

nav novartis angestellten verband
novartis employees association



— MIND your health



Contents

Editorial	5
Steffen Lang – President, Operations	
Manufacturing and delivery of pharmaceuticals during the coronavirus pandemic	6
Schweizerhalle site	
Time exerts its toll – a personal account	10
Inclusion & People Engagement Switzerland	
Focus on mental health	14
Membership	
Perspective of a cross-border NAV member	18
Joining NAV	
This is what the employees association offers you	19
Baselland Cantonal Parliament	
Regula Steinemann, Baselbiet's highest-ranking female politician, talks with the NAV	20
Novartis Career Center	
Coaching as a force for personal development	24
Inclusion & People Engagement Switzerland	
Support in life's different circumstances	26
SWICA	
Get back to professional life as soon as possible with the help of Care Management	28
arb – Basel Region Employees Association	
Successful elections to the Basel-Stadt Labor Tribunal	30
Membership offer	
Contest	32

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The reproduction of this publication and its pictures in any form is forbidden without the expressed written consent of the editorial team.

Erratum: The change of logo did not take place in 1957, as noted under the picture on page 5 of the last issue, but in 1997. The editors apologize for the error.

All articles can also be found at www.nav.ch



Editorial



Dear member

To coincide with the decision to focus on only two languages in our long-standing *info* magazine, the idea of giving our publication an entire design makeover also came up. The *info* magazine literally underwent a rejuvenation. The smart, yet elegant layout has given the publication an entirely fresh look.

Nothing has changed in terms of the high-caliber contributions within the magazine, however the pleasure gleaned from reading it is much greater. So? Do you like what you can see, feel and perhaps even smell? It's all encapsulated by the expression: (practically) every sense is also reading along!

The past two years have been shaped by the pandemic and its global impact which has left its mark on each and every one of us. Read the article penned by STEFFEN LANG, President, Operations, to find out what measures the company took in this crisis situation and how it also provided support – not least thanks to the tremendous efforts of its employees.

Unfortunately, the ongoing circumstances and uncertainties have put increasing pressure on the mental health of some people. The widely extolled topic of working from home not only brings advantages, but also carries the risk of slipping into isolation. “This has certainly been recognized, which is why Novartis is placing the issue of mental health first and foremost,” asserts JUDITH LEUENBERGER, Head of Inclusion & Employee Assistance at Novartis Switzerland. But it is not only in this field that Novartis is assuming responsibility for the health of its employees.

Nothing beats a healthy and solid employee network. Indeed, this very facet enabled the NAV to conduct an exclusive interview with REGULA STEINEMANN – Baselbiet's highest-ranking female politician.

You'll be able to find all this and much more in the spring issue of “INSIGHTS”; that's the name of our newly designed NAV magazine. We are delighted!

All the best and stay healthy.

Andrea Fedriga-Haegeli & Davide Lauditi
Co-Chairs NAV

Manufacturing and delivery of pharmaceuticals during the coronavirus pandemic

The spread of the coronavirus has had far-reaching consequences over the past two years. In addition to the direct health consequences for many of those affected worldwide, the pandemic has led to restrictions and consequential forced changes in many areas. The supply of everyday goods was also partially restricted, and delivery problems are still clearly visible in some branches of industry.



Steffen Lang
President, Operations

At Novartis, we provide patients in over 100 countries around the world with medicines that are either produced in one of our more than 50 production facilities or by our manufacturing partner companies. Looking back, we can now say that we were able to completely fulfill our important remit of supplying patients with medicines, even during the pandemic. This result was due to a number of important factors. First and foremost was the tremendous work carried out by our employees.

Key factors for our success

Compliance with stringent occupational safety standards at our production sites is a basic requirement for us to be able to produce pharmaceuticals. This became all the more important, since considerable uncertainty about the appropriate measures prevailed at the beginning of the pandemic. Always compliant with the official regulations that had to be followed in the various countries and regions, suitable protective measures were implemented that allowed the production of medicines to be maintained. In addition to the use of protective clothing and masks, personal contacts in companies were reduced and – where



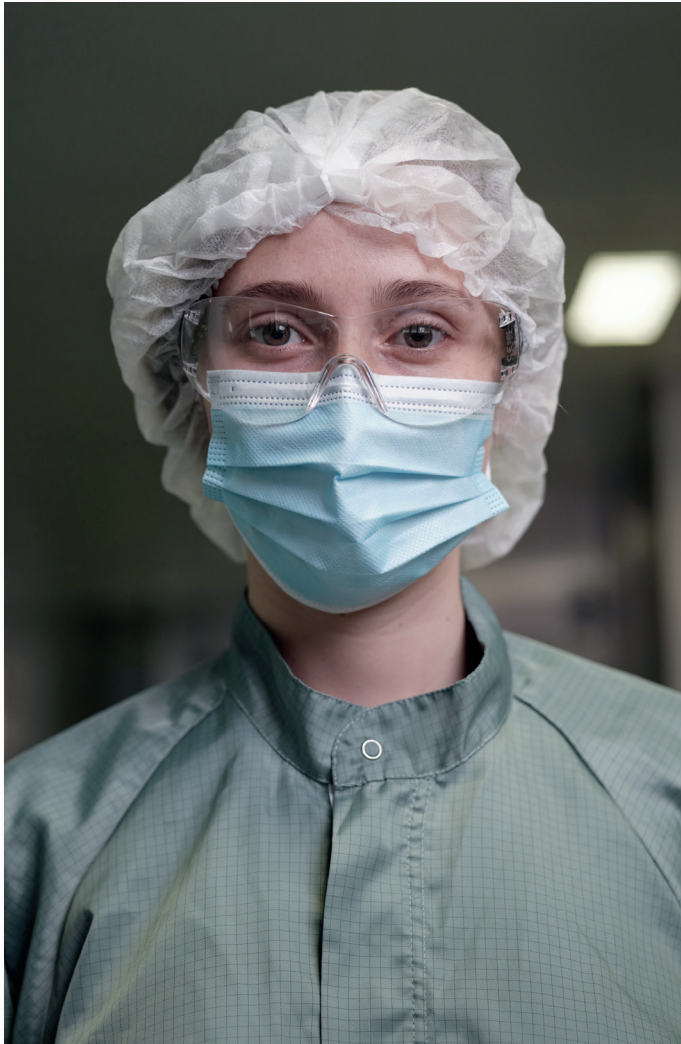
possible – some activities were also carried out from home. Thanks to such measures we were able to continue producing at almost every production site, even during times of lockdown. This was mainly due to the tremendous efforts of our employees in all areas of production, quality assurance and logistics. I wish to take this opportunity to once again express my great gratitude and my respect.

Over the past two years, there have also been repeated instances of regions or countries sealing off their borders to the movement of persons. On the one hand, this led to bottlenecks in many areas and, on the other hand, it also posed a challenge for our cross-border commuters working at our production sites in border regions. Thanks to the close cooperation with local authorities, this was usually able to be addressed very quickly, and good solutions were able to be found.

The flow of goods, both regionally and internationally, also came to a standstill at times. This also led to delays in some parts of our supply chain. Our employees working in logistics, however, always found expedient solutions in a timely manner, which is why any delays were usually kept at only a few days. This enabled us to maintain our high delivery reliability. Our in-country inventories also contributed to this. We typically retain around three months of stock for each of our products locally in each country. In this way, minor delays in delivery can be well cushioned. This stockpiling in countries has also proven itself to be a very valuable asset during the pandemic. Since the processing time from the start of production to the availability of the finished product often lasts several months in the manufacturing of pharmaceutical products, we also retain stocks of precursor materials and the intermediate stages of our products in our warehouses. This is also an important contribution to ensuring patient care.

The close cooperation with our suppliers of raw materials for production was also a key success factor. All of these companies have similarly had to cope with changed circumstances, yet still ensure that supplies to our manufacturing plants remained unaffected. With a few exceptions, this always worked out well and the stocks in our warehouses were sufficient. Bottlenecks, for example, occurred in the area of precursor materials that were also required for vaccine production worldwide. Even today, bottlenecks in the procurement of some such materials still remain. Nevertheless, we also managed to cope well with this situation through close communication with our suppliers. Our employees





working in planning and materials procurement are worthy of particular praise here.

Advances in the introduction of new manufacturing technologies, digitization and automation also contributed greatly to our ability to maintain our delivery capabilities. This progress has made a considerable contribution, both in the plants themselves, in planning and in the worldwide distribution of our products.

The special circumstances of the past two years have also triggered a great deal of cooperation and support between the production departments of the various pharmaceutical companies. In concrete terms, we were able to make an important contribution here with our production facilities and highly skilled employees to support global vaccine production. I am very proud of our employees who have managed to successfully introduce new manufacturing processes for such novel vaccines into our plants in record time and seamlessly continue to produce these critically important medicines on a large scale. Ultimately, we see ourselves as a company reimagining medicine with advanced therapy platforms, as part of our obligation to use our manufacturing capabilities to help support the supply of COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics worldwide. In addition to vaccine production, all the necessary preparations are currently underway to facilitate starting the manufacture of a new COVID-19 drug in Stein as quickly as possible.

Summary

In retrospect, the excellent interplay of an entire series of key factors has contributed to Novartis being able to uphold the supply of medicines to patients worldwide on a very high level, even during the ongoing pandemic. Special thanks must go to the employees at Novartis Technical Operations (NTO) who ultimately made all this possible.



SCHWEIZERHALLE SITE

Ciba-Geigy Schweizerhalle site, 1989

Time exerts its toll – a personal account

Roland Hirt, NAV Board Member, in conversation with Benny Niederberger

Benny Niederberger and his over 32 years of service at Ciba-Geigy and Novartis take us on a journey through time at the Schweizerhalle production site.



Benny Niederberger
NAV Board Member

When did you first become aware of the Schweizerhalle site?

BENNY NIEDERBERGER: On Saturday, November 1, 1986, at the tender age of 16, I was on a mission to purchase my first stereo system in Basel. As I alighted from the tram at Heuwaage, a pungent smell hit my nostrils. As I found out later that day, a major fire had broken out

in Schweizerhalle and my first thought was: that's a place where I shall never work!

But you must have had a change of heart at some point then, surely?

After my apprenticeship as a painter, I continued to work in the trade for a while until the winter of 1989/1990 when I happened to be working on a facade in the Dreispitz area. I stopped and told myself that there must be a more pleasant line of work than one that would have me exposed to the wind and cold continually. It was then that I applied to work at Ciba-Geigy in Schweizerhalle on the recommendation of a colleague who worked here. After I was offered a job there, I wanted to give it my best and find out if the work was a good fit for me, otherwise I would happily look for another job. And 32 years have passed since then!

When you look back, what has changed?

Everything. At that time, thousands of colleagues worked here at the plant in continuous shifts over a 24-hour period and there was always a bustle of activity, even at night. When I started my second vocational training as a chemical technologist here in the WSH in 1992, I was able to gain practical experience in all the buildings on site then. Be it in the field of additive production which took place in buildings WSH-2047, -2049, -2056, -2090 and -2094, or in the production of agricultural products in WSH-2007 and -2010. Even the dye production in WSH-2084 and -2042 were places where I served part of my training. Pharmaceutical products were also manufactured in WSH-2060 and -2112. After the completion of my training, I worked for a while in the WSH-2007 agricultural building as a chemical technologist in a semi-autonomous working group (even then, unbossed was something we were already familiar with).

Building WSH-2084, 2003



© Mathias Leemann, Novartis Archives

And then the merger took place. What was your experience of that?

At that time I was working a 6/4 shift schedule; I happened to be off work and was traveling to Engelberg for some skiing. I can remember the day well; it was February 29, 1996. We were on our way to Engelberg and heard the announcement of the merger on the radio. This was news that nobody had expected.

What was your first thought?

Have I just become a new Novartis employee, or who is my current employer? Since the new company would, by all accounts, focus on the core areas of pharmaceuticals and agricultural chemicals, it was clear to me that my employer would be Novartis from now on.

How did you feel after the announcement?

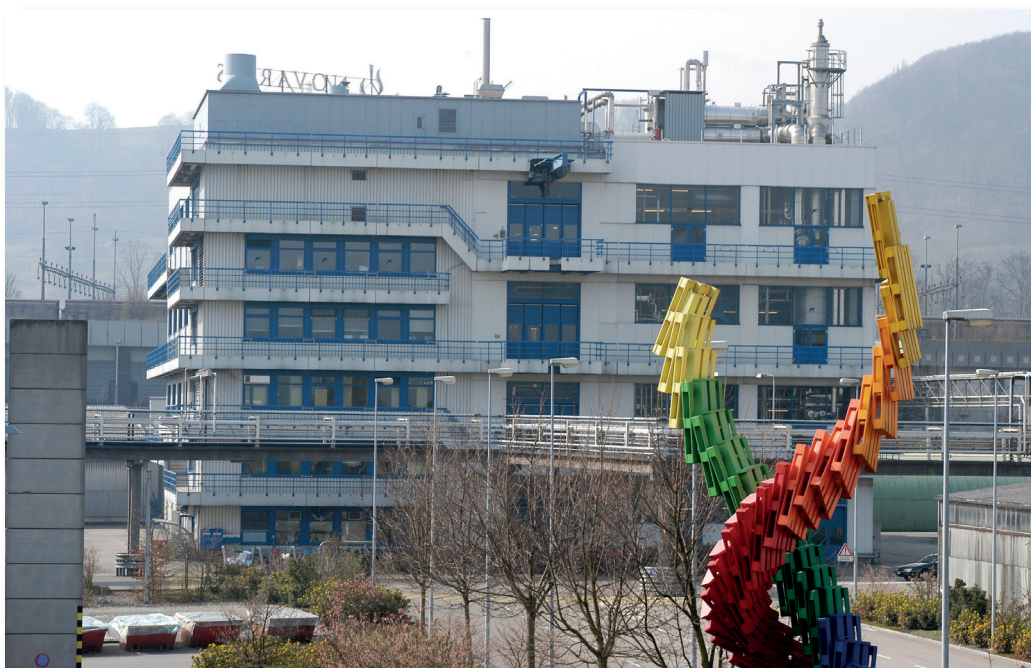
Initially I was astonished by this merger. The question naturally arose as to what would happen to the Schweizerhalle site and the various buildings that had previously belonged to Ciba-Geigy? Everyone also asked themselves who would belong to which company from now on, and what the future development of the company would look like.

Weren't those uncertain times for you?

Yes, actually, because a lot was changing and we didn't know in which direction our journey would be going. For example, mine went in the direction of pharmaceuticals, in the newly converted WSH-2084, in which Diovan® would be

Multipurpose building WSH-2060, approx. 2012





Building WSH-2112, 2003

manufactured for years to come. This change took place shortly before the agricultural chemicals unit merged into the newly created company of Syngenta. That was in November 2000.

What has changed since then?

Of the remaining three (!) production buildings owned by Novartis, only the WSH-2112 remains in use today. The other two i.e., WSH-2060 and -2084, have been sold to third party companies. Many of the other buildings that I had the privilege of becoming acquainted with here in Schweizerhalle during my early days have now been leveled to the ground, or taken over by other companies.

For example, the entire infrastructure, which has now become the responsibility of Getec Park.Swiss AG. In the past, all of the tasks, be they management, security, maintenance or others, were carried out by Novartis. However, these came to be increasingly outsourced over time.

Would you take the same path today, as you did 32 years ago?

Yes, I think I would. I wasn't only able to work in a wide variety of roles such as chemical technologist, supervisor, shift quality inspector, etc., but also become involved in the field of social partnership. For example, I was President of the GAV (collective labor agreement) Employee Representatives which in turn allowed me to take part in consultations that had a direct impact on the jobs of many colleagues at the Schweizerhalle site.

Thank you for your story, and all the best for the future!



Small scale production WSH-2112, 2015

Focus on mental health

Novartis prides itself on offering a diverse and inclusive working environment. During the past year, as part of its efforts to achieve this worldwide, the company has committed itself to further promoting equality and inclusivity for employees with a disability – be it visible or invisible. In addition to ensuring digital and physical accessibility and pursuing a proactive recruitment strategy, Novartis is paying particular attention to a subject that has become even more important in the last two years, because of the COVID-19 pandemic: mental health.

Tobias Meier

Inclusion & People Engagement Partner

A man in a wheelchair. A woman with a white stick. Or a child with Down's syndrome. When we think about disability, we most likely think mainly about that which is physically visible – but around 80% of people's impairments cannot be seen. Alongside chronic illnesses, mental illness accounts for the majority of these unseen disabilities.

"How are you?" is a question to which we normally just reply "Fine!", but it's not always true. Mental well-being is often hard to describe. Are having negative thoughts or constantly feeling stressed just part of a person's character or a sign of possible mental illness?

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health like this: "Mental health is a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community."

According to the Swiss Health Survey in 2017, almost a fifth of the population in Switzerland suffers from one or more types of mental illness. These can range from eating disorders and anxiety to depression. The majority of those affected are in employment. That's no surprise, because pressure at work is often the trigger for tremendous or even overwhelming mental stress. The COVID-19 pandemic, which has affected all our lives, can present employees with additional mental challenges, regardless of whether they are at their place of work or working from home.

However, this is a subject that is highly personal and sensitive. Do I really want to admit to myself that something is wrong? Should I talk to anyone about my mental health, just when I'm not feeling well? Furthermore, mental illness is still often stigmatized in our society and perceived as weakness. And to be honest, who wants to talk about their own weaknesses, let alone with their manager or a work colleague?

Looking behind the facade

“If we do talk about our health, then it’s usually about physical illness or more minor ailments,” says Judith Leuenberger, Head of Inclusion & Employee Assistance at Novartis Switzerland. Unfortunately, mental well-being is often not touched upon. “Yet it should be so important, because, after all, the mental aspect plays a major role in our health,” she says.

Since mental illness is so common in society, you are highly likely to come into contact with someone who is affected. Nevertheless, support and understanding for people suffering from mental problems are often lacking. In many cases, help comes along too late, or not at all.

Judith Leuenberger wants to encourage staff who are experiencing mental problems to talk to someone about them. “The sooner, the better. It’s quite normal for us not (always) to feel great mentally. That’s why it’s all the more important to flag it up early if something is going wrong, to reduce the risk of protracted mental illness.” She is aware that employees might be worried about potential consequences if they talk about their mental problems at work. “We as a company have to be quite clear about it and say: It’s OK for someone to have problems with their mental health. We are here for them and will support those affected as much as we can.” It is not a sign of weakness to admit that you are experiencing mental health problems. “That is an important first step, even if it can take a huge effort. And sometimes it can take someone around you to set the ball rolling,” says Judith Leuenberger.



Your managers and colleagues can help you

This is where the Novartis Energized for Life Swiss team comes in. Supported by Pro Mente Sana, a mental health foundation that Novartis has also worked with during the coronavirus pandemic, the team offers regular courses in “Mental Health First Aid” for any staff in Switzerland who are interested.

“These first aid courses enable participants to learn more about mental health problems and gain a better understanding of them. They learn how to spot mental health problems in other people at an early stage, offer them support and show them how to get professional help,” says Nicole Ziegler, Wellbeing Lead at Novartis Switzerland.

People experiencing mental health problems can find help and support within the organization, for example from the NOVARTIS COUNSELING SERVICE, whose staff can advise you and – if you are off work for a long time – also help with reintegration into the workplace (see the article on page 26). There are also a number of employee networks (Employee Resource Groups, ERGs* for short) which deal with physical disability and mental health and provide a platform for sharing experience.

The Energized for Life Swiss team has already trained nearly 300 people to become Mental Health First Aiders. What makes people sign up for the course is often something that has happened in a person’s private or professional life and has caused them to feel unable to help, says Nicole Ziegler. The feedback from participants is very positive:

“I have witnessed a few serious cases of (potential) burnouts or mental breakdowns. I am very pleased that Novartis is taking steps to identify that kind of situation and raise awareness of it.”

Elitsa Nikolova, Cluster Head of ERC European Clusters, Oncology and Mental Health First Aider

“The training has given me the confidence to know that I can help people who are experiencing mental health problems, by listening, asking the right questions and helping them to get medical support if they need it.”

Christine Huber, Senior Business Process Manager for Clinical Trial Supply Management, Technical Research & Development and Mental Health First Aider

“I can really only recommend the course to everyone. The more people are informed about mental health, the more we can do to help one another.”

Alina Baldini, Head P&O for P&O Customer Technologies & Services and Mental Health First Aider

“People working in my area can discuss their concerns with me first if they wish. In such a situation I would always encourage the person I’m talking with to seek help in overcoming their mental health problem.”

Raphaela Kutil, Research Scientist II, NIBR and Mental Health First Aider

During the last year, the Energized for Life Swiss team has also worked with Pro Mente Sana to introduce for the first time a half-day training course for managers on “Mental Health in the Workplace.” Other similar courses are already being planned for this year. “On this half-day training course, we want to raise awareness among participants of mental health in the workplace in general,” says Nicole Ziegler. Managers can play a key role in helping one of their employees to overcome a personal crisis, she says. She emphasizes that this course only gives an initial introduction to the subject of mental health in the organization. “So we recommend that everyone also takes the actual ‘First Aid for Mental Health’ course for more in-depth knowledge.”

On the right track

Judith Leuenberger would also like as many employees as possible to get trained as Mental Health First Aiders. Although there is now greater understanding of mental health in public perception, people experiencing mental health problems continue to be stigmatized. Overall, though, the Head of Inclusion & Employee Assistance at Novartis Switzerland thinks Novartis is on the right track in this regard. “I am very pleased that we as a company are paying so much attention to this very important subject. The more we learn about it, the better we can support one another and prevent mental illness.” After all, this aim is closely connected with the overriding goal of Novartis to improve and extend people’s lives, says Judith Leuenberger.

Internal mental health support services at Novartis

Novartis Counseling Service

Professional support from trained counselors aimed at solving professional and psychosocial problems. [go/beratungsstelle*](#) for more details. Direct contact: tel. +41 61 324 42 88.

Energized for Life

The global program takes a holistic approach and supports and promotes the mental, physical and social well-being of the employees. [go/efl*](#)
[go/eflSwitzerland*](#)
[go/howareyoufeeling*](#)

Employee Networks

DIVERSABILITY SUPPORT NETWORK (DSN)

Aims to ensure that colleagues with a visible or invisible disability feel supported and included.

MENTAL HEALTH RESTORATION (MEHR)

Services include providing resources and tools for improving the energy levels, satisfaction and emotional well-being of employees both at work and outside.

BE MINDFUL

Focuses on mindfulness and meditation to foster well-being.

* Access only possible for Novartis employees

Perspective of a cross-border NAV member



Mathieu Dietsch
Senior TMF Subject Matter Expert

After my studies in Documentation in Digital Environment at the University of Strasbourg, France, I worked at the INA (National Audiovisual Institute), a public institution with the aim of archiving French audiovisual heritage.

In 2011, I had the opportunity to join Novartis as an external employee in Document Management as archivist in the clinical trial field. When I started, Roland Hirt, who is also a board member of the NAV, took the time to familiarize me with our missions and introduced me to the drug discovery and clinical trial execution processes.

This was one of my first contacts with the pharma world, and it really helped me to connect the dots between my documentation expertise and the challenges of the pharma industry. Even though I was external, Roland took his time for me, which I truly appreciated.

In 2013, Novartis offered me a permanent position, and since then, I have had the opportunity to evolve and grow by supporting many health authority inspections and by being involved in the development of new tools for the management of documentation.

Later, I saw the commitment of Roland Hirt as a board member of the NAV. This made me realize the importance of the association and the benefits of membership, which is why I joined in summer 2021.

I appreciate how the NAV seeks the dialog with the management in all labor-law-related aspects, and I feel well represented by the association.

I have worked at Novartis in Switzerland since 2011, and I want to understand the entire framework of working here. I also believe cross-border associates and Swiss citizens share common interests.

There is a long historic relationship between Switzerland and France and the Alsace in particular, especially in the field of trade. As an employee from the border region, I feel truly thankful that I have this opportunity to work in Switzerland and with Novartis, where my skills are being recognized and appreciated.

I am glad that, despite the recent health crisis conditions, the “Morgestraich” has taken place, and I look forward to continuing building a community of associates who gather their ideas and energies.





nav novartis angestellten verband
novartis employees association



This is what the employees association offers you:

Your voice ✓

Making one's own voice heard more through the strength of the association

Your rights ✓

Labor law and social security insurance coverage

Your advantages ✓

Benefit from a wide range of discounts

Join us – **become a NAV member!**

Salutation	First name	Name
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Home address	Zip/City	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Telephone	Email	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Personnel number	Contract (IEA/CBA/Management)	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Date of birth	Correspondence language	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Internal address:	<input type="text"/>	
Type of membership (membership fee per year)		
<input type="radio"/> CHF 99.– Active members including labor law and social security legal protection*		
<input type="radio"/> CHF 99.– Retirees Plus including labor law and social security legal protection*		
<input type="radio"/> CHF 59.– Retirees including labor law and social security legal protection		
<input type="radio"/> CHF 39.– Retirees without labor law and social security legal protection		
* Including all benefits and services		
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Date and signature:	<input type="text"/>	

Fill in the registration form, sign it and send it to: NAV Office, WSJ-200.P.84 (Forum 1) or scan and send to nav.nav@novartis.com or apply online at www.nav.ch.

Regula Steinemann, Baselbiet's highest-ranking female politician, talks with the NAV

The Novartis Employees Association has for many years had a close partnership with the umbrella organization, the Employees Association for the region of Basel (ARB), for which Regula Steinemann works as a lawyer. In that role, she is available to give our members advice.

Our association has also benefited from the many invaluable expert articles about employment law that she has written in *info*.

However, our questions are not about the ARB – we want to find out more about Regula Steinemann, the President of Baselbiet's Cantonal Parliament.



Regula Steinemann

Director of the Basel Region Employees Association (ARB)

What were your reasons for going into politics? What motivated you and does it still do so today?

REGULA STEINEMANN: I grew up in a family that is interested in politics. My uncle was a member of the Baselbiet Cantonal Parliament for many years. However, I never felt as if I belonged in any one party, and it was only after I finished my training that by chance, through Dr. Hans Furer, who is Co-Director of the Employees Association for the Basel region, I came across the Green Liberal Party for Baselland (glp). The friendly people, the shared ideas and the feeling that I could do something for the community, motivated me to serve as a member of the Board for that party. I want to look after people, the environment and nature, and encourage others to do the same. It was quite by chance that I ended up in the Cantonal Parliament, because of our electoral system in the Baselbiet, whereby seats can be moved from one electoral district to another.

What were the main reasons why you put yourself up for election to become President of the Cantonal Parliament?

That was another happy coincidence: for a number of years, smaller political parties have had the opportunity to stand for President of the Cantonal Parliament. Unfortunately, at the last elections, both of my former colleagues in the Cantonal Parliament had fallen victim to the electoral system, that's to say, their seats got shunted into a different electoral district so they are no longer in the Cantonal Parliament. I got two new buddies in the Cantonal Parliament and I was the only one at the time who was eligible. I thought hard about it,

Baselland Cantonal Parliament Chamber



Cantonal Chancellery Basel-Landschaft

and talked to my family and my employer a lot before I agreed; it's a great honor to occupy that position and a unique opportunity – but of course, at the same time, it's very demanding; there is a great deal of traveling and you carry a heavy burden of responsibility. It was, and still is, very important to me that my young daughter doesn't lose out. When I received promises of support from various quarters, especially from my husband, my parents, Hans Furer and my party, I decided to go for it. In my work in politics so far, I have always emphasized how important I believe it is for the Cantonal Parliament to represent a cross-section of the population and for everyone to have the opportunity to take part. My political initiatives have always had a similar purpose, to do with reconciling not only work and family, but politics and family, too. So obviously holding this office enables me to put this into practice and perhaps be a role model for others.

In June 2021, you were elected to the highest office in the Baselbiet, President of the Cantonal Parliament. Even though that's now a few months ago, congratulations on getting that job. According to the media, you enjoyed a stunning victory, with 78 out of 90 possible votes!

Thank you very much! I was really delighted with that great result and the many congratulations I received.

Please briefly explain, for the political lay people among us, what are the main tasks of the Cantonal Parliament, how it fits into Switzerland's political structure and what your responsibilities as President are?

The Cantonal Parliament is the legislative body for the canton of Baselland, the regional equivalent of the Federal Parliament. It defines regional policies and is responsible for incorporating suggestions from the local population into policymaking. The Cantonal Parliament is supposed to represent the general population and act in its interests.

As President of the Cantonal Parliament, one has the great honor of representing the canton to the outside world; be that at important events, award ceremonies, anniversaries, etc. or by delivering messages of welcome. For example, if the Government is unable to do so, I visit people on their 100th birthday (which I regard as a very pleasant duty) and I gave a speech when the Baselland Sports Prize was presented, and so on and so forth... It's great fun and gives me a lot of pleasure. I also have the additional responsibility of leading the Parliament during its sessions.

Being in office during the pandemic has brought even more challenges than would arise under normal circumstances. How are you finding this period, and what are the main difficulties? How much faith do you have in the political decision makers who are superior even to you, and in the offices of state which bear the greatest burden of responsibility? As a representative of the law, do you see any divisions between the medical sciences? What positive findings and happenings will you take away from the pandemic?

Unfortunately, many of the events that had been planned could not take place because of coronavirus, and of course I regret that. Covid made debates in Parliament more difficult in various ways, and some hard decisions had to be made. After meeting in exile in Basel for over a year, we returned to the Parliament building after the summer recess in 2021, with masks and a strict safety protocol. Due to the rising case numbers, we came up with alternatives for future sessions at an early stage – but all this consumed our resources and took more time – and our decisions were sometimes criticized.

During the pandemic we missed out on face-to-face conversations, chatting outside of actual parliamentary sessions, over coffee or lunch and so on. That is the lifeblood of politics.

Regarding the decisions taken by the Federal Government in Bern and by the cantons, I would say that in my view they were correct and important, even if sometimes they were made a little too late. The scenario could have been quite dif-

Baselland Parliament



ferent – if you consider, for example, what went on in Italy or Alsace at the start of the pandemic, it's clear what could have happened here, and what people were presumably expecting. I don't want to, and can't really, criticize something in retrospect which at the time even I thought made sense. The pandemic has not only divided medical sciences: initially there was a great deal of solidarity among the population and with healthcare staff, and then came the long-awaited vaccine. However, this did not bring about the hoped-for defusing of the situation, but created a rift in the population which continues to this day, and I regret that. In the current situation, these difficulties are easing and everyone is regaining a certain level of freedom, and I value that very highly.

As well as being a lawyer and President of the Cantonal Parliament, you are also a family woman and a mother. How do you manage to reconcile all that – in other words, what does a working week in the Steinemann household look like?

For the Steinemann-Siegenthaler's, every week and every day is different – it calls for a lot of flexibility from everyone. And it's only thanks to the magnificent support from my family, especially my husband and my parents, and my employer, and because my friends and people at work are so understanding, that it's all possible, and I'm very grateful for that.

As a politician, a professional woman and a family woman with a young daughter, you certainly know what balancing your work and your family entails, and what challenges it brings. Where could politics and our society do even more to support young families?

One problem I have in particular is that, as I say, no two days or weeks look the same. Regular childcare, tied to certain days of the week, unfortunately does not meet the everyday needs of me and my family. It's hard for people working irregular hours to find suitable childcare that is also available at short notice. I am dependent on irregular but reliable childcare. I certainly notice that it's still unusual for a new mother who is already in a political position to keep doing it – it's not yet the norm. We need a rethink by society. It would have been easier for me if there had not been maternity leave as such but parental leave instead. I would have liked to be able to pursue my career or my parliamentary work on a few days without sacrificing my maternity leave. I have now launched a cantonal initiative to enable young mothers to continue with their political work even during their maternity leave, should they want to, without losing it. Furthermore, I have drawn up another motion which luckily also progressed from the Cantonal Parliament for further processing, whereby deputies could take over when needed or in the event of long absences – not only in the case of maternity leave, but including that. All this makes it easier for mothers and removes the pressure that makes them feel they have to step down from their role.

And if you ever need some downtime, to catch your breath, where or how do you recharge your batteries?

I must confess, that doesn't happen very often at the moment. A free Sunday, a lie-in, a relaxed breakfast with my family, playing with my daughter, meeting up with close friends, going to the zoo or the countryside – all those things bring me welcome distraction.

**Thank you, Regula, for your time and your willingness to answer our questions so openly.
Andrea Fedriga-Haegeli**

Coaching as a force for personal development

“Priceless” – this is how one client describes her experience at the Novartis Career Center (NCC). The NCC supports employees who are affected by restructuring. It prepares employees for the next step in the process through one-to-one coaching and workshops.



Adrienne Develey
Head Novartis Career Center

Refining and making changes to a business' focus are important measures that are necessary to meet the challenges of a constantly evolving market environment. Such realignments in focus are accompanied by changes and organizational restructurings that may in turn lead to the restructuring of employees.

During this challenging situation, affected employees are supported by two teams as part of the relevant social plan: the Job Brokering Team, which will help with internal job searches. (NAV Magazine reported on this in its last issue.) And the Novartis Career Center (NCC).

The NCC is a team comprising Novartis employees who are accredited as coaches and who are passionate about helping affected employees. It will support each individual according to their personal needs.

The employees affected will be assigned a coach based on their professional profile and their language preference – the NCC coaches in German, English, French and Italian. During a first informative discussion, the employee receives information about what coaching entails and, equally, what it doesn't entail. They are also told how confidentiality is governed (everything that is discussed is kept solely between the coach and coachee) and what the NCC offers.

If the personal chemistry is right, the coaching begins. Certain clients will only need assistance in drafting and finalizing their CV. Others will need to work on their positioning. Who am I? What are my skills and abilities? My strengths? Achievements? Which values are important to me? How can I best contribute in a new workplace? What am I seeking?

These and similar questions are addressed together to give the coachee clarity on how to proceed. Thanks to

“For me, the greatest benefit of this coaching was finding tools that would help me. It is akin to being a precious stone that is cut and polished with various tools until the diamond is shaped such that it, or I, can shine in my own light.”

NCC client

“The coaching took place at the perfect time. ... At a time when one has many questions. Having the opportunity to be supported by such a professional and certified coach within the company is fantastic.”

NCC client

“After attending the workshops and being able to experience this coaching, I ask myself why Novartis doesn’t make such coaching available to all employees.”

NCC client

“I really appreciated the coaching and the learning curriculum as it helped me to establish the basics. After 27 years at Novartis, I didn’t have an updated resume, nor a good idea of what a good one should look like, or how to use social media like LinkedIn for job hunting and networking. I received the best and outstanding support from my coach. His passion for his work and his extensive knowledge made every session with him an (almost weekly) highlight. We had a very positive relationship and I benefited greatly from his challenging style and constructive feedback. He was a good listener and always remained flexible when the need arose to discuss something or ask for advice at short notice.”

NCC client

this shared reflection, the coachee will frequently envision and find completely new career pathways.

Targeted training workshops also help to prepare for the internal and external job market. What is particularly appreciated at these workshops is the exchanges with affected employees and the mutual feedback. Working in small groups, we will cover topics such as how best to deal with change, what can be done against self-limiting beliefs, what impactful personal branding and a professional LinkedIn profile look like. Together, we will prepare job interviews and give pointers on how best to present yourself either in person or virtually. More and more introductory interviews are being held via so-called video interviewing platforms. Our clients can also prepare themselves for situations like these.

Each of us will react differently to change. Some of those affected will see it as an opportunity to make a dream come true. Others will take longer to accept the situation. Ultimately, we often find that, because of the imposed change and thanks to the coaching, the employees affected are pushed to dare something new, to change their career paths, to achieve a promotion or to find a job in a new industry or in a new role. Personal development, supported by Novartis, also helps with the process of new personal direction finding.

The NCC also supports those who have to carry out and oversee a restructuring. Working together with supervisors and colleagues from the human resources section, we work out how the affected employees should be looked after and treated.

Further detailed information is available on the Novartis Career Center website at [go/careercenter](https://www.novartis.com/go/careercenter)*

More voices from our clients can be heard on the Novartis Video Channel Stream at [Watch “About the Novartis Career Center” | Microsoft Stream](#)*

* Access only possible for Novartis employees

Support in life's different circumstances

The in-house Novartis Counseling Service provides help and advice to employees who are going through a challenging phase of life and works with them to find solutions.

Tobias Meier

Inclusion & People Engagement Partner

A conflict at work. Personal or family challenges. A financial emergency. Assistance coordination in matters relating to dependency and addiction. The task portfolio of the Novartis Counseling Service is comprehensive and reflects the obstacles and pitfalls people can face in the course of their lives.

The team consists of four internal and five external consultants, a care manager and two administrative assistants. Free advice from the counseling service is available to all current Novartis employees at the Basel, Schweizerhalle and Stein sites. The service can be used up to seven times during working hours. The other Swiss locations are supported by external partners.

“Appreciation, respect and impartiality form the basis of our professional advice. Everything we discuss remains totally confidential”, explains consultant Marija Ramljak. According to the trained social worker, employees also have the option of exchanging ideas with an external consultant either within or outside of company premises, if they wish. “Our experience shows that a consultation in a confidential atmosphere can make a big difference”, asserts Marija Ramljak. “In doing so, one principle also applies to us: the sooner people get in touch, the better we can support them in finding a solution.”

Stress management and psychological resilience at the forefront

Dealing with high-pressure situations and the deliberate separation of professional and private life all have a direct influence on one's own well-being. In a fast-moving society which is being impacted by additional challenges from a pandemic that has lasted for almost two years, such skills become even more important. The Novartis Counseling Service Team has addressed these topics and had already developed a STRESS RESILIENCE EXCHANGE GROUP prior to the onset of COVID. This entails employees meeting up every two weeks in groups of maximally six to eight people, under the guidance of an internal adviser. They discuss ways of coping with stress and strengthening one's own mental resilience.

“The exchange group is primarily aimed at employees who are experiencing health or psychosocial challenges due to an imbalance between work, family and leisure time or are basically interested in the topic”, states Marija Ramljak. Participation necessitates a personal preliminary talk with a counselor regarding the content and organization of the group's meetings. Interested employees can find further information about the stress resilience exchange group on the SharePoint page [go/beratungsstelle](#).*

Care Management – help in getting back to work

Despite precautionary measures and existing preventive services, longer absences by employees cannot be ruled out. The teams at the



Novartis Counseling Service and also at SWICA will support those affected and their supervisors in reintegrating absent employees back into working life, whether due to a long-term illness or an accident. “We are heavily involved in the care management process that Novartis has set up in partnership with SWICA,” affirms Novartis Care Manager, Anita Guthauser. Employees who are absent for more than 30 days can, if they so desire, take advantage of the professional support of a care manager. The application for this is submitted by the responsible People Partner after the employee has given their consent. The employee is then first contacted by the SWICA Care Manager (for more information, see the article on page 28). “Those affected can then decide whether they wish to continue to receive support from the SWICA Care Manager or from an employee of the in-house Novartis Counseling Service during their reintegration,” explains Anita Guthauser. “We, together with the respective People Partner and supervisor, assist affected employees in making their way back to the working world.” During this process, they will work closely with other persons such as the attending doctor, psychologist or the occupational doctor as well as with the social security funds and work out solutions for a successful and sustainable reintegration together with the employee in regular meetings, she states.

Counseling Service Team

For Anita Guthauser, it is important to emphasize that employees should take sufficient time to fully recover. “Longer absences are difficult, but at Novartis we have a well-established process for reintegration. The colleagues affected need to take the necessary time for this, and carefully plan their return to work together with all the parties involved.” As a healthcare company in particular, the well-being of its employees assumes the highest priority, she emphasizes.

Accordingly, the entire Novartis Counseling Service Team will also continue to support employees in life’s various circumstances by finding solutions to work-related and psychosocial challenges or, in the best case, by preventing these entirely.

Contact information

Initial contact: tel. +41 61 324 42 88
Email: counseling.service@novartis.com
[go/beratungsstelle*](#)

* Access only possible for Novartis employees

Get back to professional life as soon as possible with the help of SWICA Care Management

Getting back to work after a long illness or an accident often poses questions. Care managers can advise affected employees and network them with internal and external partners.

The name tells you what SWICA Care Management does: it provides care. Not in the sense of medical care or direct provision of medical treatments, but in terms of mediating and coordinating appropriate offers and measures.

With health insurers such as SWICA, which insure companies for daily sickness benefits, care or case management is an important part of the support offered. The care managers work systemically, i.e., they network employees who are ill over a long period of time, or suffer from the consequences of an accident, with all partners who are important for a professional reintegration – medical providers, social insurance companies such as Disability Insurance, and other advice centers in the social and reintegration areas. They also coordinate the necessary steps with the partners in the company (supervisors, HR, company doctors, pension fund) and ensure the flow of information.

The goal is to get people back to work

Illness or accident-related rehabilitation over several months is very stressful. On the one hand, there are the symptoms associated with the event: pain, weakness, loss of mobility. People who are absent for a long time are also worried about their work – how will it get done, and will colleagues be overburdened? Last but not least, employees who are sick or have had an accident miss their daily work. Because having a job not only gives security and structure, but also brings fulfillment, appreciation and meaning, and is therefore important for psychological well-being. For this reason, sick employees usually want to get well as quickly as possible and return to their workplace.

“At Novartis, the motivation to return to work is usually very high,” says Philippe Walker, Head of SWICA Care Management at Novartis. He suspects that the dynamic international environment has a very



motivating effect and strengthens the willingness to work. At the same time, however, he also emphasizes that many of the expats far away from home have fewer interfaces to other areas of life and so would define themselves through their job to a greater extent.

Advice and support on a voluntary basis

Philippe Walker and his team advise and support Novartis employees who are sick or have had an accident, who are registered by their P&O partners with their consent and who want to be supported by SWICA Care Management in the healing and reintegration process. "Getting support from Care Management is strictly voluntary, but not non-binding. The motivation to work together in a solution and resource-oriented manner and to actively participate is essential for a successful process."

In cases where it is not possible to return to the previous job after illness or an accident – for example, because the person concerned has physical limitations that exclude the former occupation, or because certain factors would be psychologically stressful – the care managers point the way to alternative reintegration options or follow-up solutions within the scope of their means; they often do this in cooperation with the Disability Insurance offices concerned.

For questions and clarifications about SWICA Care Management:
phone +41 61 270 67 25 or
email philippe.walker@swica.ch.



Successful elections to the Basel-Stadt Labor Tribunal – NAV Board Member newly elected

Every five years, the Government Council elects arbitrators to sit on the industrial arbitration tribunal. It is important for every association – including for the NAV – to build up a broad network of contacts outside the company in order to be able to represent the interests of members and employees in various committees and panels.



Hans Furer

Director of the Basel Region Employees Association (ARB)

Important elections

The Basel-Stadt Government Council elected all five candidates from the Basel Region Employees' Association (ARB) to sit on the Basel-Stadt Industrial Arbitration Tribunal for the 2022–2027 election period. The ARB is the umbrella organization at a regional level for the NAV.

In addition to the board member Yvonne Tanner, Urs Meister and Daniel Linder – all arbitrators with long-standing experience who are also members of the NAV – as well as Thomas Fuchs and Roland Schleier were re-elected. The ARB delegation accordingly comprises five persons.

In the canton of Basel-Stadt, employment disputes up to a dispute value of CHF 30,000 are ruled upon by a three-arbiter panel. The panel consists of the president and two lay arbitrators. These comprise one employer and one employee representative.

Life Science Group has three Novartis/ex-Novartis representatives

The tribunal consists of six groups, with the chemicals industry (the terminology is somewhat outdated, now termed Life Sciences) represented in Group 3. Three of the five arbitrators are members of the Novartis Employees Association.



Basel-Stadt Civil Court

This honorable role is also a personal challenge for all those elected and we wish Yvonne Tanner as a new member and Urs Meister, Daniel Linder and Thomas Fuchs all the best in this group.

It is important to note that so far, fortunately, extremely few cases concerning the two large corporations Roche and Novartis have had to be ruled upon, as their company policy is to resolve all employment disputes internally.

In addition to sitting in the Chemicals Industry Group, Daniel Linder is an arbitrator in the Hospitality Industry Group and Roland Schleier (Construction Management Association) is an arbitrator in the Construction Group.

ARB benefits from a wide contact network

The Basel Region Employees Association (ARB) was not only able to delegate arbitrators to sit on the Industrial Arbitration Tribunal, it is also represented in the Tripartite Commissions of Basel-Stadt and Basel-Landschaft, on the Sounding Board for Equal Opportunities in Basel-Landschaft, in the Commission for Child Allowances in Basel-Stadt and in the decision-making committee of the Basel Social Award.

This wide range of engagement is possible because the Basel Region Employees Association (ARB) is active across all branches of industry and is a strong partner for employees in the cantons.



The lucky winners of the “25 years of Novartis – 250 years of innovation” contest in our last magazine were:

Angela Oberrieder, Saint-Louis
Richard Haefeli, Nunningen
Werner Kilcher, Oberwil

Contest

After having read this magazine, we invite you to answer the following three contest questions on the subject of “health.”

3x 2 day tickets to the “sole uno” wellness world in Rheinfelden will be drawn from the cor-

rect entries received – with a little luck, you will soon be able to immerse yourself in this diverse bathing and sauna complex and enjoy some beneficial hours.

Contest questions

Submission deadline: 31 May 2022

First name

Name

Home address

Zip/city

1. Which organization has issued a definition of mental health?

- UNO
- WHO
- Novartis

2. What is the name given to the assistance for reintegration into the workplace?

- Care Team
- Care Management
- Mental Management

3. What does the abbreviation NCC stand for?

- Novartis Curriculum Center
- Novartis Care Center
- Novartis Career Center

Send your answers by post to: NAV Office, Contest, Novartis Campus, Forum 1, WSJ-200.P.84 / P.O. Box, 4002 Basel or scan and send to [nav.nav\(at\)novartis.com](mailto:nav.nav(at)novartis.com)

All members of the Novartis Employees Association NAV are eligible to participate (except members of the NAV board). The winners will be notified in writing. There will be no correspondence regarding the contest. Prizes will not be paid out in cash. There is no legal recourse.