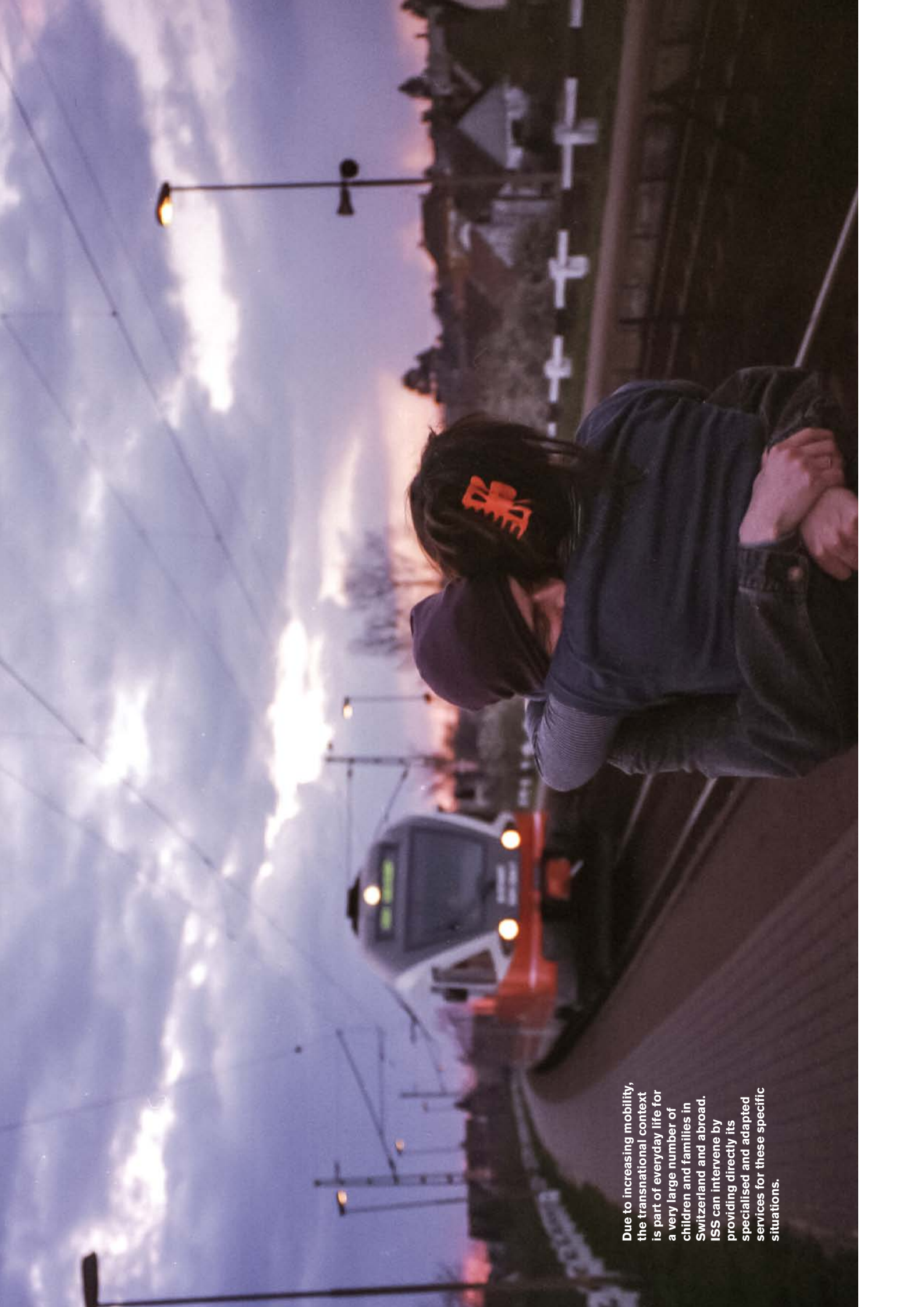


# Swiss Foundation of the **TRANSNATIONAL SERVICES** International **UNACCOMPANIED MINORS** Social **SUPPORT FOR MIGRANTS** Service

**ANNUAL REPORT 2015**



FONDATION SUISSE DU SERVICE SOCIAL INTERNATIONAL  
SCHWEIZERISCHE STIFTUNG DES INTERNATIONALEN SOZIALDIENSTES  
FONDAZIONE SVIZZERA DEL SERVIZIO SOCIALE INTERNAZIONALE  
SWISS FOUNDATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE

A photograph of a couple embracing on a train platform at sunset. The woman is in the foreground, wearing a dark jacket with a red graphic on the back. The man is behind her, wearing a purple hoodie. A high-speed train is visible on the tracks in the background, and the sky is filled with colorful clouds. The scene is romantic and evocative.

Due to increasing mobility, the transnational context is part of everyday life for a very large number of children and families in Switzerland and abroad. ISS can intervene by providing directly its specialised and adapted services for these specific situations.

# A Collaborative Response to Increasing Mobility

The year 2015 was marked by a major migrant crisis. A substantial number of children and families fled terrible conditions of their home countries, where their safety could no longer be guaranteed. In Switzerland, and elsewhere, we saw the arrival of many refugees and migrants.

Among them were unaccompanied minors, whose arrival presents considerable challenges in terms of accommodation, guidance and integration. The Swiss Foundation of the International Social Service (ISS) got involved at various levels to ensure that their rights were respected. After all, they are children first and foremost, not just migrants. For that reason, they require specially adapted services.

With the help of our regional office in Ouagadougou, 1,700 children and young migrants were able to benefit from care in the 15 member states of the West Africa Network for the protection of children (WAN). This effort was officially recognised in 2015 by the authorities in the region (ECOWAS).

Our transnational services, which specialise in the resolution of intercultural family conflicts and international child protection, also received many requests this year. In total, we took action in 72 different countries. At the same time, our international partners sought our expertise regarding social and legal services in Switzerland. As a result, over 850 cases affecting some 3,300 people were handled.

Turning now to our direct aid for migrants, many people and families received support via legal assistance, help with their professional future or guidance for returning to their countries of origin.

Confronted with growing human mobility, these examples and statistics serve to demonstrate the paramount importance of the values of transnational solidarity and reciprocity advocated by the ISS network.

I would like to thank all of our professional and financial partners for their constructive cooperation, without whom we would not be able to support so many children and families in Switzerland and all over the world. Warm thanks also go to our trainees, who help us maximise our effectiveness through their personal investment and their passion for our activities. Last but not least, I would of course like to thank the Foundation Council and all of our volunteers, as well as the ISS Team, for their commitment.

I am pleased to present you the 2015 Annual Report and hope you will enjoy reading it.

**Olivier Geissler**  
**Executive Director**



## **A Career Dedicated to Children and their Protection**

Olivier Geissler shifted his focus to international cooperation, child protection and social development after initially pursuing a career in banking. Joining ISS Switzerland in 2002, he worked as a project manager before becoming the Head of International Programmes. Olivier worked mostly with developing countries and countries in transition in the field of child protection. In Eastern Europe, he played a role in the reform of social institutions and for the social and professional integration of youth lacking parental care. In West Africa, he developed a regional collaborative network for the transnational care of children and young migrants. He has worked with a variety of stakeholders, including NGOs, local and regional authorities, and international organisations. He holds both a Master's in International Relations and an Executive Master's in Development Policies and Practices.

Olivier is also a runner and regularly takes on ultra-endurance challenges, enabling him to raise money for vulnerable children.

# Two Key Appointments and a Multi-disciplinary Team

The year 2015 was pivotal for the Swiss Foundation of the International Social Service, with a new Director and a new Chairman.

In June, Rolf Widmer retired from his position as Director after 15 years of unwavering commitment. He was replaced by his Deputy Director, Olivier Geissler, who took over the role on 1st July.

Under the leadership of Rolf Widmer, the Foundation expanded its range of activities, both in Switzerland and abroad. Through his human qualities and his expertise in social work, he helped further the reputation of the International Social Service as well as the quality of his services. I would like to take this opportunity to thank him and express our profound gratitude for his tireless work.

Rolf will continue to offer his wealth of experience as the Chairman of the Foundation Council. He will be taking over from Philippe Aegerter, who wished to step down, and I offer him my warmest thanks for his six years as Chairman.

These two appointments thus complete a team of skilled and motivated staff who are active both on the ground and at the Geneva and Zurich offices. I have the utmost confidence that we embody all of the qualities necessary to implement the 2016-2020 Strategic Plan. On behalf of all the members of the Foundation Council, I am delighted to welcome Rolf Widmer and Olivier Geissler in their new roles, and I wish them success in their new duties.



**Paul Peter**  
Deputy Chairman

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### Imprint

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# Strategic Plan 2016-2020

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## The Challenges of an Ever-changing Environment

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Over the next few years, Switzerland – along with many other countries – will be affected by the alignment of two parallel worldwide trends. On one hand, migration flows will intensify in many different forms. And on the other hand, family patterns will become more diversified, with a higher rate of separation and divorce. This dual situation exposes children and their families to particular challenges and generates specific vulnerabilities in terms of their transnational nature: separated children, children abducted by one parent, children displaced or moved to another country, children born to a surrogate mother, children searching for their biological parents, etc.

From the point of view of migration flows, Europe is currently facing a major crisis. This is also affecting Switzerland and will have long-term human consequences on migrants, their families and populations. Against this backdrop, ISS Switzerland intends to fulfil its role while reinforcing its activities. It wishes to offer a high-quality service to the people affected by migration. This will be achieved primarily by increasing its networking in Europe as well as with the countries of origin. In particular, ISS Switzerland seeks to intensify its activity at all levels to help unaccompanied minors. These minors represent a particularly vulnerable group, and their arrivals have risen drastically over the past year (2700 young migrants, three times higher in 2015 than in 2014).

On the strength of its history and its expertise, ISS Switzerland is ideally positioned to contribute to face these new challenges.

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## A Strategic Plan to Help Children, Families and Migrants

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The 2016-2020 Plan drawn up by the Swiss Foundation of ISS aims to refine the organisation's strategic approaches for the next five years. Remaining consistent with those established back in 2011, the plan is built around the two pillars that form the basis for the activities of ISS: migration and child protection. It presents elements of continuity which consolidate achievements and sustain high-quality services for customers. It also suggests several innovative components with a view to developing our activities and more effectively tackling the challenges raised by the current state of migration, social developments and new family trends.

In addition to the three thematic bases presented below, ISS intends to develop its services in the coming years in the German-speaking part of Switzerland. This is primarily to publicize its transnational services and also to provide training and support activities to the care systems for unaccompanied minors.

In order to carry out our mission beyond borders, our organisation will help to strengthen, develop and promote the activities of the International Network of ISS, including West Africa by supporting its regional office in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso which carries out actions in 16 countries.

The cornerstone of this plan lies in the affirmation of the values and principles underpinning the activities of ISS to help children, young and families affected by the migration.

*Olivier Geissler, February 2016*

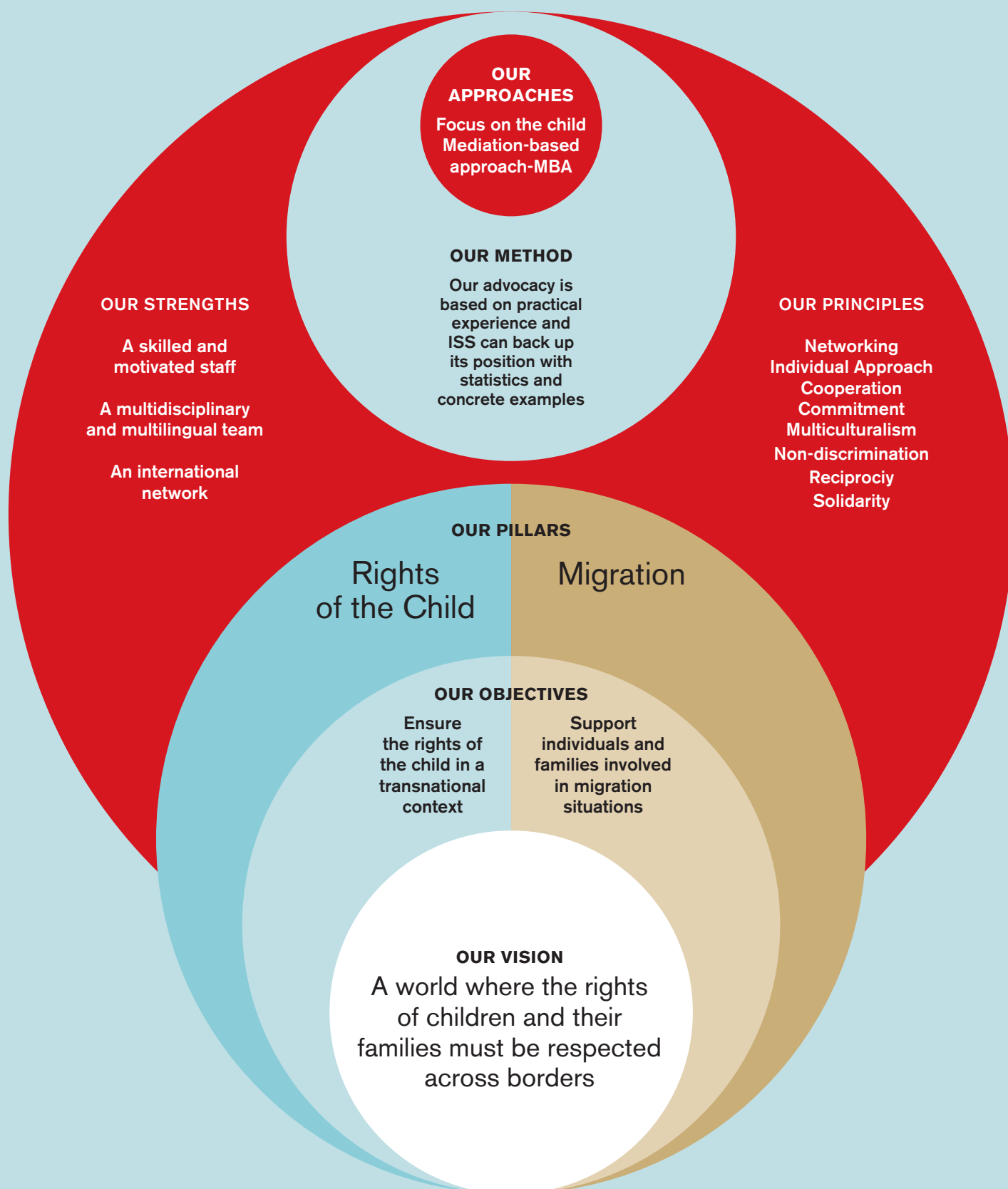


## Thematic Areas of Focus

The 2016-2020 Strategic Plan is structured around three thematic areas of focus which govern all of the services, activities and projects undertaken by ISS Switzerland.

	OBJECTIVE	MAIN THEMES	CONTEXT
<b>Transnational Services for Children and Families</b>	<b>Consolidate our position as a key player in Switzerland for the international protection of children and adults</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International protection of children and adults</li> <li>International family conflicts</li> <li>New forms of parenting</li> <li>Searching for origins</li> </ul>	Despite the Hague Conventions, in operational terms, the international protection of children and adults remains limited due to a lack of international cooperation with non-participant countries. Furthermore, it is often inadequate even in the Convention's countries and remains limited to administrative action with no real social, legal or transnational mediation work.
<b>Unaccompanied Minors (UMs)</b>	<b>Develop a UM department within ISS that strives to become a recognised centre of expertise in this field</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct services for UMs: protection, social, legal and financial support</li> <li>Development and monitoring of standards governing the care of UMs</li> <li>Training of caseworkers</li> <li>Advocacy and awareness campaigns</li> <li>Development of cooperation with the countries of transit, origin and destination</li> <li>Scholarships and (re)integration</li> </ul>	For more than ten years, our organisation has dedicated itself to this issue. It has honed its skills and now offers a wide range of services and procedures at various levels. In light of its in-house expertise, the topical nature of this issue and, especially, the needs of these young people, ISS pools the various services available into one ad hoc area in an effort to make our activity more consistent and effective, both in Switzerland and abroad.
<b>Support for Migrants</b>	<b>Offer direct, complementary and innovative services to migrants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Services regarding the right to asylum and the rights of foreigners</li> <li>Support for reintegration in the country of origin</li> <li>The CTRS project in cooperation with Tunisia</li> <li>Cooperation with Italy to make objective information available to migrants who wish to or have to return to the country</li> </ul>	Migrant support systems established in Switzerland offer basic services, which are often not adequate or sufficiently personalised. This is an area in which ISS endeavours to offer services which complement those provided by the official system.

# Identity of the Swiss Foundation of the International Social Service



# Transnational Services

**Individual services dedicated to vulnerable children and families in a transnational context.**

In a world where mobility is gaining increasing importance, children and families are faced with growing challenges. The transnational aspect is now a part of everyday life for a great many children and families in Switzerland.

First of all, there are migrants arriving in the country due to a variety of circumstances and looking for members of their family, scattered throughout other European countries.

We are also seeing an increasing number of transnational families, such as binational couples who met at work or activities outside the working environment, studied abroad. This situation is aided by free movement.

A scenario also exists in which Swiss citizens move abroad for professional or family-related reasons.

When these binational couples have children and separate, there are a multitude of legal and psychological issues and challenges to overcome, as well as parenting arrangements to consider. How then should they go about parenting between two, or even several, different countries, not only in accordance with the law, but especially through solutions which take the interests of the children into consideration?

## **The reach of ISS extends abroad thanks to its international network**

In 2015, ISS multidisciplinary team, which comprises experts in law, social work and mediation, answered several thousand calls and e-mails asking questions about transnational family situations. More than 850 new transnational cases were handled by the Zürich and Geneva offices (for more details, please refer to the statistics page).

Most of the cases handled fall within the scope of child protection, concerning placement in foster or institutional care in Switzerland or abroad, as well as signals. We also deal with transnational family conflicts, which might concern child abduction or disputes regarding custody or access rights across borders. ISS gets involved in these situations at the request of the Swiss administrative and legal authorities for child protection. In some cases, the request may come from foreign authorities through its international network or from individuals directly. In all of these situations, which are often highly complex, ISS works closely with its partners both in Switzerland and abroad.

**“A huge thank you to ISS, without which – since the beginning – I would not have been able to see my son again. Despite sometimes hopeless difficulties in finding solutions all these years, we were still able to restore contact. Thank you so much for your help!”**

*Maurice\*, Oliver's father from Switzerland*



## Among our many activities, we also intervene in situations involving intra-family child abduction

Child abduction represents just 7% of the cases handled by ISS. However, they remain the most complex situations of all. They require a great deal of time, dedication and energy from our staff. Beyond the issue of the legality of removing the child, i.e. if it is a case of abduction as defined by law and international conventions, ISS approaches each situation individually and ensures that the child is the foremost concern.

Such cases often focus on complex legal, psychological and social aspects, which compel ISS to find other suitable solutions: How should we proceed when a father 'abducts' his children in an effort to protect them from a mother who, in his eyes, although she has parental responsibility, is unable to meet their educational and emotional needs? How should we advise a father whose wife has 'taken' the children to keep them safe, in her words, from a threatening ex-husband?

In such situations, ISS always bases its work on a multidisciplinary analysis with the following key stages:

- Establish with the left-behind parent all of the options available to them and analyse the advantages and disadvantages with them
- Support decisions which make the interests of the child the core focus of the process
- Initiate long-distance mediation with the other parent in order to restore parental communication and identify common ground
- Organise, jointly with the parents, the (re-)establishment of contact between the child and the distanced parent and establish realistic meeting scenarios
- Put the desire (understandable, but sometimes impractical) to 'get the child back at any cost' into perspective within a broader context of maintaining and improving parent-child relationships.

In 2015, ISS achieved meaningful results in a large number of cases of child abduction, in particular including the restoration of parental relationships.

## THE CASE OF MAURICE\* AND HIS SON OLIVER\*

**A father and son were separated for several years due to an international family conflict. They were finally reunited and maintain regular contact, thanks to the work of ISS.**

Year after year, ISS supports families in finding constructive solutions to transnational conflicts. The mediation-based approach taken always keeps the interests of the child at its core. The following example illustrates this work: Ari\*, a Japanese national, and Maurice\*, a Swiss national, met in Australia during their studies. They got married there and had a child, Oliver\*.

A few months after the baby was born, the marriage began to fall apart and, by mutual agreement, Ari temporarily returned to Japan with Oliver. However, in the end, she did not come back.

Maurice, meanwhile having returned to Switzerland, had no means of taking action because there were no international agreements in place with Japan. He would then only see his son a few times, despite

multiple trips to Japan. The situation worsened when Ari moved without leaving a forwarding address. It was then that Maurice contacted ISS to seek help. He desperately wanted to track down his son and re-establish a relationship with him.

ISS took action at various levels, locating Oliver's family and initiating mediation via its Japanese branch. It also provided socio-legal advice and put the father in contact with specialist lawyers in Japan. Furthermore, it offered Maurice psychosocial support. After completing these multiple steps, and thanks to the constructive attitude of the father, the mother eventually agreed to mediation with a view to divorce.

As a result, Maurice was able to start seeing his son again gradually. In 2015, Ari finally allowed Oliver (age 10) to go to

Switzerland for an extended holiday with his father. The parents are now able to communicate and Oliver is increasingly asking to see his father.

*\*Aliases*

### ISS is part of the following networks in Switzerland:

Member of the Swiss network of research services – consultancy for original research as part of the ongoing revision of adoption law

Member of Child Rights Network  
[www.netzwerk-kinderrechte.ch](http://www.netzwerk-kinderrechte.ch)

Co-chair of Association MédiationS  
[www.association-mediations.ch](http://www.association-mediations.ch)

Member of the Board of Juris Conseil Junior  
[www.jcj.ch](http://www.jcj.ch)

Member of FICE – International Federation of Educative Communities  
[www.ficeinter.net](http://www.ficeinter.net)

## Organisation of a Conference and Other Activities of ISS

In addition to monitoring individual situations, ISS transnational services were also active in a variety of other matters. For example, they organised an interdisciplinary conference on the transnational aspects of the new law on joint custody. This law actually raises a number of major challenges when one of the parents moves abroad.

The conference was held on 20 November 2015 – befittingly, the anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It was organised in partnership with the International Institute for the Rights of the Child (IDE). The staff from the transnational services has also been working actively with universities, higher education institutions specialising in social work and other academic institutions to give conferences on the themes associated with the transnational work of ISS. For many years, they have also been training the people involved in child and adult protection in German-speaking Switzerland.

## Working Internationally

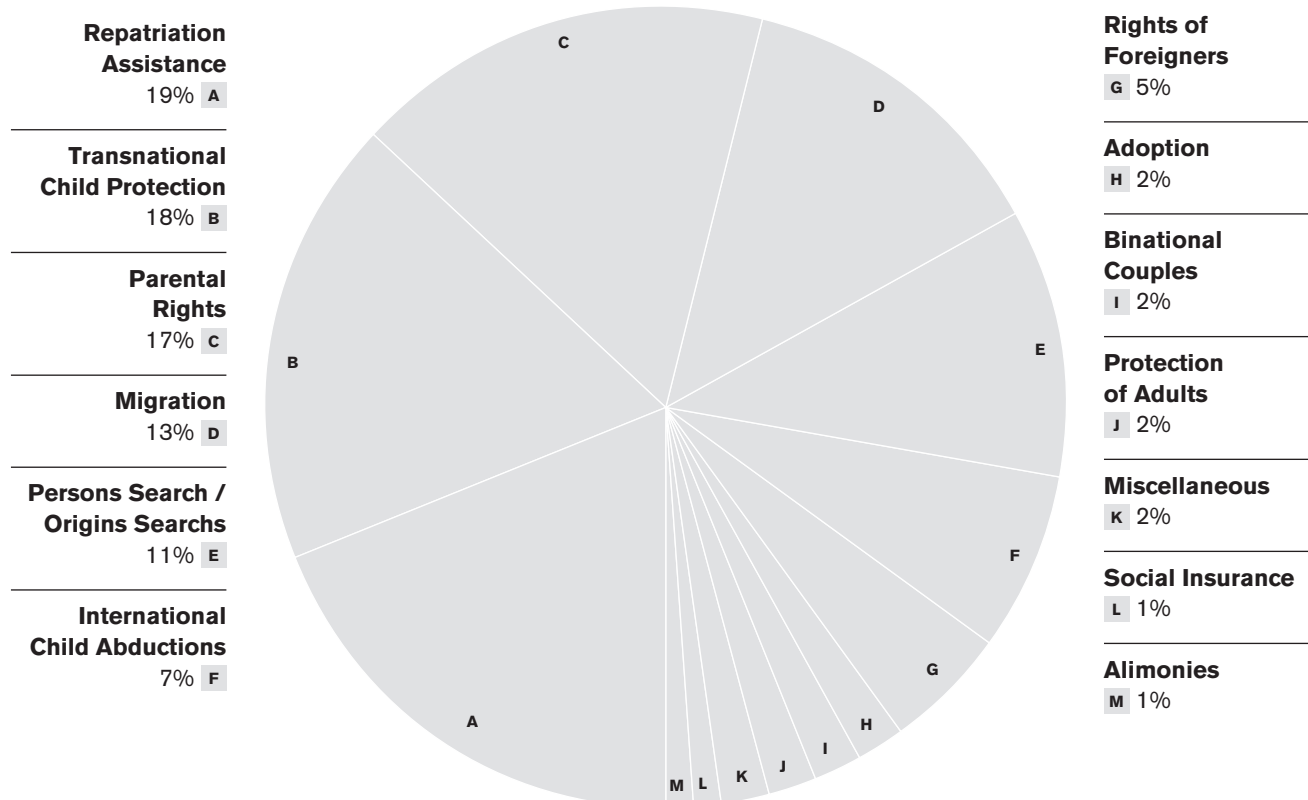
# 138

applications transmitted to us by our ISS partners abroad; they emanated mostly from Portugal, Germany, Spain and Britain.

# 72

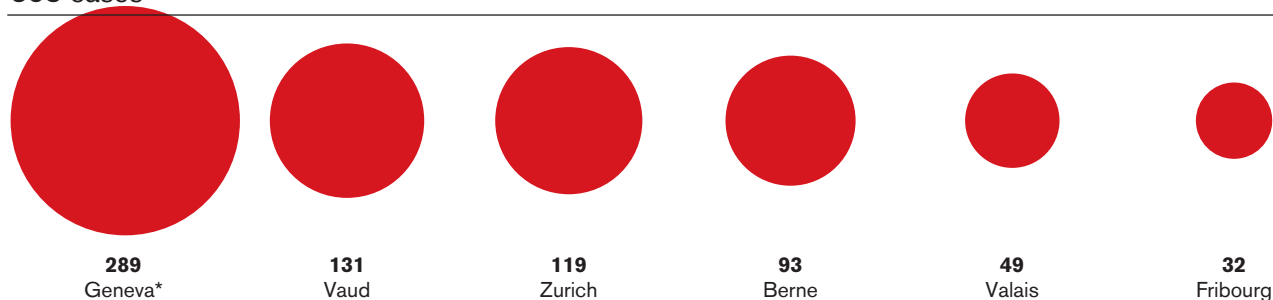
countries were solicited to collaborate in response to requests for intervention made in Switzerland. We worked intensively with Spain, Germany, France and Portugal.

## Problems Treated



## Origin/Source of Applications by Canton

853 cases

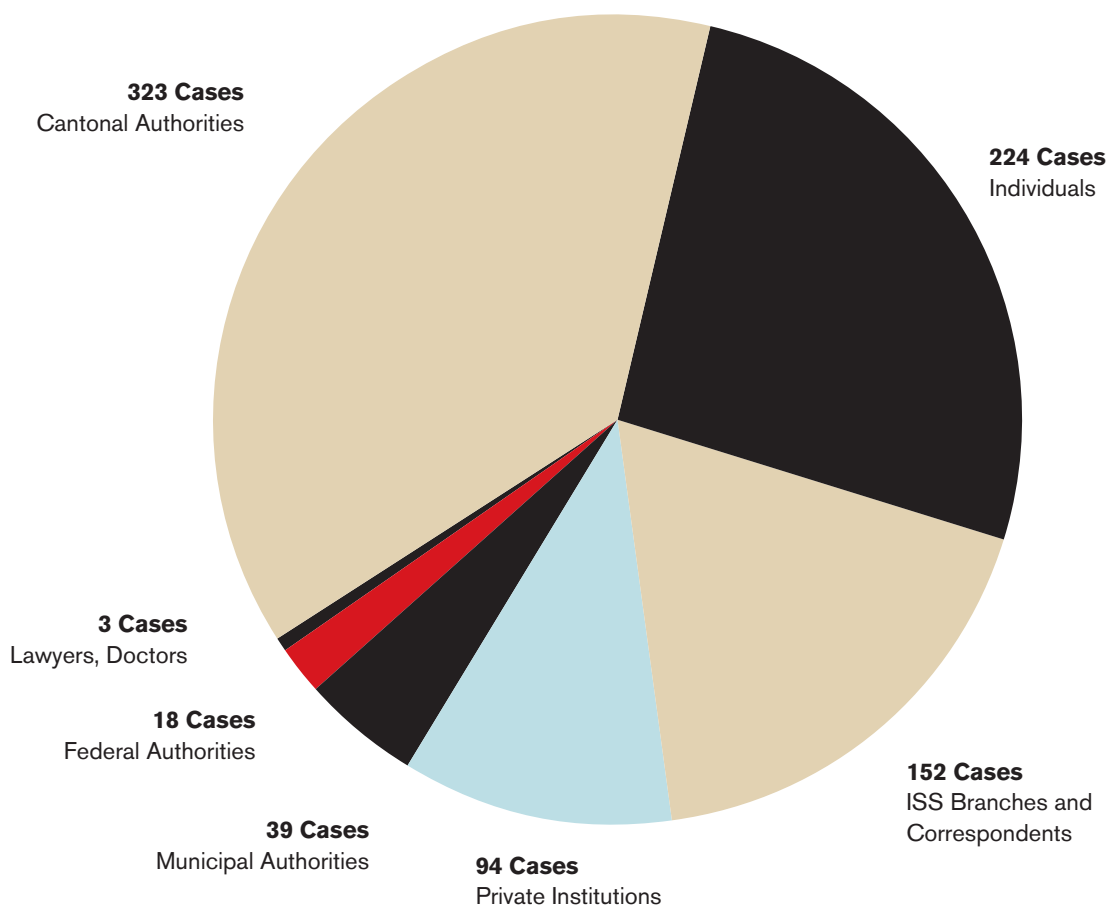


### and also

Appenzel Outer Rhodes	0	Glarus	1	Neuchâtel	25	Solothurn	7
Appenzel Inner Rhodes	0	Graubünden	7	Nidwalden	1	Ticino	20
Aargau	17	Jura	5	Obwalden	0	Thurgau	4
Basel-Country	7	Schwyz	4	St Gallen	10	Uri	2
Basel-City	20	Lucerne	8	Schaffhausen	1	Zug	1

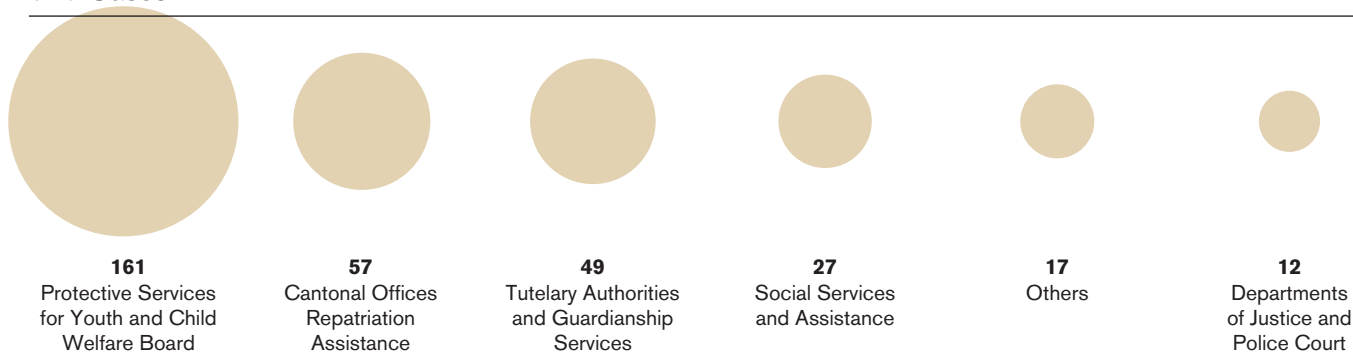
\*including 68 unaccompanied minors

## Origins of Applications – 853 Cases



### Cantonal Authorities

323 Cases



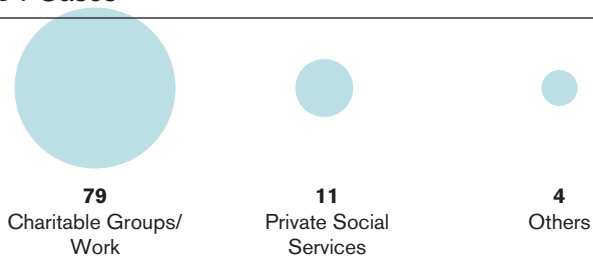
### Municipal Authorities

39 Cases



### Private Institutions

94 Cases



# Growing Needs of Unaccompanied Minors

**For many years now, ISS Switzerland has been committed to improving care for unaccompanied minors, both in Switzerland and abroad. In this way, it contributes to the international protection of those children.**

The number of migrant children arriving alone in Switzerland has increased significantly. In 2015, 2,700 unaccompanied minors (UMs) sought asylum in our country, compared to 795 in 2014 (statistics from the State Secretariat for Migration). They are primarily coming from Eritrea, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria or Somalia, and represent almost 7% of all asylum applications filed in 2015.

UMs are children under 18 who find themselves outside their country of origin. They have been separated from their parents or their legal guardian. Most arrived in Switzerland between the ages of 15 and 17, nevertheless a third are under 15. Their arrival requires particular attention in terms of protection, care and lasting solutions for their future. Indeed, these young migrants find themselves confronted with a situation of no knowledge about cultural markers or family references and a lack of information about their stay in Switzerland, in addition to isolation. This situation not only impedes their development, but also makes them especially vulnerable.

Due to a rise in the number of UMs, the majority of cantons have opened new emergency support facilities. However, certain cantons are still in the process of adapting their services, which causes problems for the quality of guidance. New needs have arisen to deal with this situation, such as the need for access to knowledge, education and instruments specialised in the field of providing care to these youths. Harmonisation of care between the cantons therefore seems essential.

## Advocating on Behalf of Young Migrants

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**ISS is working to standardise the care provided to UMs through advocacy for them and by developing tools for caseworkers.**

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### Advocacy for UMs to Achieve Better Care

The components of our advocacy campaign are based on the principle that the unaccompanied minors are first and foremost children, regardless of their refugee status (migrant, asylum seeker, illegal immigrant, stateless person, etc.). ISS is mostly engaged for:

- Individual guidance guaranteed for each youth
- Priority given to foster care solutions or placement in small facilities
- Giving every young person the opportunity to develop trusting relationships with the adults caring for them
- Provision of specific measures supporting social, educational and professional integration
- Ensuring that young people over 18 can complete their education if they have to return to their country of origin
- Ensuring transnational support for young people between the host country and the country of origin or another country, with a view to offering them stability and long-term perspectives

### Active Participation in Drafting the Recommendations to the UN's Committee on the Rights of the Child

ISS took an active part in writing the Swiss alternative report for the UN's Committee on the Rights of the Child. In its 2015 recommendations for Switzerland, the Committee highlighted several failures in which our country must make an additional effort, to meet the requirements of the obligations set out by the ratified Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Certain items in the CRC specifically concern UMs. These recommendations constitute an important reference to guide the activities of ISS Switzerland in the years to come.

### Publication of a Handbook on the Care of UMs for Caseworkers

ISS, in conjunction with its French-speaking Swiss partners, has developed a handbook on the care of UMs for caseworkers. Structured around nine stages, its aim is to promote and establish common practices in an effort to give these young people the best possible prospects in life and for future. ISS is working to roll out this approach, particularly in German-speaking Switzerland.

Handbook available at [www.ssiss.ch](http://www.ssiss.ch)

### Revival of the Alliance for the Rights of Migrant Children

ISS has also dedicated itself to reviving the Alliance for the Rights of Migrant Children (ADEM). In partnership with Terre des Hommes, Lausanne, and the International Institute for the Rights of the Child (IDE), the aim of this alliance is to improve the care of UMs by pooling the efforts of the various professionals working on their cases. In 2015, the ADEM organised a national conference on this issue. It emphasised the need to strengthen the ties between public authorities and civil society, as well as for active participation from the young people themselves.

[www.enfants-migrants.ch](http://www.enfants-migrants.ch)

### Involvement in Harmonising Cantonal Standards

The Conference of Cantonal Directors of Social Affairs (CDAS) formulates recommendations for the cantons regarding the hosting and care of UMs. ISS takes part in this process, sharing its experience and offering suggestions for the harmonisation of standards based on the Rights of the Child.

## Direct Support Activities for UMs

**In 2015, ISS provided numerous services to UMs arriving in Switzerland. Below are a few examples.**

### Handling of Cases Concerning UMs

The transnational services of ISS Switzerland handled several UM situations. They were involved mainly in re-establishing contact with birth families and also conducted in-depth investigations into countries of origin.

### Legal Assistance for UMs

In the Canton of Geneva, the ISS team offered legal services to 68 UMs to defend their rights in the Swiss asylum system.

### Organisation of a Summer Camp and Creation of the *Ma voix pour toi* (My Voice for You) Newspaper

Activities for UMs were also organised, such as a summer camp and the creation of a newspaper. This biannual publication, titled *Ma voix pour toi* is produced entirely by UMs. It offers a chance to gain more of an insight of their everyday lives and concerns. In addition to the difficulties faced, the topics of family, health, education and safety were addressed directly from the migrants themselves.

### International Initiatives

ISS Switzerland is a member of civil society advocating initiatives, at both European and international level, addressing the issues of migrant children.

[www.separated-children-](http://www.separated-children-europe-programme.org)

[europe-programme.org](http://www.separated-children-europe-programme.org)

[www.destination-unknown.org](http://www.destination-unknown.org)

### Financing of Scholarships

The *Formation. Perspectives. (Education. Prospects)* project aims to develop future prospects and establish lasting solutions for UMs through financial support and individual guidance as part of their education. Indeed, young migrants find themselves in a delicate situation and are not eligible for official study grants. At present, some sixty UMs have been awarded scholarships. As part of this project, ISS has organised cantonal meetings on the issue of access to learning for young migrants.

### Launch of a Mentoring Project

ISS is launching an initiative to enhance the care of UMs. The *An Extra Place at Your Table* project involves a member of the host community providing guidance and support to a young migrant. The goal is to offer them a dedicated place where they can be heard, build relationships and experience life. In the middle term, the project seeks to promote stable relationships and social integration for these young people in Switzerland through exchanges and activities with volunteers.





Camp-workshop hosted and organised by ISS for unaccompanied minors in the Swiss Alps in Vaud. This stay offered them an opportunity of editing the first newspaper dedicated for young migrants.





Boys Peul, a Muslim minority in Guinea-Bissau, who migrated to Senegal and have been taken care by the West African Network for the Protection of Children (WAN) supported by ISS Switzerland and ISS West Africa.



# Care for Young Migrants in West Africa

**Through its protection of children in fifteen different countries, the West Africa Network for the protection of children (WAN) has undertaken a colossal task. It is now recognised by the official authorities.**

ISS Switzerland has supported the work of the WAN since 2005, working closely with ISS West Africa, whose office is based in Ouagadougou. The WAN takes an active role in the protection and reintegration of young migrants between the fifteen countries in West Africa, using procedures which place emphasis on the interests of the child. In 2015, Mauritania starts successfully to collaborate with the network and the first cases of reintegration were achieved between this country and Mali. A total of 1,784 cases were handled in 2015 by the WAN and 1,002 children were taken into care.

During 2015, ISS Switzerland, as the WAN's technical partner, organised several regional meetings such as coordinators' convention in June at Grand-Bassam (Ivory Coast) and a Steering Committee in December in Abuja, Nigeria. The latter was held for the first time in conjunction with the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), attended by the fifteen national child protection authorities of the member states, as well as civil society organisations and children's representatives.

Following the meeting in Abuja, ECOWAS officially announced its intention to add the issue of 'Children on the Move' to its agenda. As part of its general policy on child protection, ECOWAS stated that it would develop specific programmes to ensure this vulnerable group is given more thorough consideration. The WAN has also been recognised as a regional mechanism for the cross-border care of children, and its standards will be incorporated within the ECOWAS' instruments for child protection.

WAN is supported financially by SDC and the EU for more than 5 years.

**In 2015, ISS Switzerland and ISS West Africa led a substantial number of support initiatives within the WAN:**

**5**  
coaching  
initiatives

**10**  
training  
courses  
provided

**225**  
trained  
people

**14**  
carried  
internal  
audits

An external audit and capitalisation of results of the WAN are currently in progress. They will be available in 2016 with an updated version of the regional protection standards.

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## **A documentary tells the story of two migrant children**

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A documentary in 2015 showcased the demanding fieldwork carried out each day by the WAN's partners involving migrant children. Directed by a Swiss civilist, Rémi Willemin, it was filmed between Senegal and Guinea-Bissau.

Named *Les chemins de l'enfance* (*The Paths of Childhood*), the film focuses on the migration of youth from Guinea-Bissau to Senegal seeking traditional Koranic education. This system is exposed to major corruption and causes more and more children to run away from these schools, where they are the victims of labour exploitation and forced to live on the streets. The documentary tells the story of two young migrants, from their identification on the streets of Senegal to their education in their home village.

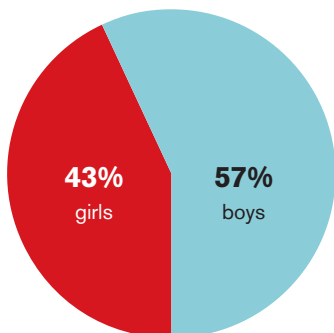
[www.resao.org](http://www.resao.org)

## Key Figures in the WAN



### Children Taken into Care

Age  
0-25 years



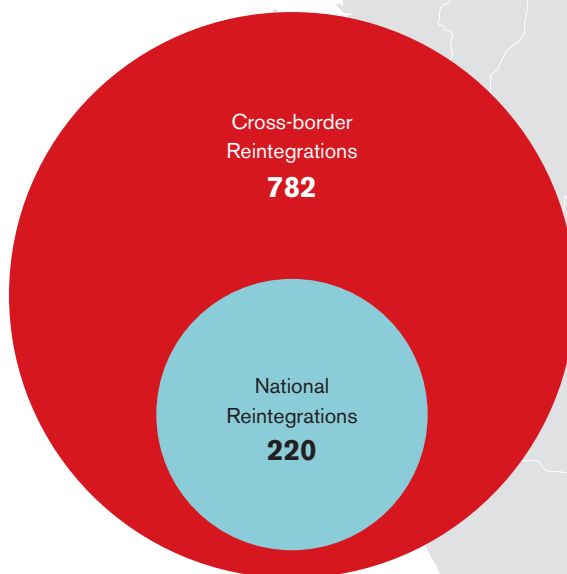
### Main Vulnerabilities

Labour exploitation

Begging

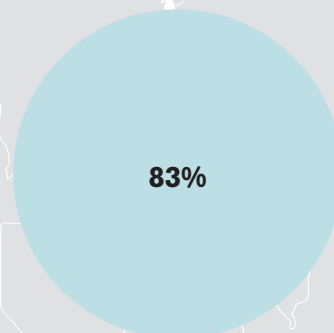
Abuse  
(physical,  
psychological,  
negligence)

### Types of Reintegrations

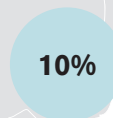


### Types of Projects Funded

Education



Training  
(ie: agriculture, hairdressing,  
dressmaking, electricity,  
nursing, masonry, market  
gardening, mechanics)



Income Generating  
Activities



# Support for Migrants

**Our direct aid for migrants supports many people and families via legal assistance, help with their professional future or guidance for returning to their country of origin. In this area, ISS offers services and projects based on the needs and opportunities identified.**

## Community of Tunisian Residents in Switzerland (CTRS) for Development Initiative

The aim of the CTRS project, backed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and undertaken jointly by the Swiss Embassy in Tunisia and ISS Switzerland, is to maximise the contribution from Tunisians residing in Switzerland (TRS) to the socio-economic development of Tunisia. In 2015, three TRS associations had their project management capabilities bolstered and were able to implement their projects.

Following the signing of the Exchange Agreement for Young Professionals between Switzerland and Tunisia, nine trainees are currently working in Switzerland and one has successfully finished her six-month placement. Two intercultural mediators handle the monitoring of the socio-professional integration of these trainees.

Fourteen Tunisian residents in Switzerland also benefited from entrepreneurship support. One of them was able to bring their technical skills in milk processing to a project undertaken in the Kasserine region.

[www.ctrs.ch](http://www.ctrs.ch)

**50**

young Tunisians were trained in various professions

**10**

entrepreneurship initiatives are currently under way

## Safe Parks for Syrian Children Refugees in Lebanon

In Lebanon, among the 4 million inhabitants are 1.5 million Syrian refugees – 53% of them are children and 15% go to school.

In an effort to ensure that the needs of these out-of-school children are met in terms of protection and development, ISS launched the 'Safe Parks' project. It is managed jointly with our local operational partner, Himaya, and our technical partner, FICE International.

The project, launched in 2014, provides psychosocial support to refugee children surrounded by crisis and offers them creative activities and safe play areas to boost their resilience.

The initial phase of the project is already under way, which entails setting up 'Safe Parks' in various cities of the Mount Lebanon Governorate and training local peer educators – ideally refugees themselves – on how to care for these children. This phase will be completed by July 2017.

**2000**

children beneficiaries of our safe parks by 2017

**200**

trained peer educators by 2017

## Support for developing a Professional Project in the Country of Origin

Through the "Reintegration in the Country of Origin" Association, ISS supports vulnerable migrants who are returning to their country of origin after having lived in Switzerland. This support consists of funds provided for a professional project or training, meaning migrants can make a fresh start. The local partners of ISS will then guide the recipients throughout their project in the country of origin.

In 2015, 'Reintegration in the Country of Origin' paved the way for the creation of 60 projects in 28 different countries around the world, thus helping 114 people. Since 2004, the programme has backed 350 projects and 700 people in 51 countries.

[www.reintegrationproject.ch](http://www.reintegrationproject.ch)

## Cooperation with Italy

ISS initiated a six month pilot project in the frame of a partnership with the Canton of Vaud aiming to connect the actors from both countries, and to improve the information given to migrants wishing or obliged to return back to Italy. Several dozen of migrants received such information and a workshop has been organised in Geneva among Swiss and Italian actors.



Key Figures  
of the Project  
“Reintegration  
in the Country of  
Origin” in 2015

**60**  
Created projects

**28**  
Concerned countries

**114**  
People helped

Kaddy Sidibeh,  
seamstress reintegrated  
in The Gambia



# Providing Expertise

**Drawing on its professional network, ISS is able to offer its expertise as part of specific projects in a variety of fields, such as solutions for children who are unable to live with their own families, community development focusing on the child or the development of methodological tools.**

**Among these were three projects in which ISS was involved:**

**In 2015,  
ISS was  
involved in**

**17**

Field missions

**29**

Interventions  
in conferences

**12**

Training provided

## Strengthening Social Services in Bulgaria

ISS Switzerland and ISS Bulgaria have been working together since 2013 to increase the capacity of social services in three regions of Bulgaria. This initiative is part of Switzerland's contribution to the enlargement of the European Union. Consequently, some forty people have been trained in the management of care centres for children without parents. They also learned skills for the preparation and support of foster families in caring for these young people.

[www.iss-bg.org/en](http://www.iss-bg.org/en)

## 'Child Protection and Rights' Training in Dakar

For the first time ever in Africa, May 2015 saw some thirty students from fifteen different countries, including five coordinators from the West Africa Network for the protection of children (WAN), began a training course in child protection and rights in Dakar. The university-level course offers a certificate awarded by the University of Geneva and is organised by the International Institute for the Rights of the Child (Sion) and the Dakar Judicial Training Centre. Its aim is to build the professional skills of people working in the field of child protection and child rights. Accordingly, ISS West Africa and ISS Switzerland have developed and coordinated a one-week module on the migration of children in West Africa.

[www.childsrights.org](http://www.childsrights.org)

## Better Protection for Children without Families in Algeria

ISS has been commissioned by UNICEF Algeria to improve the care of children without families and strengthen the alternative placement systems.

ISS Switzerland has been working on implementing international standards for the care of children in Algeria (Quality4Children) in partnership with the Algerian Ministry of National Solidarity, Family and Women's Affairs. These standards have been rolled out in three pilot areas: Alger, Oran and Annaba. Its goal is to set up a national system for the protection of young people without families, placing emphasis on approaches focused on the child. The programme also concentrates on reinforcing the Kafala system, which is an adoption procedure specific to Islamic law and acts as an alternative to institutional care.



# The International Network of ISS

- **A professional social assistance network in 140 countries. The network operates on the basis of global solidarity: each country member appealed to benefits of other members, without these benefits be subject to monetary compensation.**
- **A network of foreign partners involved in a common working method and knowing well the social, economic, legal environment and the policies in force in their own State.**
- **A single network able to provide coordinated social intervention for children and families, when two or more countries are concerned.**

Member of



International  
Social Service

## The International Conference on Cross-Border Child Protection

**In 2015, an event brought together the branches of the network.**

The General Secretariat of ISS organised an international conference on cross-border child protection, held in Geneva from 21 to 23 October 2015. The Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law backed the event, which brought together more than 250 professionals from all around the world. Among them were university professors, judges, central authorities, mediators and lawyers, as well as representatives of the ISS network.

The conference highlighted the need for interdisciplinary cross-border cooperation between public authorities and private partners, following the example set by the ISS network. This will help to ensure better protection for children in the various concerned countries. The conference was also an opportunity for several members of the teams at ISS Switzerland and ISS West Africa to make valuable contributions in their fields of expertise.

# Financial Reports

2015 was one positive year for ISS. Year by year we maintained a solid funding base of more than CHF 3 millions received from the Swiss public institutions (Confederation, cantons and municipalities) as well as the European Union.

Donations increased from CHF 668'000 in 2014 to CHF 1 million which allowed us to pursue beyond our objectives certain essential projects implementation in Switzerland and abroad. Other sources of funding allowed us to reach a total funding of more CHF 5.2 millions.

We highly appreciate this solidarity and consider it as a relevant element of our motivation to improve continuously the quality and the efficiency of our

work which also includes the development of financial and operational management tools. These tools allow us to manage in an effective and transparent way our activities, while assuming the full accountability to our beneficiaries and our grantors and donors.

In 2015, approximatively CHF 2.6 millions were used for projects abroad and CHF 2.2 millions for services in the transnational sector.

We continue to strengthen the Foundation's equity by an additional allocation of the 2015 annual result of CHF 38'725.

*Marc Evéquoz*  
Finance Manager

## Balance Sheet as of December 31st

	2015 CHF	2014 CHF
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash	1,389,958	1,127,425
Trade Accounts	221,368	213,780
Non-invoiced Services	366,565	360,378
Prepaid Expenses / Accrued Income	135,798	106,500
Fixed Assets	80,378	40,902
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>2,194,067</b>	<b>1,848,985</b>
<b>LIABILITIES, FUNDS AND CAPITAL</b>		
Trade Payables and Other Short Term Liabilities	259,025	178,577
Accrued Expenses / Deferred Income	118,361	57,604
Restricted Programme Funds	1,508,101	1,342,850
Foundation Equity	-	-
Social Capital	50,000	50,000
Unrestricted Capital	258,580	219,855
Total Foundation Equity	308,580	269,855
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES, FUNDS AND CAPITAL</b>	<b>2,184,067</b>	<b>1,848,886</b>

# Operating Profit & Loss Account as of December 31st

	2015 CHF	2014 CHF
<b>OPERATING INCOME</b>		
<b>Contributions from Public Institutions for Transnational Services</b>		
Swiss Confederation	135,000	135,000
Canton of Geneva	341,319	341,319
City of Geneva	30,000	30,000
Other Cantons / Municipalities	496,011	476,582
	1,002,330	982,901
<b>Donations</b>		
Other Private Grantors	112,829	123,613
<b>Other Income</b>		
Services Invoicing and Other Collections	148,714	170,755
Expertises and Project Management	634,812	814,193
Personnel Cost Reimbursement	339,378	289,857
Other Income	17,184	11,426
	1,140,088	1,286,231
<b>TOTAL OPERATING INCOME</b>	<b>2,255,247</b>	<b>2,392,745</b>
<b>Contributions from Public Institutions for Projects</b>		
Swiss Confederation	983,928	2,155,868
Canton of Geneva	-	3,112
City of Geneva	4,572	-
Other Cantons / Municipalities	79,063	26,478
EuropeAid - European Commission	1,000,576	290,763
	2,068,139	2,476,220
<b>Donations for Projects</b>		
"Loterie Romande"	100,000	100,000
"Fonds d'aide de Migros"	44,000	-
Other Private Donators	762,195	444,514
	906,195	544,514
Other Income for Projects	19,915	67,723
<b>TOTAL OPERATING INCOME FOR PROJECTS</b>	<b>2,994,249</b>	<b>3,088,457</b>
<b>TOTAL OPERATING INCOME</b>	<b>5,249,496</b>	<b>5,481,202</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>		
Personnel Costs	1,682,505	1,805,281
Operating Expenditures	534,018	519,983
<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>2,216,523</b>	<b>2,325,264</b>
<b>Implementation Costs for Projects</b>	<b>2,596,549</b>	<b>2,737,307</b>
<b>TOTAL OPERATING COSTS</b>	<b>4,813,072</b>	<b>5,062,571</b>
<b>RESULT BEFORE CHANGE IN FUNDS</b>	<b>436,424</b>	<b>418,632</b>
Withdrawal from Restricted Funds	-397,699	-351,149
<b>ANNUAL RESULT</b>	<b>38,725</b>	<b>67,483</b>

# Agregated Operating Income and Implementation Costs of Projects

Projects	Eco-Mentoring*	Switzerland-Italy Canton of Vaud Project	Other Projects in West Africa	Safe Parks	Reintegration
<b>OPERATING INCOME</b>					
Contributions from Public Institutions	35,270	37,763	1,572	41,300	-
Donations	-	-	81,318	166,677	211,000
Other Income	18,260	-	149	-	76
<b>Total</b>	<b>53,530</b>	<b>37,763</b>	<b>83,039</b>	<b>207,977</b>	<b>211,076</b>
<b>Implementation Costs for Projects</b>	<b>19,665</b>	<b>37,763</b>	<b>64,119</b>	<b>49,533</b>	<b>244,380</b>
<b>Annual Result</b>	<b>33,865</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>18,920</b>	<b>158,444</b>	<b>-33,304</b>
<b>Total Restricted Funds as of January 1st, 2015</b>	<b>-33,865</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>189,913</b>
<b>Total Restricted Funds as of December 31st, 2015</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>18,920</b>	<b>158,444</b>	<b>156,609</b>

\*Project completed in 2014

	Scholarships for Unaccompanied Minors	Unaccompanied Minors	Tunisia CTRS	WAN SDC	WAN UE
<b>OPERATING INCOME</b>					
Contributions from Public Institutions	-	83,500	418,158	450,000	1,000,576
Donations	216,000	231,200	-	-	-
Other Income	1,100	40	-	-	291
<b>Total</b>	<b>217,100</b>	<b>314,740</b>	<b>418,158</b>	<b>450,000</b>	<b>1,000,867</b>
<b>Implementation Costs for Projects</b>	<b>72,079</b>	<b>198,155</b>	<b>194,388</b>	<b>938,505</b>	<b>777,962</b>
<b>Annual Result</b>	<b>145,021</b>	<b>116,585</b>	<b>223,770</b>	<b>-488,505</b>	<b>222,905</b>
<b>Total Restricted Funds as of January 1st, 2015</b>	<b>26,392</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>706,025</b>	<b>19,041</b>
<b>Total Restricted Funds as of December 31st, 2015</b>	<b>171,413</b>	<b>116,585</b>	<b>223,770</b>	<b>217,520</b>	<b>241,944</b>

The summary of the financial statements 2015 presented in the Annual Report is part of the Audit Report of the Annual Accounts 2015 issued by KPMG, Geneva. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Swiss GAAP in particular FER 21, the label ZEWO and the Swiss legislation.

The Audit Report can be found on our website [www.ssiss.ch](http://www.ssiss.ch) or upon request in writing to [ssi@ssiss.ch](mailto:ssi@ssiss.ch).

# The ISS Team

**In order to implement its strategy, ISS has formed an interdisciplinary team of people who maintain a high level of expertise and personal commitment. The organisation works together closely despite being spread across two different geographical areas (Zurich and Geneva), seamlessly combining skills in social work, law, development and mediation.**

## Foundation Council

**\* Mr Philippe Aegerter**  
Chairman – Economist, HEC graduate  
(until 30/06/2015)

**\* Mr Rolf Widmer**  
Chairman of ISS (from 01/07/2015)  
Technical advisor to ISS  
Economist and social worker  
Director of Operations, Tipiti  
President, FICE Switzerland

**Ms Régine Aepli**  
Former Member of the Swiss Council of States,  
Canton of Zurich

**\* Mr Daniel Burnat**  
Migration consultant

**Mr Raphaël Comte**  
Member of the Swiss Council of States,  
Canton of Neuchâtel

**Ms Valérie De Graffenried**  
Journalist, Le Temps

**Ms Florence Farion**  
Producer, Radio Télévision Suisse  
(until 28/11/2015)

**\* Mr Gabriel Frossard**  
Advisor to the Law Courts of Geneva

**Ms Ariane Guisan**  
Secretary (out of Council)

**Mr Blaise-Alain Krebs**  
Former Director of Jeanne Antide Children's Home

**Mr Ueli Leuenberger**  
Former Member of the Swiss National Council

**Mr Heinrich Nufer**  
Child psychologist

**\* M. Paul Peter**  
Rural engineer, ETH Zurich graduate

**Mr Stefan Rissi**  
Corporate Philanthropy Manager, JTI  
Director, JTI Foundation

**\* Mr Georges Schürch**  
Former Director of Cycle d'Orientation  
Secondary Education (DIP), Geneva

**Mr Michel Thentz**  
Head of the Department of Health, Social Affairs,  
Personnel and Districts of the Republic and Canton  
of the Jura

**Mr Jean Zermatten**  
Former Chair of UN Committee  
for the Rights of the Child  
Projects Manager at the International  
Institute for the Rights of the Child

*\* Members of the Executive Committee*

## Management

Olivier Geissler  
Director, from July 2015

Rolf Widmer  
Director, until June 2015

## Communication and Private Fundraising

Orianne Couturier  
Communications Manager, since April 2015

Rolf Widmer  
Fundraising

## Finance

Marc Evéquoz  
Finance Manager

Pierre-Alain Kummer  
Accounting Officer

## Administration

Michèle Demierre  
Executive Assistant, Human Resources

Gabriela Desseigne  
Project Officer, Translator

Shaheeda Dollie  
Secretary and Receptionist

Sébastien Pronini  
Project Manager, until February 2015

Paul Stalder  
Administrative Assistant

## Transnational Services

Stephan Auerbach  
Head of Department, Mediator

Christoph Braunschweig  
Social worker

Ruth Eigenmann  
Lawyer, Mediator (ZH)

Patricia Koch  
Social worker (ZH), since July 2015

Annette Lory Hilbourne  
Social worker, Mediator (ZH),  
until April 2015

Denis Martin  
Lawyer, Social worker

Albert Mukwiye  
Project Assistant, since February 2015

Joyce Tschopp  
Social worker, since July 2015

## Support for Migrants

Ramla Allani  
Project Officer - Migration and Development  
for the CTRS project

Jean-Louis Berardi  
Lawyer

Michèle Demierre  
Project Officer - "Reintegration  
in the Country of Origin"

Marie Emery  
"Safe Parks" Project Assistant

Valerio Prato  
Project Officer "Switzerland-Italy"

## Unaccompanied Minors

Elodie Antony  
Project Officer

Christoph Braunschweig  
Technical advisor

Patricia Koch  
Project Officer

## International Programmes

Olivier Geissler  
Head of Programmes, until 30 June 2015

Daniel Varadi  
Community Development Project Manager

## Civilists

Lucas Baumann  
until 1 April 2015

Wenzel Gruber  
until 27 March 2015

Rémi Willemin  
from 4 May 2015

## Trainees

Aurélien Rivier  
Zakia Kale  
Laeticia Isoz  
Marie-Thérèse Maruri  
Leila Raïs  
Selina Rietman  
Alicia Haldemann

## ISS West Africa Regional Office

Djibril Fall  
Regional Representative  
and his team  
of 10 employees

## Volunteer Work

During the 2015 financial year,  
ISS turned to its volunteers  
for a variety of activities.



**5,155**

Hours from  
trainees  
and civilists

**170**

Occasional  
hours for  
secretarial  
duties

**430**

Hours from  
the members  
of the  
Foundation  
Council

**178**

Hours from  
volunteer  
translators and  
proofreaders

### Administrative volunteers

Eliane Burnier  
Agnès Michelet  
Claudine Foraz  
Hélène Klein-Simmens

### Volunteer translators

Michèle Rettig, Isabelle  
Swali, Walter Rosselli,  
Christiane Privat, Irina  
Bartolome, Diana Volonakis,  
Regina Taimisova, Beatrice  
Joho, Tamara Kuzmanovic,  
Sandra Garcia Bayerl,  
Mohamed Saber Ben Lagha,  
Semhar Mehari, Anne  
Beguín, Martina Lapper



The Swiss Foundation of the  
International Social Service is  
ZEWO-certified. The ZEWO seal  
of approval certifies cost-effective  
use of received donation, ethics,  
integrity and corporate governance.

## Financial Support and Backing

### Cantons

Appenzell Outer Rhodes, Appenzell Inner  
Rhodes, Basel City, Basel-Country, Berne,  
Fribourg, Geneva, Glarus, Graubünden, Jura,  
Lucerne, Neuchâtel, Nidwalden, Obwalden,  
Schaffhausen, Schwyz, Solothurn, St Gallen,  
Ticino, Thurgau, Uri, Vaud, Valais, Zurich

### Municipalities

Aarau (AG), Azmoos (SG), Baar (ZG), Birr (AG),  
Birmensdorf (ZH), Blenio (TI), Bonvillars (VD),  
Brügg (BE), Castaneda (GR), Comano (TI),  
Corcelles-près-Payerne (VD), Dardagny (GE),  
Delémont (JU), Dietlikon (ZH), Dürnten (ZH),  
Düdingen (FR), Erlach (BE), Grancia (TI),  
Grand-Lancy (GE), Grenchen (SO), Gsteig (BE),  
Hünenberg (ZG), Hombrechtikon (ZH),  
Ittigen (BE), Interlaken (BE), Kilchberg (ZH),  
Klosters (GR), Laconnex (GE), Lutry (VD),  
Lufingen (ZH), Lyss (BE), Maienfeld (GR),  
Mervelier (JU), Meyrin (GE), Monthey (VS),  
Neunkirch (SH), Oberwil (BL), Oberägeri (ZG),  
Orbe (VD), Pfeffingen (BL), Poschiavo (GR),  
Schlieren (ZH), Solothurn (SO), Unterägeri (ZG),  
Unterseen (BE), Versoix (GE), Villars-sur-Glâne  
(FR), Worb (BE), Zollikofen (BE), Zug (ZG)

... SUBVENTIONNÉ  
... PAR LA  
VILLE DE GENÈVE



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra  
  
Swiss Agency for Development  
and Cooperation SDC



Prof. Otto Beisheim Stiftung

## MIGROS

The project "Safe Parks for Syrian  
refugees children in Lebanon" is  
supported by the Migros Aid Fund.

The support provided during the  
charity gala for Syrian refugees children.

### Private Donors

Many thanks to everyone who supported our  
work in 2015. Your help has made it possible  
for us to continue our efforts in 2016 to support  
children and families all around the world.



ISS works with migrants in Switzerland by offering various social and legal services, integration and reintegration projects in the host country, the country of origin or a third country.



**Swiss Foundation  
of the International  
Social Service**

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CCP 12-5490-5



FONDATION SUISSE DU SERVICE SOCIAL INTERNATIONAL  
SCHWEIZERISCHE STIFTUNG DES INTERNATIONALEN SOZIALDIENSTES  
FONDAZIONE SVIZZERA DEL SERVIZIO SOCIALE INTERNAZIONALE  
SWISS FOUNDATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE

Member of



International  
Social Service