss Federal Railway System [ffs.ch](http://ffs.ch)

They also have a smartphone app called “Bosco Gurin” where you can gather information about snow and weather conditions in real time.



## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Erasmus Charter for Higher Education

The award of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) is a pre-requisite for all higher education institutions willing to participate in European and international cooperation activities in the framework of the Erasmus programme. The deadline for the proposal submission was May 15 and we are very proud to announce that the European Commission decided to award the Erasmus Charter to Università della Svizzera italiana.



The group of Swiss Scholarship Holders at the Gotthard Cheese Factory

### **Gotthard Cheese Factory**

The Swiss Government, through the Federal Commission for Scholarships for Foreign Students (FCS), awards various postgraduate scholarships to foreign scholars and researchers. The International Relations and Study-abroad Office provides assistance and counsel to Swiss Scholarship Holders studying/researching at USI, SUPSI, Conservatorio della Svizzera italiana and other research institutes in Ticino. As a part of its duties, the reception service is also in charge of organizing sightseeing trips and other extra-curricular activities. On Saturday November 30 Prof. Michael Gibbert (the USI's FCS delegate) and Arianna Imberti Dosi (reception service) accompanied 7 Swiss Scholarship Holders (coming from Thailand, Costa Rica, Macedonia, Romania and Spain) to visit the Gotthard Cheese Factory, located in Airolo, at the foot of the San Gottardo Massive. Ticino, thanks to the large variety of alpine herbs growing in the surroundings pastures, has a long tradition of cheese making. The group had the opportunity to see how cheese is made through a guided tour of the factory, to make its own cheese, helped in the procedure by a professional cheese maker, and to taste a delicious fondue. More information about the Gotthard Cheese Factory: [cdga.ch](http://cdga.ch) More information about Swiss Government Excellence Scholarships for Foreign Students: [sbfi.admin.ch](http://sbfi.admin.ch)



Silvia Invrea, USI Career Service, invited to present at the Erasmus Day in Solothurn

### **Erasmus Day in Solothurn**

The 2014/15 academic year marks the start of the new Erasmus+ programme generation. The Erasmus Day 2013, organized by the National Agency in Solothurn on November 26, and addressed to staff of the International Offices and coordinators of Swiss universities, focused on the content of the new Erasmus programme, and how it should be put into action. Silvia Invrea, Head of the USI Career Service, was invited to give a presentation on the 10-years activities of the service with particular attention to the management of Erasmus students' mobility for placement grants ([careerservice.usi.ch/borse-erasmus](http://careerservice.usi.ch/borse-erasmus)). A careful analysis carried on by the Swiss Foundation for Confederal Cooperation, comparing results in different Swiss universities, shows that in the Academic year 2011-2012 USI has been the university that has obtained the largest number of such scholarships.

### **Visit of Dr. Frey, Science and Technology Office Tokyo**

Dr. Matthias Frey, Head of the Science and Technology Office Tokyo at the Embassy of Switzerland in Japan, visited the Lugano Campus on November 4. Dr. Frey was officially welcomed by USI President, Prof. Piero Martinoli, met Prof. Rolf Krause at the Institute of Computational Sciences and Prof. Peter Seele, Departmental Coordinator for International Relations at the Faculty of Communication Sciences. Besides visiting USI for the first time, the main goal of the day was to

explore the potential for bilateral collaboration with universities and research centers in Japan. The year 2014 will mark a milestone in the relations between Switzerland and Japan who will celebrate the 150 years Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

[eda.admin.ch/anniversary2014](http://eda.admin.ch/anniversary2014)

## CHRISTMAS WISHES



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