



Research

The Swiss economy depends to a major extent on discoveries, inventions and new ideas. Research and development of new products is therefore an important prerequisite of Swiss success.

Since 2004, Switzerland has been involved in the European Research Framework Programmes. As a partner, it can influence the direction of the programmes. It receives access to research results, and Swiss researchers can initiate and manage projects themselves. This is particularly important for Switzerland as a research and technology location.

Participation in the research projects is open to universities and the Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology, as well as to companies of all sizes and private persons. The areas of research up until 2013 include information and communication technology, health, energy, nanotechnology and the environment.

The networking of researchers and the targeted support of projects aim to strengthen Europe as a research region, and promote growth and employment. The main focus of the programmes is decided for one programme generation respectively. The 7th research framework programmes run from 2007 to 2013 and have total funds of 54.6 billion euro. The contributions of the member states are laid down in accordance with the economic strength of the respective countries. Switzerland's contribution to the 7th research framework programmes is approx. 2.4 billion francs.

Money has flowed back into Switzerland

Switzerland has already participated in the 6th research framework programmes of the EU. At the time, it contributed 780 million francs. Subsequently, more than 100% flowed back into Switzerland as EU subsidies: One third of the money went to the Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology; a quarter benefited companies – both small and medium-sized companies (SMEs) as well as major industries; a further quarter went to the universities. The rest went to universities of applied sciences, the public sector and non-profit organisations. A further 75 million were paid to international research institutes in Switzerland such as CERN and UN organisations.

IGREEMENTS

Key data

Date of signing: 21 June 1999 (in the framework of Bilaterals I)
Approval by the electorate: 21 May 2000 (in the framework of Bilaterals I)
Date effective: 1 June 2002
Renewal of the Agreement: 2004 and 2007 for participation in the 6th and 7th Research Framework Programmes

“ We are managing a project concerning the substitution of nitrate and nitrite with vegetable substances. Nitrate and nitrite are used as preservatives in meat products such as salami. However, the aim is to replace both substances in the medium term. We are a small company with just three employees and are involved in research in the field of biological agriculture. We wish to carry out research into vegetable substances as new ways of soil loosening and fertilisation. We were entrusted with the project management following our participation in another European research programme. The budget for our project is 4.5 million francs and we are working with a further four partners in various European countries. As an individual company we would never have been able to start a project of this nature. In addition to the research results, this also gives us a good reputation and credibility on the market. ”

Silvia Selber, Project Manager

