



Swiss Enlargement Contribution

Context – Activities – Results
Annual Report 2015



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

Title image: Left: Since asbestos sheets erode over time, there is a risk that fibres and dust can be released and be accidentally inhaled by house occupants. For this reason, Poland would like to dispose of materials contaminated with asbestos by 2032. With the help of three Swiss-supported projects, 67,500 tons of asbestos were correctly disposed of by the end of 2015. © SECO; Right: The project «Be guided by your abilities, forget your limitations» is aimed at Romanian people with physical disabilities. The enlargement contribution promotes the exchange of experience between the Motivation Romania Foundation and the Swiss Paraplegic Foundation (SPS). The aim is to enable people with a disability to have improved integration options in the world of employment and to reduce social discrimination against this population group. 120 therapists have been trained specifically to support people with a disability in this way. © SDC

Dear readers,

Žan is 14 years old and would like to be a photographer. His wish for the future is that people do not destroy the nature in Slovenia. Therefore, together with other young people, he has been trained as an “Energy Manager” in his school. He learned more about the subject of renewable energy and energy efficiency and now makes his fellow students aware of these issues. This training programme has been supported by the enlargement contribution. In addition, thanks to Switzerland, Žan’s school is now heated with biomass instead of oil and has been refurbished to be energy efficient.

This example shows three things. Firstly: the enlargement contribution is beginning to bear fruit. It is good to see how the projects are being completed and results achieved. Secondly: with the implementation of the projects, cooperation with Switzerland in the supported EU countries has also become more visible and our country shown in a positive light. It

was also possible to apply Swiss specialist knowledge to energy projects in Slovenia through study trips and through the supply of heat pumps. This visibility brings us many benefits, both politically and economically. Thirdly: the energy project in Slovenia precisely meets the sense and spirit of the enlargement contribution. Thanks to the switch to biomass and the renovation of school buildings, the heating costs have fallen by around 50%. Through these and a variety of other projects, Switzerland also helps to reduce social and economic disparities between the partner countries. Switzerland thus also makes its contribution to improved security, stability and prosperity in Europe.

This is just one of many examples used by SDC and SECO to illustrate the results of the enlargement contribution in this annual report. We hope you enjoy reading it.

Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch



State Secretary
SECO Director

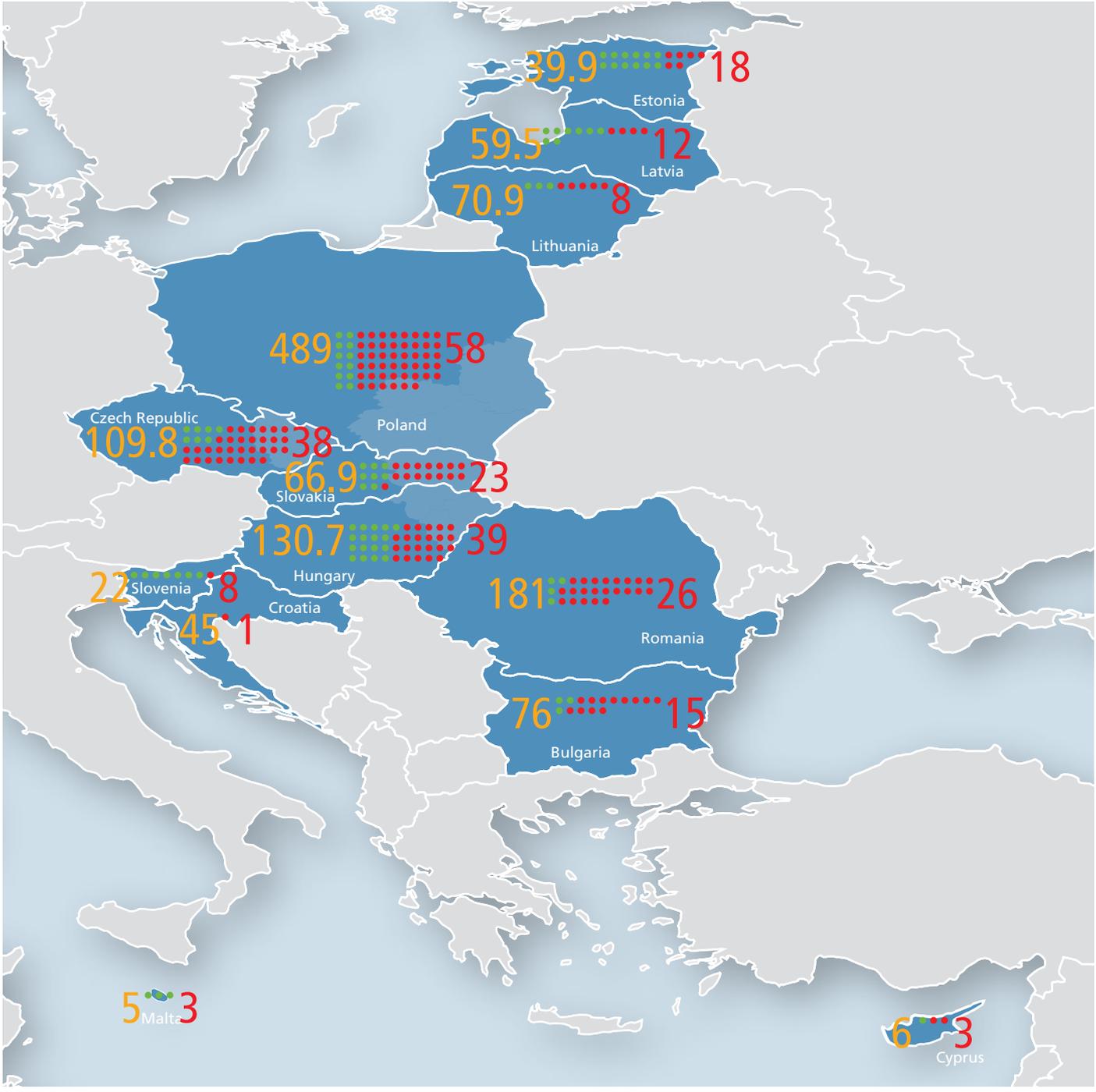


Manuel Sager



Ambassador
SDC Director





- Contribution in million CHF
- Number of projects and thematic funds
- Completed projects

Overview

With its Swiss contribution of a total of CHF 1.302 billion, Switzerland supports projects in those countries that have joined the EU since 2004 for the purpose of reducing the economic and social disparities within the enlarged EU. Since 2007, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia have benefited from Switzerland's funding of specific projects for a total value of CHF 1 billion. The implementation period for these countries will end in 2017 and all projects must be completed by then. In 2009, the Swiss enlargement contribution was increased by an additional CHF 257 million for Bulgaria and Romania, which joined the EU in 2007. The implementation of these projects will run until December 2019. And in the latest addition to the contribution, Switzerland is providing a further CHF 45 million in support for Croatia, which became the 28th EU member state on 1 July 2013. The framework agreement with Croatia was signed in June 2015. The projects with Croatia should be committed by the end of May 2017 and completed by the middle of 2024.

The enlargement contribution is based on the 2006 plebiscite, in which Swiss voters approved the Federal Act on Cooperation with the States of Eastern Europe, thus affirming their intention to contribute to reducing the economic and social disparities within the enlarged EU. The enlargement contribution

is a gesture of Switzerland's sense of solidarity and shared responsibility. But it is also in Switzerland's own interests. Numerous partnerships are developed through the projects. Through the cooperation, Switzerland consolidates relationships not only with the new EU member states, but also with the EU as a whole. The enlargement contribution is an important instrument in Swiss European policy and reinforces the image of Switzerland. This in turn also increases the opportunities for Swiss companies with regard to public tenders in the EU. An additional goal is to contribute to climate protection through the projects.

Switzerland decides autonomously on the use of the enlargement contribution funds and negotiates directly with the partner states on which projects to support. As a rule, at least 15% of the project costs are borne by the project partners. The enlargement contribution is administered jointly by the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and their offices in Warsaw, Riga, Prague, Bratislava, Budapest, Bucharest, and Sofia. Employees in these offices are familiar with local conditions and are in direct contact with the relevant authorities. This ensures an optimum investment. If irregularities are suspected, Switzerland can stop payments and request a refund of illegally paid contributions.

The enlargement contribution in figures:

Approximately 300 projects approved	100% of the project's budget for the EU-10 and for Bulgaria and Romania has been committed
5 project objectives: promoting economic growth and improving working conditions; improving social security; protecting the environment; improving public safety and security; strengthening civil society	13 partner countries: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Cyprus, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia
CHF 1.302 billion contributed to reduce economic and social disparities in Europe	CHF 110 million of orders and contributions to Swiss companies, universities and other institutions from the enlargement contribution

Milestones 2015

Croatia: Bilateral Framework Agreement signed

On 30 June 2015 Switzerland and Croatia signed a bilateral framework agreement regulating the implementation of Switzerland's CHF 45 million enlargement contribution to Croatia. The framework agreement sets out the objectives and size of the contribution as well as the most important implementation provisions. With the signing of the agreement, Switzerland has formally approved project outlines that were previously proposed by Croatia and discussed by the two countries. The Croatian partners will now develop the project outlines further. Switzerland must give its final approval for all projects in Croatia by May 2017 at the latest.

Swiss expertise will help strengthen Croatia as a centre for research and improve its international connections. Switzerland is financing the establishment of 15 university research partnerships. Swiss knowhow and financial support is helping to modernise the Croatian vocational education and training (VET) system to adapt courses to changing economic needs. These projects will promote economic growth and improve working conditions in Croatia. In addition, Switzerland supports measures to protect the environment in the Gorski Kotar region in north-west Croatia. The construction and expansion of waste water treatment systems protects the ecology of important bodies of water. The simultaneous renovation of existing drinking water systems improves the quality of life in the region. Both measures also promote sustainable growth of the regional economy. Furthermore, the consequences of the Yugoslav Wars in the 1990s are still felt in many places. Together with Croatia, Switzerland intends to continue the process of demining and integrating the victims of landmines in society and the job market. Switzerland is also financing projects to strengthen civil society and promote partnerships between Swiss and local institutions through two funds.



A Croatian delegation visited several Swiss vocational schools and companies from a wide range of industries to get an overview of the Swiss dual vocational training system. © SDC



A Swiss expert inspects the existing drinking water reservoir in the Croatian district of Fužine which was built in 1960. © SECO

Malta: Completion of the projects

Malta is the first country where the programme of the Swiss contribution programme has been completed. The two projects have met their targets and can be assessed as very good in terms of their impact and sustainability:

› Since the installation of the tomograph in the „Mater Dei“ public hospital at the beginning of 2013, approximately 10,000 scans have been carried out. The PET/CT scanner (Positron emission tomography/X-ray computed tomography) facilitates early and precise cancer diagnosis, which offers improved treatment of the disease and thus a better quality of life for patients. In Malta, this technology has only been available in private clinics or patients had to travel abroad. Both of these options were unaffordable to many Maltese people. Maltese radiologists have enhanced their knowledge of the PET/CT scanner thanks to the transfer of knowledge and experience with the Oncology Institute of Southern Switzerland (IOSI), of the regional hospital in Bellinzona. Switzerland co-funded the purchase of the PET/CT scanner in Malta with a contribution of CHF 2.79 million, thus substantially improving cancer diagnosis for the Maltese people. Now, following the completion of the project, maintenance and personnel costs will be taken over in full by Malta's public health system.

› Switzerland and Malta have maintained a long-standing partnership to promote peace and stability in the Mediterranean region. They jointly founded the MEDAC in 1990. Swiss support for the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC) has strengthened Malta's role as a mediator and bridge-builder between Europe and North Africa. Thanks to the availability of scholarships, in the period between 2010 and 2014, 60 young

diplomats from North Africa and the Middle East have acquired important knowledge about human rights, democracy and governance through a master's degree programme. Establishing the alumni network encourages contact between the academy graduates and with it collaboration between the Mediterranean countries. The Swiss professorial chair at the academy has strengthened the partnership between Switzerland and Malta, and Swiss visiting lecturers have had the opportunity to teach at the MEDAC. Switzerland provided financial support to the MEDAC of CHF 1.9 million from Switzerland's EU-enlargement contribution. Switzerland and Malta will continue to work together now that the project is over.



60 young diplomats from North Africa and the Middle East deepened their knowledge about human rights, governance and democracy with a master's degree at the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC). © SDC

Project goals

The enlargement contribution helps to reduce economic and social disparities. Each project follows one of the five project objectives:

- › Promoting economic growth and improving working conditions
- › Improving social security
- › Protecting the environment
- › Improving public safety and security
- › Strengthening civil society

For each project, an individual project agreement sets forth measurable results that are expected to be achieved. Primary responsibility for making certain that tasks are performed and the project goals achieved lies with the partner countries. The partner countries report to Switzerland on a regular basis concerning the progress made on the various projects and compliance with the specified indicators. The project objectives are described in more detail and illustrated with examples on the following pages.

Successful poster campaign in Lithuania

To increase the visibility of the enlargement contribution, a poster campaign was launched in Lithuania in the summer of 2015. In response, the Swiss Embassy in Riga received the following e-mail: „Good day, I saw the posters in Vilnius which state that Switzerland has supported Lithuania with around CHF 70 million. Although I do not profit directly from this, as a Lithuanian citizen I would like to thank you for this generous support. Kind regards, Justas“. © Finance Ministry Lithuania



© Ministry of Finance Lithuania

Promoting economic growth and improving working conditions

Switzerland provides CHF 333 million to support projects in partner countries that promote economic growth and improve working conditions. This is also in Switzerland's interest as the Swiss export industry profits from developing the Eastern European growth markets and the increasing spending power in the partner countries.

The projects are extremely varied and range from supporting structurally weak regions in South-East Poland and the implementation of a dual vocational training system in Slovakia to scholarships for young scientists from the new EU member states. The en-

largement contribution also finances small company loans and thus contributes to the creation and preservation of numerous jobs. It also strengthens companies' social responsibility and tourism in structurally weak regions. Moreover, it improves the application of international financial reporting and auditing standards, which increases investors' willingness to invest and helps to prevent financial crimes.

The enlargement contribution in figures:

Over **500** doctoral and post-doctoral students were able to conduct research in Switzerland

Around **15,000** prospective Polish entrepreneurs have knowledge of setting up and managing a business thanks to their participation in training courses

186 highly qualified Hungarian workers have a job thanks to a risk capital fund

102 Romanian companies received secured loans to renew or expand their production capacities

156 Polish SMEs implemented specific actions to promote sustainable and social business management

Over **10,000** employees of authorities and associations in five partner countries have knowledge of international standards for auditing and financial accounting thanks to training courses

Sciex research programme comes to an end

Thanks to the grant programme Sciex (Scientific Exchange Programme between the New Member States and Switzerland), over 500 doctoral and post-doctoral students were able to complete a temporary research in Switzerland and progress their research work. Experience in different research institutes, including experience abroad, is often necessary for an academic career. A research period develops both the individual competence of the researcher and also the academic exchanges and relationships that outlast the projects. This means that new research approaches can be developed. However, many young academics from the new EU member states are often excluded from this as the costs are too high. The Sciex programme has made an important contribution to developing research in the countries involved. In doing this, Switzerland used its strengths in the ed-

ucation and research sector and, at the same time, consolidated contact with the academic networks in the new EU member states. Switzerland provided CHF 46.8 million to support the programme in the following countries: Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Czech Republic and Hungary. The Rector's Conference of the Swiss Universities (swissuniversities) was responsible for the programme coordination.



Post-doctoral researcher Magdalena Rowinska-Zyrek from Poland completed a research placement at the University of Zurich in the field of bioinorganic chemistry. Through this placement she was able to broaden her research and learn new techniques that are useful for her current work in Poland at the Wroclaw University of Technology. © Magdalena Rowinska-Zyrek

Improving social security

Around CHF 180 million is being invested in a wide range of social security measures. The focus is on old and ill people, as well as youth welfare. The projects focus on five main areas – basic health services, hospital upgrades, prevention, social services for specific target groups and various social services such as im-

proving medical emergency services and facilitating access to schools in rural areas. In doing this, Switzerland provided its specialist knowledge.

The enlargement contribution in figures:

8,000 Roma children and young people in Slovakia benefit from access to community centres offering extra tuition and advice on health and financial problems

110 school buses transport over 7,000 children from 59 districts in Latvia and facilitate their access to education

350 elderly persons enjoy the service of outpatient care in 4 communities in the Wraza District of Bulgaria. 8 of the newly trained carers came from Roma families.

814,000 people in Poland took part in 16 regional and 4,921 local prevention events on the themes of alcohol and tobacco

86 children without parental care in Estonia have moved into 13 new family-like housing units where they are under the care of social workers

Each month, **2,000** citizens of Hungary benefit from support by health specialists

Home nursing service in Bulgaria regulated by law

A homecare system based on the proven Swiss Spitex model improves the quality of life for chronically sick or disabled elderly people in Bulgaria, including members of the Roma population. In four districts of the Wraza region, 350 elderly people are treated and cared for at home, which gives them a certain degree of independence. In Bulgaria, the population is ageing while young people are increasingly emigrating or moving to larger cities. As a result, many older people are increasingly isolated. The project is run by the Swiss Red Cross and the Bulgarian Red Cross.

On 9 September 2015, the Bulgarian Parliament approved the introduction of care at home in the Health Act. The new service will be financed through health insurance and other health budgets. As part of the project, the Swiss Red Cross and the Bulgarian

Red Cross have made suggestions and recommendations and thus made an important contribution to the statutory basis for home nursing service. In addition, the profession of home nurse has been officially recognised and defined.

Lyubomir Tzenov is 78 years old and comes from the town of Vratza in Bulgaria. He has been on his own for a long time. In order to receive medical care, it was necessary for him to see a doctor or go to hospital. Thanks to the home nursing service, he can again lead a more independent life. Home nursing services costs less than care in a hospital and relieves the pressure on family members. © SDC



Protecting the environment

Around CHF 479 million of the Swiss contribution is being invested in environmental protection projects. These include infrastructure projects which promote public transport, drinking water supply, wastewater treatment, energy efficiency, the use of renewable energies, the disposal of hazardous waste and environmental monitoring. These projects not only contribute to the protection of the environment, but also reduce health risks to humans, improve the living

conditions of the population and promote economic development. In addition to these infrastructure projects, Switzerland is also backing projects aimed at nature conservation and preserving biodiversity.

The enlargement contribution in figures:

27 kilometres of water pipelines in Hungary have been relaid or renovated	80,000 m ² of solar panels have been installed in Poland
900 tons of crude oil products were pumped from a polluted industrial port area in the Latvian capital of Riga	11,549 buildings in five partner countries have been renovated to be energy-efficient and/or use renewable energy sources
67,500 tons of asbestos has been disposed of professionally in Poland	1,861 households in Slovakia have been connected to the sewerage network

Contribution to climate protection in Slovenia

The Swiss contribution to Slovenia is CHF 22 million. Almost half of this went to two projects in the areas of renewable energy production and sustainable use of energy. Thanks to these two projects, the heating and electricity costs of renovated public buildings have fallen by 40–50%. The first readings show a reduction in CO₂ emissions of around 1,600 tons each year, which corresponds to 82,500 car trips from Bern to Zurich. The specific results of the two projects in brief:

- › Heating for 41 public buildings – mainly schools – using locally produced wood chips or pellets and heat pumps supplied by a Swiss company. 20 of these buildings were also renovated to be energy-efficient.
- › Thanks to five photovoltaic installations and a noise protection wall fitted with solar panels along the motorway, Slovenia now produces more electricity from solar energy.
- › Each year several hundred young people receive specific lessons in the areas of energy efficiency, renewable energy and sustainability. The instructors are supported by an E-Learning platform, educational materials, model houses and ecological classrooms in the country.

- › 44 schools took part in a competition on the topic of renewable energy. The winners were able to take part in a student exchange with the Zurich cantonal school in Enge and could visit the Umweltarena (environmental arena) in Spreitenbach.
- › Two study trips to Switzerland and a symposium enabled companies from Slovenia and from Switzerland to exchange experiences. One of the trips made by a group of Slovenian entrepreneurs was to the Richti area in Wallisellen in the canton of Zurich, which is a new development modelled on the '2000 Watt Society'.

School classes from all over the country are informed about sustainability topics at the „Eco Haus“ in Cerkno. © SECO



Interview: Swiss technology is popular abroad

The Swiss company Leica Geosystems AG won two major tenders within the framework of the Swiss contribution. Laura Petersberger, Director of internationally financed projects at Leica, provides more information.

How has Leica been able to benefit from the Swiss contribution?

Leica has won two tenders. On the one hand, we won an order in Estonia with a total value of around CHF 1.1 million. We supplied hardware and software for real-time measurements via GPS, which facilitates environmental monitoring in Estonia. On the other hand, we were able to supply equipment worth around CHF 1.5 million to Slovakia. The terrain and surface models created using this equipment enable sustainable forest management and maintenance.

In addition to these tenders, Leica also indirectly profits in connection to the measurement or monitoring, or the recording, analysis and presentation of spatial information. In addition to the traditional field of land registers, our technologies are also used in the areas of air and space travel, agriculture, catastrophe and disaster management, environmental research, crime and public safety. As some of these topics are covered by the Swiss contribution, it is highly possible that our technologies have been distributed via our local distribution partners after the contracts were awarded.

As a result of the contracts awarded, can one conclude that Swiss companies can prevail in spite of the strong Swiss franc because Swiss specialist knowhow is popular?

As a result of their reputation for quality, Swiss technologies still enjoy a preferred status, even abroad. In spite of this, the abolition of the minimum exchange rate by the Swiss National Bank has not passed us by unnoticed. It is particularly evident with public tenders for which aggressive price competition has intensified. I would not make a hasty conclusion about the overall financial situation of Swiss companies based on the tenders won by Leica. For example, the above project from Slovakia was developed before the period of the „weak Euro“.

Are the countries that have joined the EU since 2004 interesting future markets?

These countries are of course very important markets for Leica and offer interesting potential for growth.

Do the awarded contracts help gaining access to these markets?

Leica was already present in these markets. Nevertheless, awarded contracts strengthen our foothold in the country.



The project in Estonia mentioned in the interview is part of an environmental monitoring programme which Switzerland is supporting with CHF 8.5 million. Switzerland and Estonia have equipped eleven laboratories and monitoring stations in Estonia with modern equipment and are financing staff training. This provides Estonia with comprehensive and reliable environmental data in the areas of water, air, nuclear radiation and natural hazards. © Finance Ministry of Estonia, photograph: Arno Mikkor

Improving public safety and security

CHF 116 million of the enlargement contribution flows into projects for improving public safety in the partner countries. These include modernising the legal system in Latvia, increasing protection along the outer border of the Schengen area in Poland, measures for handling natural disasters and emergencies in Hungary as well as fighting corruption and or-

ganised crime in various countries. Improving public safety in the partner countries is also in Switzerland's own interest as the projects also contribute toward fighting cross-border crime.

The enlargement contribution in figures:

308 audio and 94 video systems are installed in 42 courts and 12 prisons in Latvia

227 members of public institutions in Poland took part in additional 10 training sessions on emergency situations

57 districts in the Czech Republic were able to increase their fire prevention measures meaning that 14,000 children can now go to school in a safer environment

4,500 members of the Slovakian police took part in basic training on handling radioactive and nuclear materials

480 metres of dam have been rebuilt in the Rabaka Reservoir in Hungary for flood protection

4 exchange visits enabled Bulgarian authorities to expand their knowledge of the Schengen information system

Safer roads in Poland thanks to Swiss specialist knowledge

With 87 fatal traffic accidents each year per million inhabitants, Poland is one of the most dangerous countries in Europe with regard to traffic. With the «Road Safety» project, Switzerland is helping to improve traffic safety in Poland. The focus of the project is the exchange of knowledge between Swiss and Polish officials relating to traffic-calming measures, training and accident prevention whereby Switzerland shared its many years of experience of reducing accident rates.

On 6 February 2015, the Polish Parliament passed a revised Traffic Act which was implemented in May 2015. Poland took inspiration from Switzerland in the new legislation. There are now higher fines for traffic offences and drink-driving will be more severely punished. In addition, Poland followed Switzerland's example and introduced victim support. Anyone who causes an accident while under the influence of alcohol is now legally obliged to make a payment to the victim, the victim's family or to a fund to sup-

port victims. The revision of the legislation in Poland shows the possible effect of a single project at the political level and the positive changes that can come from bilateral dialogue and the exchange of Swiss specialist knowledge.



More than 600 members of the Polish police received training on the issue of traffic safety. This enables traffic monitoring to be structured in a more efficient and effective manner. © Andrzej Mitura

Strengthening civil society

The enlargement contribution provides around CHF 105 million to finance projects for strengthening civil society. In all partner countries, with the exception of Malta, a support fund is financed for non-governmental organisations (NGO fund) which comprises around 700 small projects. The NGO fund specifically supports projects in the areas of society and the environment which enables civil societies in all countries to successfully contribute to the economic and social development of the country. By including Swiss partners in projects, the NGOs benefit from Swiss specialist knowledge. At the same time, Swiss

organisations can further develop their networks and competences thanks to partnerships with organisations in the partner countries.

In Bulgaria, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Croatia, there is also a partnership fund. Around 250 partnership projects support the exchange of knowledge between districts and institutions in Switzerland and the partner countries.

The enlargement contribution in figures:

20 projects help to create new partnerships between Bulgaria and Switzerland	10 projects in the area of social services in the Czech Republic improve the quality of life for elderly people.
99 NGOs from the disadvantaged region of north-east Hungary were supported in their work with regard to management and efficiency	114,000 persons in Romania benefited from NGO projects in the social sector and the field of environment
4 NGOs were able to participate in the creation of legislation in Slovakia	95% of the 97 NGO projects in Lithuania encouraged cooperation between municipalities and NGOs

Swiss-Czech partnership focusses on children's rights

The International Institute for Children's Rights (Institut international des Droits de l'Enfant, IDE) and the non-profit Czech organisation Česko-britská worked together with the help of the partnership fund to ensure that children's rights are an integral part of the education and training of professionals in the social sector and the field of education.

In three successive projects, which were all successfully completed in the last five years, a total of three important publications were published on this subject. In 2012, the Supreme Court in the Czech Republic based a decision made in a case relating to a child on the publication „Study on the Rights of the Child“. The sentence and justification were subsequently applied to all courts in the country for use in similar cases. Two years later, the two organisations published the study „Ways to Respect and Fulfil Children's Rights“ and in 2014, the publication „Participation and new approaches to working with children and families at risk“ was published. Both of these publications were used in June 2015 by the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport as the basis

for a public tender for the new EU operational programme „Research, Development and Education“. This programme focusses on the social integration of children, particularly in the pre-school stage, the prevention of academic failure and the further training of teaching staff.

Unfortunately, not all children are lucky enough to grow up in a family that remains intact. In the Czech Republic too, some children and young people live in homes or other institutions. The aim for the future is to accommodate children in foster families. Awareness of children's rights in the Czech Republic is promoted through this project, for example, in the Merhautova primary school in Brno. © SDC



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