

## Swiss Import Promotion Programme (SIPPO)

### Successful partnership with emerging markets

**L**AUNCHED in 1982, the Swiss Import Promotion Programme (SIPPO) for emerging markets and markets in transition aims to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) to gain access for their products to the Swiss and EU markets.

**SIPPO Your competent partner:** In Switzerland, SIPPO cooperates closely with various business organisations, chambers of commerce, importers, major distributors and the processing industry. As a component partner for the import economy, SIPPO is present at various trade fairs throughout Europe. Involvement in this field is specific to six core business branches:

- ✓ Agricultural products and processed foodstuffs (semi-finished and finished goods)
  - ✓ Textiles, clothing and fashion
  - ✓ Home, interior design and furniture
  - ✓ Technical products, electronics and software
  - ✓ Leather products and accessories
  - ✓ Jewellery and handicraft.
- Traiblazer for the European**

**market:** SIPPO supports small and medium-sized companies in their entry to the Swiss and EU markets. It also helps Swiss importers to find new market sources and interesting products. SIPPO provides Swiss importers with information on export offers, trade fairs and publications on a regular basis.

Within a framework of commerce, SIPPO has implemented a computerised database which enables exporters to publish their product offers online, thereby bringing them to the attention of buyers and importers. Through the database, the Swiss importers and buyers have access to a large number of exporters' business profiles covering a wide range of products.

**SIPPO is active on four levels:** Trade and market information SIPPO provides market overviews in various areas of products and core businesses.

Trade development SIPPO gives producers in-depth support in the fields of design, quality management and product adjustment.

Trade promotion SIPPO

attempts to find exportable products for which there is a demand in the Swiss and the EU markets.

**Training:** Training in marketing and export processing familiarise exporters with the prerequisites for a competent supplier.

**How to contact Swiss importers:** SIPPO offers you the opportunity to have your company registered in its exporters' database and your profile to be published along with your export products in the SIPPO Bulletin. This bi-monthly magazine is distributed to over 5,000 Swiss importers, wholesalers, distributors and industrialists. Additionally, your export offer will appear on SIPPO's Internet website, where it can be accessed worldwide.

**SIPPO**  
Swiss Import Promotion Programme  
Stampfenbachstrasse 85  
PO Box 492  
CH-8035 Zurich  
Phone: +41-1-365-5200  
Fax: +41-1-365-5202  
Email: info@sippo.ch  
Internet: www.sippo.ch

## Vocational education in Switzerland

### The apprenticeship: A successful model

**T**HE history of vocational education in Switzerland dates back to the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when Swiss enterprises for the first time were confronted with international competition as a result of free trade agreements (liberalism) and improved transportation (railway). In the backdrop of the outmoded structure and insufficiently trained employees hurting Swiss trade, the Swiss Federal Parliament in 1884 decided to support and partially regulate the 'crafts and trade schools' as a measure to promote the country's economy. Thus the first step of the Swiss vocational education was made. This educational system got its real boost after World War II, when more and more people became attracted towards it. Over the years, the quality of Swiss vocational education has become one of the best in the world.

Two factors have made their mark on vocational education in Switzerland: diversity and pragmatism. Both contribute to the quality of Switzerland's vocational education. Where two cultures with a Germanic or Latin influence meet, there is a need for impartial openness to varying solutions. The development of the modern economy likewise leaves little room for inflexible schemata. Rather it

requires solutions that are suited to the region and to technology.

Politically, the country is divided into 26 cantons, each of which has a large degree of political autonomy, especially in terms of how its educational system is organised. Similar to other highly developed industrial nations, Switzerland's earning and production structure is dominated by the service sector. Small businesses play a major role in the economy. In 1995, only 176 businesses employed more than 1000 people. Other important branches of production are machine construction and the metal industry, the manufacture of electronic, electrical and precision mechanical devices, and the chemical and pharmaceutical industries. Commerce and transport are also of major significance. Health care, services for enterprises, and the restaurant and hotel trade too play a major role.

The predominant form of vocational education is the apprenticeship: attendance of

an introductory course, followed by on-the-job-training in a firm and simultaneous attendance of a vocational school (triad system).

The apprenticeship  
The Swiss attach great significance to vocational education, especially in the form of the apprenticeship. The apprenticeship is considered to be especially

-- well-suited to young people because of the combination of working at a job and attending school, and the fact that learning takes place through doing real tasks;

-- flexible in that it allows ongoing adjustment to the changing needs of industry and society;

-- reasonable in terms of costs: an apprentice only costs the state a fraction of what a student preparing for the university does.

Nonetheless, the young people themselves or their parents are increasingly more interested in attending a school that prepares for the University

Entrance Certificate instead of doing an apprenticeship. Social prestige may play a major role here.

The modern apprenticeship can have quite different proportions of productive work and training depending on the abilities of the person in training, the occupation, and where the training takes place, be it in a modern small business or in a large enterprise in industry, trade or banking. The vocational education designates a maximum of two days of school a week.

What make the apprenticeship special in educational terms are its two-fold objectives: to provide both training and knowledge, and qualifications and personal development. According to law, 'Basic training provides the skills and knowledge necessary to perform an occupation. It broadens general knowledge, and promotes personal development and a sense of responsibility. Furthermore, it provides the foundations for continuing education, both professional and general.'

**On-the-job training**  
Practical training takes place in the firm. Large firms move many of the training tasks to their own workshops, laboratories, practice offices or internal schools. This is not only common for industry, but also for stores, large banks, insurance companies or restaurant chains.

On-the-job trainers are either the owners of the firms themselves or more commonly other professionals with job experience.

In most cases, the cantons or the community finance vocational schools. But associations often run their own schools as well.

Similar to the training that takes place in the firms and in introductory courses, the courses at vocational schools are oriented to the occupation to be learned. In addition, general subjects are taught for the development of language skills and a certain foundation for general knowledge (legal rights, work, family, environment etc.)

## Specialised software galore

**G**IVEN the shortage of raw materials, software as a form of grey matter has traditionally been one of Switzerland's greatest assets. Nowadays, a new and future-oriented accent is being set by the IT software sector.

Represented by some 1500 companies, the fledgling business of software development in Switzerland covers more than just the domestic demand for tailor-made solutions. The branch is becoming increasingly active at an international level and is now also meeting needs in such complex areas as professional services and embedded software.

The Swiss market for information technology (IT) is worth more than 10 billion Swiss francs a year. This works out at 1600 Swiss francs per inhabitant - the highest anywhere in the world. It proves the country's high standard of IT development. Around a third of this figure is attributed to

the area of software. This area of production is now the strongest within the IT sector of Switzerland.

However, despite its strength in absolute terms, the domestic market is too small to stand up to international competition in the long term. More and more local software companies, generally small and with limited resources, came to realise this and are now looking for a targeted strategy to enable them to grow to the ideal size for success abroad.

Understanding the significance of the software sector as a key player in Switzerland's economy, both the private and the public sector have come forward to actively support it. For example, since 1997, the Swiss Federal Office for Vocational Training and Technology (BBT) has been running a programme to promote IT-training and to create synergies in the transfer of know-how between industries and universities,

and between product development and product marketing. With these initiatives, the availability of well-trained IT workers in Switzerland is continuing to grow.

Throughout the world, Switzerland is highly regarded for its IT educational system. Numerous international schools offer classes to overseas students, preparing them for their final school examinations in their own countries. A dense network of academic establishments, including renowned universities, technical and business colleges, and numerous public and private institutions round off the educational offering.

Swiss Software Association swissSOFT  
Lättichstrasse 6  
CH-6340 Baar  
Phone: +41-41-761-8531  
Fax: +41-41-761-8533  
Email: duss@swisssoft.org

## The Swiss film scene

**I**N the last 20 years, an abundance of Swiss films has appeared in the world film arena: fiction, documentaries, biographies and narratives of all kinds, which curiously, almost always touch upon subjects related to the country's destiny, international contradictions, and ritualised attitudes. The Swiss film industry has a long history that includes various phases. Older generations still remembers the domestic products of the Second World War time and post-war era.

The 'new Swiss cinema' -- the equivalent of the nouvelle vague in France -- appeared after 1965, with a clear distinction between the French and the German speaking parts of the country. While the latter's contribution comprised at first critical documentary works, the French part concentrated on feature films. Such successful names as Alain Tanner, Claude Goretta, Michel Soutter, Jean-Louis Rey and

Jean-Jacques Lagrange, who all started their careers at the Swiss-French Television, all played a major role in establishing the new Swiss cinema. They were later joined by others who achieved international fame, such as Yves Yersin with his film 'Les Petites Fugues', and the Swiss-German Markus Imhof with 'Das Boot ist voll', an impressive work about Switzerland's dubious treatment of refugees during the Second World War.

In the 1970s and 1980s there was a large number of film directors who made their name in feature films and documentaries, including Daniel Schmid, Kurt Gloor, Rolf Lyssy (with the record box-office success 'Die Schweizermacher'). Marlies Graf, Francis Reusser, Peter von Gunten, Jacqueline Veuve and Patricia Moraz. 'Hohenfeuer', directed by Fredi Murer, is a superbly atmospheric masterpiece. With his highly topical film about refugees 'Reise der

Hoffnung', Xavier Koller was the first Swiss director to win an Oscar (for Best Foreign Film).

The present crisis in the European film industry and the dominance of American products in Swiss cinemas have indeed had their effect on the Swiss filmmaking scene. It remains nevertheless surprisingly productive even if it does not enjoy success it deserves.

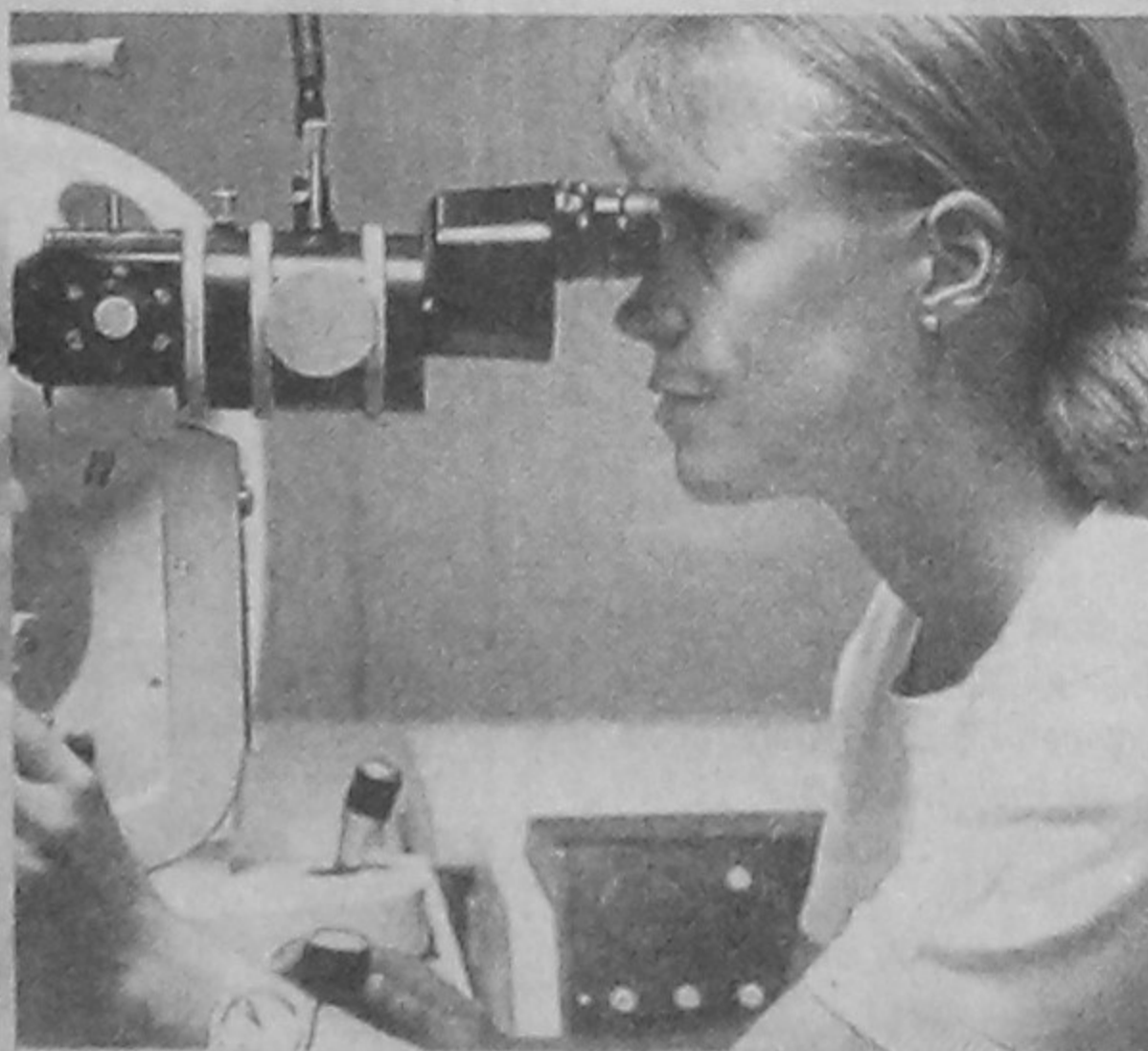
Having attracted over 100 000 cinema goers, Daniel Schmid's comedy film 'Beresina oder Die letzten Tage der Schweiz' (Beresina or The Last Days of Switzerland), which came out in 1999, was the most successful Swiss film for a long time and, like Lea Pool's 'Emporte-moi' (Take Me Away), won various prizes at foreign film festivals. The young Zurich director Florian Froeschmayer attracted a lot of attention with his independently produced high-class thriller 'Exklusive' (Exclusive), and in the French-speaking part of Switzerland a thriller-comedy

entitled 'Attention aux chiens' (Beware of Dogs) directed by Francois-Christophe Marzal was also a big hit. As always, however, it was again documentary films which were the most appreciated outside the country, including, for example, Richard Dindo's 'Genet a Chatila' (Genet at Chatila), Patricia Plattner's 'Made in India', or Norbert Wiedmer's 'Schlagen und Abtun' (Hit and Run). 'Ernstfall in Havana' (Emergency case in Havana) of Sabine Boss, a new film in the Swiss film industry, attracted the attention of many people and it seems to be the most successful Swiss film in recent years.

Two major film festivals are being held on a yearly basis in Switzerland. One is the renowned Solothurn Film Festival, the other is the International Film Festival Locarno. They both host major new mainstream titles and innovative productions -- from progressive cinema.

# NOVARTIS

Novartis is a world leader in healthcare with core business in Pharmaceuticals, Generics, Eye-care, Consumer Health and Animal Health.



- We improve lives. We extend lives. We save lives.
- We want to rank among the top performers of the industry.
- We will achieve this through innovation and our people.

Our best wishes on the occasion of the Swiss National Day

Novartis (Bangladesh) Limited  
House-50, Road-2A, Dhanmondi, Dhaka.



Nestlé Bangladesh Limited wishes all the best on the occasion of the Swiss Confederation Day.

Nestlé, the world Food Company, is present in Bangladesh with quality food and beverage products. Nestlé's trusted world class brands are known for their goodness and

nutritional values the world over. Nestlé Bangladesh Limited is a fully owned subsidiary of Nestlé S. A. Switzerland.

 **Nestlé**  
Good Food, Good Life