



Swiss Thai



September 2021 | SWISS-THAI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE | E-NEWSLETTER #134

Good food, Good life

TOP NEWS:

- Economy:** Aging and the Labor Market in Thailand
- Legal:** Thailand Deploys Relief Measures to Help Insured Persons under the Social Security Act
- STCC Internal News:** Khon Kaen Online Business Forum
- New Members:** Chow Energy / PMG Shipyard
- RIS Swiss Section:** School start on Monday, 9th August

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

DEAR FRIENDS AND MEMBERS OF THE STCC



PRESIDENT BRUNO G. ODERMATT

Having returned from a summer holiday to Europe, I have to admit that I was astonished by the level of normalcy prevalent in Switzerland and Germany. Switzerland has always used to be on the top of international rankings such as for innovation, economic performance, personal freedom and prosperity, and now it can add managing Covid-19 to the list. Just recently, it has been ranked as one of the best places to be in the current phase of the pandemic (source Bloomberg). Sadly enough, Thailand and some other countries in SEA ended up at the bottom of the list. One could say it is a result of the careful ways Swiss politicians

attempted to relax lockdown and economic freezing mandates, without sacrificing public health and safety. Unlike heavily debated and complex rescue packages adopted by the US and European governments, Switzerland pursued simple and cheap measures to keep the economy going. It extended unemployment benefits to self-employed and regular employees and provided bridge loans to small and medium business to keep them in business. Overall, it has been a smart and pragmatic approach and you can see and feel the result when you travel around Switzerland.

As I write this column in a closed-up hotel room as part of the Thai government quarantine programme, I had lots of time to watch the unfolding tragedy in war-torn Afghanistan. *History does not repeat itself, but it rhymes lot* – Mark Twain once said, and as we are witnessing the end of one of the longest

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MEMBER DETAIL UPDATES

Do you have changes among your delegates or changes to your e-mail, mobile, telephone, or fax numbers?

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lasting wars in US history, there is some wisdom in it. After Vietnam and Iraq, another senseless war is about to come to an end. Over a 20-year period, the US spent 2 trillion USD to keep the Taliban at bay, of that 800 billion USD on direct warfighting costs. Over 3,500 coalition troops lost their lives and there are 20,000 wounded US soldiers who need to be cared for the rest of their lives. Overall, the war has killed 170,000 people, of which 50,000 were civilians. The US army left behind military equipment of around 1 billion USD, courtesy of US tax payers, which leaves the Taliban militarily better equipped than a number of NATO states. You can watch the display of sophisticated weapons on Twitter tweets of Taliban fighters, which is also heavily used as communication tools amongst the self-proclaimed Gotteskrieger. We live in a remarkably strange world, as Twitter barred the account of the former President and Commander in Chief of the USA, whereas the enemies and classified terrorists can freely make use of it. As tragic as it is, one can sum up this US-made disaster in a single sentence: It took the USA four presidents, 2 trillion dollars, thousands of lives and 20 years to replace the Taliban with the Taliban. Or as CNN host and best-selling author Fareed Zakaria eloquently put it in one of his shows: *There is no elegant*

way to lose a war.

Thailand is also going through some tough economic times and the lockdown measures are now taking its toll on the economy. With an annual trade volume of 10 billion USD, Thailand is Switzerland's second most important trading partner in South East Asia, after Singapore. With over 200 companies with ties to Switzerland operating in Thailand and employing roughly 60,000 employees, the STCC has many incentive to stand by Thailand during these difficult times. As I come from an educator's family and am a firm believer in higher education, I am extremely pleased about the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich and the STCC for an exchange programme for Swiss interns in STCC member companies. It will allow students from the ETH Zurich to gain meaningful working experience with leading Swiss companies in Thailand. DKSH Thailand signed up as the first company to take part in this programme. If you or your company share the same vision and want to be part of this programme, please contact our office. We would be delighted to provide you with relevant information. It is another way to strengthen the business and economic ties between Thailand and Switzerland

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In mid-September we should be able to officially inaugurate our new STCC office container at the premises of the Swiss Embassy, which will be another milestone in the success story of the STCC. We are grateful to our members and our sponsors who made this story possible. Given the celebrations of 90 years

diplomatic and business relations between Switzerland and Thailand in 2021, it will further strengthen our mission to foster Swiss investments in Thailand.

With my best wishes,

Bruno G. Odermatt-Maag
President

Contact the President:

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President STCC

president@swissthai.com

Tel: +66 2 652 1911sd

STCC Calendar:

Tuesday, September 14:

DX4: The impact of the 'C' pandemic across global supply chains & logistics

Wednesday, September 15:

Sharp Focus on Customs Audit Trends

Thursday-Friday, September 23 - 24: **Khon Kaen Business Forum - Online**

Wednesday, November 17:

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP - Resilience

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ECONOMY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - AGING AND THE LABOR MARKET IN THAILAND

World Bank Group. 2021. Aging and the Labor Market in Thailand: Labor Markets and Social Policy in a Rapidly Transforming and Aging Thailand

Thailand's labor market faces several challenges.

Labor force participation has been declining, the shift of jobs out of the low-productivity agriculture sector has slowed, and informality is the norm. The COVID-19 outbreak has likely reinforced these trends. Thailand's workforce has not transitioned to the types of jobs involving nonroutine tasks and interpersonal communication that increasingly characterize knowledge-driven economies. The labor force participation of women is 20 percentage points lower than that of men, a gap that has persisted for two decades. Needs associated with caring for a growing population of older people could put additional pressure on working women. The higher labor force participation rate of older people in rural areas reflects a need to work longer to make ends meet despite the nearly universal Old Age Allowance social pension.

Older people face particular challenges in the labor market.

Older people often have care responsibilities and, despite living longer and healthier lives than in the past, continue to face health challenges. The report uses data from the Socioeconomic Survey to show that both factors are associated with lower labor force participation among older people. The report also draws on the Socioeconomic Survey to show that Thailand's contributory pensions can have disincentive effects on older people's labor force participation, although low coverage means that these effects are not of immediate concern. The Old Age Allowance, a social pension, may have some disincentive effects as well, although in this case the adequacy of benefits is likely a greater concern. The report also raises

concerns about how prepared current and future older people are for the changes taking place in the world of work. Analysis of the task intensity of occupations shows that older people are not working in the jobs of the future, which re-quire a set of less manual, more cognitive skills. Young people are transitioning out of the more routine occupations that were in demand in the past and into quickly growing occupations. But prime-age workers—the older workers of the near future—re-main in more routine jobs where demand is falling.

This difficult labor market is complicated by a rapidly aging population, which implies a smaller workforce in the future.

The working-age share of Thailand's population is projected to decline from 71 percent of the population in 2020 to 56 percent in 2060. This is equivalent to a decline in the working-age population of nearly 30 percent, the third largest decline in the East Asia and Pacific region, after only Japan and the Republic of Korea. Meanwhile, the share of the population 65 or older is projected to rise from 13 percent in 2020 to 31 percent of the population in 2060—the 22nd largest share globally. This aging is occurring quickly: the 65-plus population in Thailand doubled between 2000 and 2020 and will double again by 2040 to 26 percent of the population.

Thailand is less wealthy than other countries were at similar stages of population aging, meaning that fewer resources are available to confront the challenges of aging.

Thailand is aging at a lower level of income than other countries. Analysis for the report shows that, at every stage of aging, Thailand has had lower GDP per capita than the global average. Indeed, the East Asia and Pacific region's older economies—Hong Kong SAR, China; Japan; Korea; and Singapore—had GDP per capita



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of around \$41,000 (purchasing power parity in 2011 international dollars) when their elderly dependency ratios were at the same level as Thailand's today. This is more than twice the level of Thailand's current GDP per capita.

Population aging has significant implications for Thailand's labor market and for its overall economic development. All else equal, Thailand's declining working-age population implies a mechanical decrease in growth of income per capita. Projections of the potential impact suggest that, absent any adjustments, changes in demographics will lower growth of GDP per capita by 0.86 percent in the 2020s. Impacts on the labor market could be substantial. The report shows that, assuming constant labor force participation rates by age and gender, Thailand's projected demographic changes would lead to a reduction in the overall labor force participation rate of about 5 percentage points between 2020 and 2060 and a reduction in the overall size of the labor force of 14.4 million people. Such a decline could result in labor market shortages that could further hinder Thailand's prospects for growth. Automation, digitization, and other trends associated with Industry 4.0 may alleviate some of these shortages while exacerbating others as the demand for skills

evolves.

The negative effects of population aging are not inevitable, but addressing them requires changes across labor markets and by people of all ages. Population aging is not just about older people. The causes of and responses to population aging are tied to the actions of and policies affecting people of all ages.

Expansions of Thailand's labor supply could counteract the shrinking labor force implied by population aging. Increases in healthy life expectancy mean that older people are likely to be able to work longer. The large gap between male and female labor force participation means that there is significant potential to activate the labor supply of women. Migrants have been filling gaps in Thailand's labor force in recent decades and could be better used to do so in the future.

Simulations undertaken for this report confirm that expanding the supply of labor could offset some of the negative implications of population aging. Simulations of different scenarios of labor force participation and migration show that higher rates of labor force participation among older people and women and a liberalized migration system could

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increase Thailand's labor supply in the long run relative to current projections under population aging. Liberalized migration and increased female labor force participation would have the largest effect.

Even under these scenarios, Thailand's labor force will still decline as its population ages, implying that the labor force will need to become more productive. A smaller labor force will need to be more efficient in order to maintain and improve living standards. As fertility declines, this process will require more intensive investment in human capital as well as higher saving rates, capital deepening, and adoption of labor-saving technologies that offset labor scarcity. These latter changes will themselves require the appropriate human capital to complement investments in physical capital.

Policy can help to address the challenges created by population aging. Policy can help to activate the labor supply of older people, women, and migrants. At the same time, policy makers can help to ensure that sufficient investments are made in the quality of present and future workers so that they become more productive. Finally, population aging creates several opportunities, particularly in the care sector but also in the larger "silver economy," that policy makers can exploit.

- **Policies to extend working lives** can target older people in urban areas, who tend to retire at earlier ages than their rural peers. These policies will need to target not just people at or just below retirement age, but also the prime-age workers who are working in declining occupations so that they can continue to work as they get older.
- **Policies to increase female labor force participation** can target women directly, such as by providing training programs that break down occupational segregation, and can activate women's participation indirectly, such as by increasing the

income security of older people and providing paternal leave.

- **Improvements to the migration system** can help to fill short-ages in low- and high-skill occupations. A national migration plan or strategy could set the stage for more predictable migration policy. Changes to the migration system could include allowing migration of longer duration to take advantage of the improved productivity of migrants as they work in a country and incentivizing high-skill migration.
- **A commitment to a lifelong approach to learning** can help to stimulate the productivity gains needed as the working-age population shrinks. This effort would involve developing new approaches to technical and vocational education and training as well as nonformal training focused on the needs of individual learners and adapted to labor market demand. Performance-based financing and learner-targeted subsidies and vouchers are important approaches to consider.
- **Opportunities created by aging** can be exploited by providing training for workers in the care sector, particularly unemployed and other vulnerable workers, and by complementing investments in services for local older people with those for older people from abroad.

Despite the need for action on multiple policy fronts, investing in human capital across the life cycle and stabilizing the financial security of older people are top priorities. Rapid changes in technology and in the nature of work, including those stimulated by the COVID-19 outbreak, will require workers with new types of skills to fill labor market needs created by population aging. These skills will require not only a good technical understanding of emerging digital technologies, but also soft skills like communication, critical thinking, and persuasion. Thailand will have to focus intently on improving the skills of its workforce. Thus the recommendations in table ES.1 include several policies related to improving skills development. The financial security of older people will also be a



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priority. Thailand has recently enacted policies related to older people, including expansion of the Old Age Allowance and various efforts to facilitate longer working lives. These policies should be coordinated with other policy areas, particularly pensions policy, to protect older people whose financial health is at risk. Many older people, particularly in rural areas, have to work well into old age. Although universal, the Old Age Allowance is insufficient to support the livelihoods of older people. Barriers to employment of older people remain high. Table ES.1 includes several policy

recommendations to help to improve the financial security of older people.

The full report is available for download here: [World Bank](#)



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LEGAL

THAILAND DEPLOYS RELIEF MEASURES TO HELP INSURED PERSONS UNDER THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT

Since July 13, 2021, the Thai government has issued a series of resolutions offering relief measures for persons insured under sections 33 (regular employees), 39 (former employees still paying contributions to the SSO) and 40 (freelancers) of the Social Security Act B.E. 2533 (1990) (the SSA) who have been affected by the COVID-19 prevention measures under the Emergency Decree on Public Administration in Emergency Situations B.E. 2548 (2005), including the business closures required in

some provinces.

The latest cabinet resolution extends relief measures to SSA-insured persons in 29 provinces designated as maximum control areas (or “dark red” provinces). The provinces are grouped into three categories based on when they received that designation (which, in turn, impacts the duration of the relief which they receive):

Group	Provinces
10 provinces (first group designated)	Bangkok, Nakhon Pathom, Narathiwat, Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, Pattani, Samut Prakan, Samut Sakhon, Songkhla, Yala
3 provinces (second group designated)	Ayutthaya, Chachoengsao, Chon Buri
16 provinces (third group designated)	Ang Thong, Kanchanaburi, Lop Buri, Nakhon Nayok, Nakhon Ratchasima, Phetchabun, Phetchaburi, Prachin Buri, Prachuap Khiri Khan, Ratchaburi, Rayong, Samut Songkhram, Saraburi, Sing Buri, Suphan Buri, Tak

Two types of relief measures have been announced—one for parties under section 33 of the SSA, and one for parties under sections 39 and 40.

Section 33 (Regular Employees)

Monetary assistance is available for Thai nationals insured under section 33 of the SSA (and their employers) engaged in the following business activities:

- Administrative and support activities
- Arts, entertainment, and recreation
- Automotive repair
- Construction
- Food and accommodation
- Information and communication activities

- Professional activities in science and academia
- Services
- Transportation and storage
- Wholesale/retail

Employers must submit an application to the Social Security Office (SSO) through the online portal (www.sso.go.th/eservices) in order for them and their employees to receive the assistance payments. Each qualifying employee receives THB 2,500 per month if they are registered with the SSO within the deadline, while registered employers receive THB 3,000 per qualifying employee, up to maximum of 200 employees (i.e. THB 600,000), as summarized in the table below.

Group	Registration deadline	Duration of assistance
10 provinces	July 31, 2021	2 months (July and August 2021)
3 provinces	August 24, 2021	2 months (July and August 2021)
16 provinces	August 24, 2021	1 month (August 2021)



LEGAL

Section 39 (Former Employees Still Paying SSO Contributions) and Section 40 (Freelancers)

THB 5,000 assistance payments are available for Thai employees insured under sections 39 and 40 of the SSA. Government officers and those who receive a government pension are not eligible to receive the payments. Although the payments are classified as monthly, the current regulations authorize only one month of payments for qualifying insured persons who register with the SSO by the deadlines below.

Both of the relief measures described above are likely to be renewed on a monthly basis if the pandemic remains severe. However, as of August 19, no resolution has yet been issued to approve an extension for September.

Tilleke & Gibbins will continue to monitor the situation for developments. Questions on Thailand's COVID-19 relief measures for employers and employees can be directed to Chusert Supasitthumrong at chusert.s@tilleke.com or Piyawat Vitooraporn at piyawat.v@tilleke.com.

Group	Registration Deadline for registration with the SSO to receive the assistance money.
10 provinces	August 10, 2021
3 provinces	August 10, 2021
16 provinces	August 24, 2021



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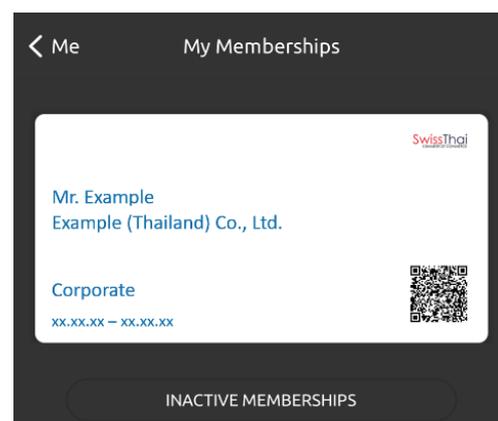
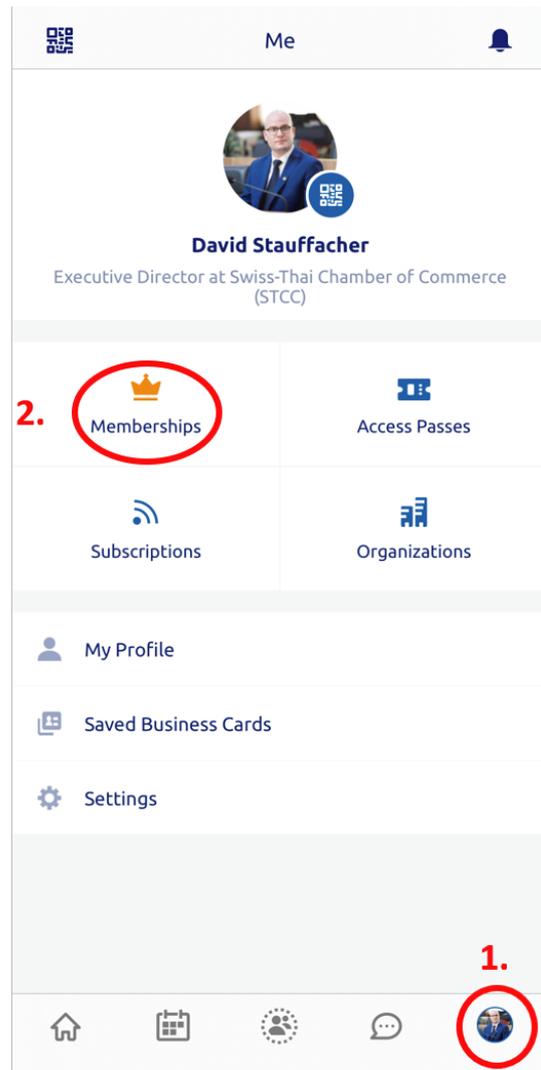
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STCC INTERNAL NEWS

KHON KAEN ONLINE BUSINESS FORUM

Supported by the Swiss-Thai Chamber of Commerce the Khon Kaen Online Business Forum will be held from 23-24 September 2021 to promote Khon Kaen as a business destination to expatriates in Thailand. Business opportunities in Smart City, Smart Farming, Innovation, Connectivity are yet to be discovered in Khon Kaen, the Gateway to GMS. The Business Forum was initiated by the FTCC, BeLuThai and the NTCC under the lead of the JFCCT.

More information: <https://lnkd.in/gDFzuugG>




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NEWS MEMBERS

CORPORATE MEMBERS:



Chow Energy Public Company Limited

Tel: +66 2 033 0919-28
Website: www.chowenergy.co.th
E-Mail: info@ps-cl.com

Representatives: Mr. Smith Tetchartvanich, Managing Director; Mr. Daniel Roh Dear Saragih, HR Director

Company Profile:

Chow Energy Public Company Limited is one of the leading companies in Renewable Energy with a wide range of services including development, design, construction, operation, and maintenance providing options for partners to engage in private power purchase agreements or as a contractor for turnkey engineering, procurement and construction. Our mission is always aiming to provide excellent service to strengthen business whilst providing energy solutions that are sustainable to our community and our environment.



PMG Shipyard

Tel: +66 38 010 570
Website: www.pmgshipyard.com
E-Mail: info@pmgshipyard.com

Representatives: Mr. Philippe M. Guénat, CEO & Founder

Company Profile:

PMG Shipyard was first established in 2004, as a privately held company with Swiss ownership & management, having strong European presence in management and key technical positions with world-renowned members of the advisory board.

Initially, our reputation was built on the production of small leisure yachts. Soon, the word spread about the excellent craftsmanship of our tailor-made commercial vessels and moderately sized catamarans, ideal for day out trips.



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PMG Shipyard has been expanding over the last years to be able to fulfil an ever-growing demand for luxury yachts from our partners and customers. The yard has now a 20,800m2 facility in Rayong, with dedicated areas for each of the production process during the construction



Royal Shammi Co. Ltd.

Website: www.royalshammi.com
E-Mail: info@royalshammi.com

Company Profile:

Royal Shammi was established in Thailand with the

help of the parent company KB ALLIANCE PTE LTD from Singapore.

KB ALLIANCE PTE LTD is based in Singapore as a logistics hub to sell OEM products in Southeast Asia and expand slowly Enter a niche market with Thailand's growing industry.

Royal Shammi was born to expand its skin care business as Market growth and brand awareness about quality products.

Royal Shammi currently focuses on the luxury products department in beauty and lifestyle.

The main beauty product that Royal Shammi currently is distributing in Thailand is called Swiss Perfection which his produced in Montreux, Switzerland.

our Products



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RIS SWISS SECTION DEUTSCHSPRACHIGE SCHULE BANGKOK

SCHOOL START ON MONDAY, 9th AUGUST



The school community of RIS Swiss Section was excited to start the new school year on Monday, 9th August 2021. Although there was some disappointment that this had to be done in distance learning mode, again, teachers and students were happy to re-unite.



A virtual ceremony heralded the beginning of the new school year. Students, teachers, administrative staff, parents and other guests were greeted with welcoming words from principal Christian Vogel, who gave a special welcome to the new teachers.

Among the guest speakers were H.E. Mrs. Helene Budliger Artieda, Ambassador of Switzerland in Thailand, H. E. Mr. Georg Schmidt, Ambassador of Germany in Thailand, and H. E. Mrs. Dr. Eva Hager, Ambassador of Austria. In video messages they greeted the students and school community and wished everyone continuing success for the new school year.



After that, Mr. Jens Eggert, the Head of Secondary, and the Head of Primary, Johanna Vänskä welcomed the new students to the school.



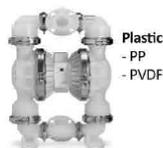
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RIS SWISS SECTION DEUTSCHSPRACHIGE SCHULE BANGKOK

PREPARATION WEEK AND EDUCATION WORKSHOPS



Preceding the school opening was a busy week for our teachers: Between the 2nd and 6th of August 2021, all teachers took part in various workshops in preparation for the new academic year, mainly organized by the steering committee of the school's educational quality development team. Online learning presents challenges to both students and teachers and these are important to understand and address in order to provide the best educational experience possible.



RIS SWISS SECTION DEUTSCHSPRACHIGE SCHULE BANGKOK

LEARNING RESOURCE PACKS FOR DISTANCE LEARNING

Certain work assignments and tasks are simply more meaningful and fun with the right equipment and resources at hand. Especially for our young learners in the lower school levels. To help our students take their eyes off the screen during distance learning, teachers had prepared individual learning resource

packages for their classes. Parents and students collected their learner packs on the first two days of school at predefined times at pick-up tables in front of the campus or even via post delivery service. Distancing rules obeyed and lucky it wasn't raining!




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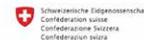
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INVITATION TO JOIN OPEN HOUSE ON SEPTEMBER 25

On Saturday, September 25, 2021, the school will once again open its virtual doors to interested new parents. The event will be held as a webinar and is primarily aimed at families in Thailand and abroad who are interested in the school's educational program and admission requirements from kindergarten to grade 12. Principal Christian Vogel, school heads and teacher and student representatives will lead through the program, which will conclude with a question and answer session.

We would be happy to welcome you at the event and also encourage you to share this announcement with friends and associates who may be interested. You can register through the school's homepage or via e-mail at events@ris-swiss-section.org.



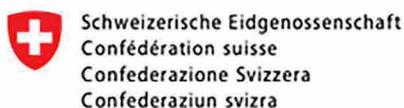
Public event calendar for the first semester of the school year 2021-22:

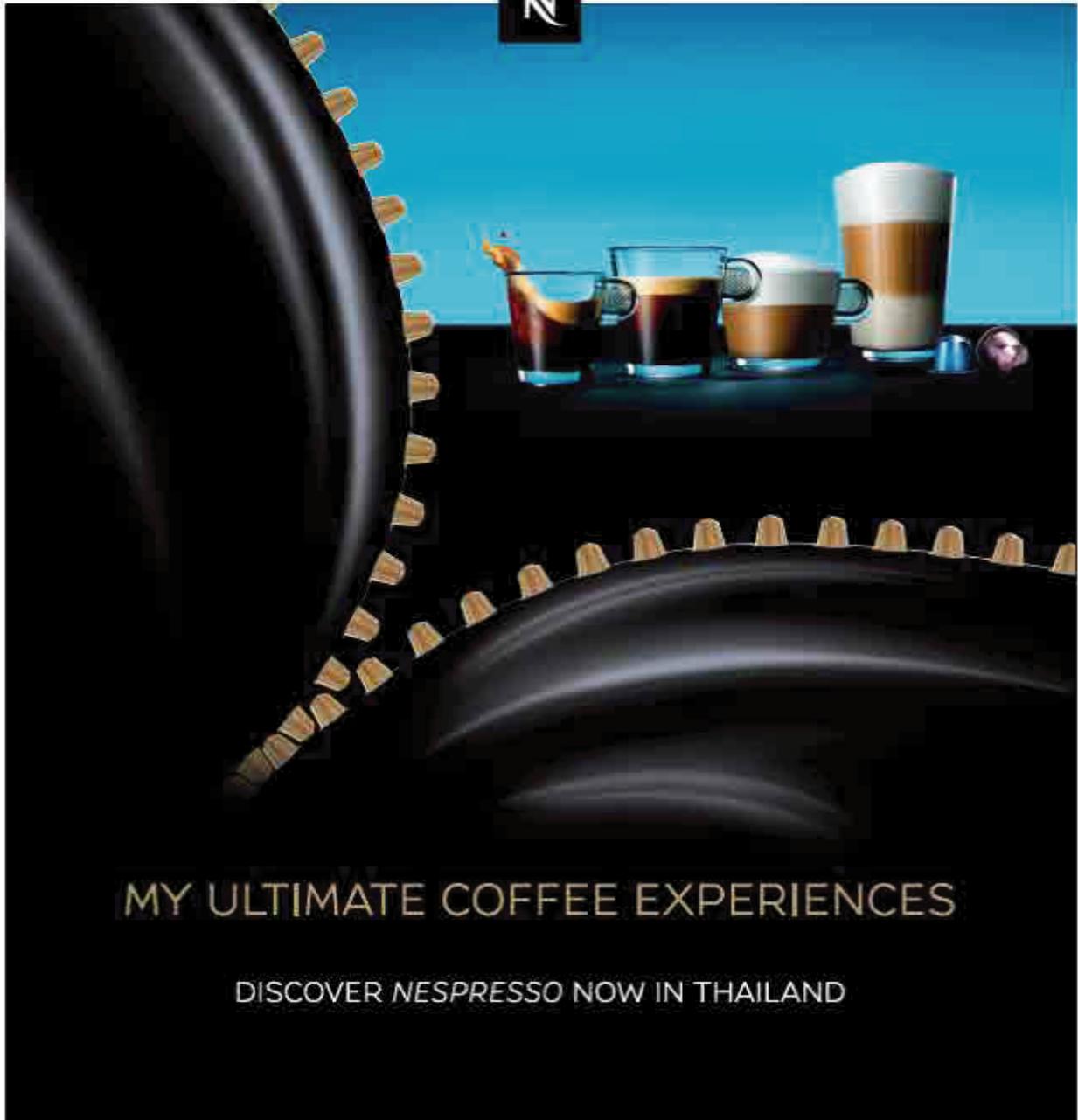
25.09.2021	Open House Info Session (13:00 – 15:00)
11. – 15.10.2021	Autumn Holidays
21.10.2021	SEA AGM (19:30 – 22:00)
02.11.2021	Open House Day (7:30 – 14:30)
12.11.2021	Lantern Parade (KG - Grade 3 - evening)
19.11.2021	Making Krathongs/Loy Krathong
16.12.2021	Celebration Christmas Party (from 13:00)
20.12.21 – 07.01.22	Christmas/Winter holidays

Please visit our website www.ris-swiss-section.org for more information about upcoming events.



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