

OSEC news

Objektyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1970)**

Heft 1590

PDF erstellt am: **08.08.2024**

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(90%). The machine tool industry markets 76 to 80% of its production outside Switzerland, which is also the case of the chemical industry as a whole. The electrical machinery industry exports 60 to 70% of its products, whereas for the textile industry the figure is in the neighbourhood of 40%.

The value of the exports of goods is equivalent to a quarter of Switzerland's gross national product, i.e. of the value of the whole of the country's economic activities. If to this is added the proceeds from the exports of services, a third of Switzerland's gross national product comes from her economic relations with other countries.

Prospects for 1970

Although industrial activity is expected to remain brisk in 1970, the general economic growth will tend to slow up. This forecast is based on a survey of the Union Bank of Switzerland covering 22 branches of the economy. Whereas the increases in the turnover of the branches under consideration worked out at 11.3% in 1969, the growth is estimated to be in the neighbourhood of 6.8% for 1970. Forecasts differ however from one branch to the next. A falling off in the rate of growth is expected in the following sectors: textiles and clothing 8.3% (1969: 12.9%), building 4.1% (13.3%), machinery industry 9% (16.5%). On the other hand, no slowing up is expected in the other main branches of Swiss economic activity.

Domestic demand will increase, particularly as a result of the rapid growth in the purchasing power of consumers and the high level of the reserve orders for work in the building trade. Thus, unlike in previous years, in 1970 it is home demand that is expected to constitute the main driving force behind the overall demand, in spite of the slight improvement in export possibilities owing to the revaluation of the DM. However a certain slackening in the growth of exports is expected for 1970. The report issued by the Commission for Economic Research confirms this, just as the opinion of the Institute for Economic Research of the Federal Institute of Technology: "The day of extremely high rates of growth in exports seems to be nearing its end, for capacities are no longer sufficient to enable them to be maintained".

Employment will increase slightly and the shortage of labour become more marked. The last reserves available will probably be exhausted during the first half of the year. Let us mention, in this connection, that the Swiss people will be called on to give their opinion on a scheme, submitted by certain circles that have become concerned at the growth in the number of foreign workers, aimed at cutting down the number to 10% of the Swiss population in any given canton. If, in June of this year, this scheme were to be accepted, the number of foreign workers would have to be reduced by some 200,000 over a

period of four years. Such a reduction would inevitably involve the closing of a number of firms. Let us point out however that the Federal Council (Swiss government), the Federal Chamber (deputies) and all the parties voted unanimously to reject this scheme. In fact, for Switzerland it is not only an economic but also a political and humanitarian choice.

Fearing a recurrence in 1970 of the excessive boom conditions which had been checked only with difficulty in 1964, the government at the beginning of 1970 instituted a number of anti-inflationist measures such as restrictions on the programmes of public building work, the cutting down of personnel in the federal offices, the sterilisation of profits from the minting of currency, the lowering of the rate of guarantee for export risks and the speeding up of the tariff reductions negotiated within the framework of the Kennedy Round. Other more important steps might eventually be taken during the course of the year, affecting in particular Swiss exports. But this is not only a political but also an economic problem which needs to be solved not by the government—but by parliament.

A FREE ADDRESS BOOK OF IMPORTANT SWISS EXPORTERS

The Swiss embassies and consulates, the Swiss chambers of trade and the Swiss tourist offices will distribute free of charge to all those who request it an address book of all the important Swiss export industries: namely the catalogue of the Swiss Industries Fair in Basle, which has just come out. This comprehensive volume, with more than 1,000 pages, is a useful reference book which can be used the whole year round, as well as an absolutely indispensable guide for visitors to the Swiss Industries Fair which will take place from 11th to 21st April, 1970.

THE CONSUMPTION HABITS OF THE SWISS

Wine consumption is dwindling to the benefit of beer consumption; such are the conclusions of a recent report by the Swiss centre for agricultural information. Between 1880 and 1884, every Swiss drank an average of 70 litres of wine a year and 11.81 litres of spirits. Over the wider span of 1893-1902, the average per capita consumption of wine was 88.8 litres. Now it is only 39 litres a year, and the consumption of strong drinks has fallen to 4.45 litres a year, an undeniable improvement. However, the information centre warns us not to be misled by these figures, since they show a distinct upward trend in consumption. In the early fifties, the Swiss consumed only 33.9 litres of wine and 2.88 litres of spirits a year. A hundred persons now die of alcoholism a year, 30,000 labour and road accidents are deplored every year and an alleged 4 to 5 per cent of national income is spent on alcoholic drinks.

Consumption of beer has sharply increased in recent years and now stands at 75 litres per person. Cider is losing ground strongly.

The Swiss ate more meat than they ever have in their history last year. Statistics show that the per capita consumption of meat was 70.365 kilograms. Consumption had reached a minimum in 1945 and was then of 30.767 kilos. According to the Federal Veterinary Office, 450,337 tons of every kind of meat, including fish, were consumed in Switzerland last year. Pork (198,000 tons) came in first position, then came beef (119,000 tons), then veal (42,000 tons), then lamb (5,500 tons), then imported and processed meat (5,300 tons), horse-meat (4,000 tons) and, finally, goat-meat (649 tons). Over two-thirds of the meat consumed in Switzerland was of national origin.

(ATS)

SNTO AND OSEC NEWS

"Gaily blows the horn . . ."

Gotthard (SNTO): - Who does not know it, the song about "the yellow coach" with its horses trotting so fireily while one sits high up with the coachmen who blows his horn? The tune of the last uostilion of the Gotthard comes back to our memory, too. — The romantic stage coaches have long since been replaced by modern, yellow postal buses. Their powerful engines make the heart of technically minded men beat faster, the melodious triple sound horn has become world famous and somehow recalls the good old times of the stage coaches of days gone by. At the same time one marvels at the comfortable way of travelling and at the high skill of the postal bus drivers, especially when they so masterfully guide their big, yellow cars across the Alpine passes. The general management of the PTT (Post, Telegraph, Telephone) has just published a nice booklet devoted to travel by post. It is very attractive from a graphic point of view and contains a lot of interesting information on the development, organisation and achievements of this postal service so rich in ancient traditions.

Avalanche shooting in the Gotthard region already in the 15th century

Davos (SNTO): - The Federal Institute of Snow and Avalanche Research on the Weissfluh Ridge near Davos is world famous. Almost immeasurable is its work aiming at the protection of mankind at times of potential danger of avalanches and first of all in the service of steadily increasing winter sports and tourism. However, it is probably less known that for instance already in the 15th century the inhabitants along the Gotthard Road used to fire mortar shots so noisy that their din would cause huge masses of

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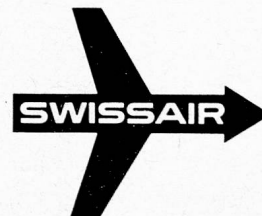
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snow to come tumbling down. This was reported by the Castilian nobleman Pero (Peter) Tafur who travelled in 1438 from Milan to Germany across the Gotthard via the Livinen Valley.

Swiss Philately 1970

This year Switzerland will issue two special sets of postage stamps. The first, containing five stamps, has already come out. It comprises a 20-cent stamp, printed in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Swiss Telegraphic Agency (1895-1970), which specialises mainly in the transmission of Swiss news to newspapers throughout the country. The 30-cent stamp is devoted to the centenary of the Swiss Firemen's Association (1870-1970), while another of the same value celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of Pro Infirmis (1920-1970), an organisation devoted to providing aid for the disabled. The 50-cent stamp commemorates the 25th anniversary of the United Nations Organisation (1945-1970), while the 80-cent issue, the last in the set, features the new Universal Postal Union building in Berne.

Equipment used for "Diretissima" climb of Mt. Eiger's north face on exhibit at Valley Station of Mt. Schilthorn aerial cableway

Stchelberg (SNT0): - Between July 15 and August 15 of last year a group of six brave Japanese climbers accomplished one of the greatest achievements of modern alpinism when it succeeded in the "Diretissima" climb of the notorious north face of Mount Eiger. Since then the great mountain has enticed other mountaineers, among them some Swiss, to perform similar feats. Michiko Imai, a 25-year-old woman doctor, who was one in the group of the original Japanese climbers, gave her complete personal equipment to the Schilthorn aerial cableway as a token of her gratitude for the kind invitation to visit Mt. Schilthorn which affords a most interesting view of the Jungfrau Massif including Mt. Eiger. In a showcase placed at the aerial cableway's Valley Station of Stechelberg this most interesting Japanese equipment may be seen. Particularly worth seeing are the various ice picks, hammers, hooks, clamps, carbines, ropes, rope ladders, climbing belts, knapsack with contents, bags, shoes, clothing, outerwear, wind-breakers, ear muffs, gloves, sleeping bags, hammocks, cookers, bottles, food, packages, etc.

Swiss Watch Industry: a "new look" merger

There is a new merger in the Swiss watch industry with the creation of the "Longines Holding Co. Ltd.", which has its headquarters at St. Imier (canton of Berne). The operation was effected in two stages. Longines — with a consolidated turnover of 75 million (U.S. \$17.4 million) and Rotary Co. Ltd. — turnover 20 million (U.S. \$4.6 million) — first of all created the Longines Holding Co. Ltd.". The two firms

are complementary from the points of view of both production and markets. This rationalisation will allow them in particular to improve their distribution facilities and strengthen their position on the market. In the second phase of the operation, the new holding company and Ebauches Co. Ltd. (turnover of approximately 400 million i.e. U.S. \$93.0 million), in Neuchâtel, agreed to a 30% participation on the part of the latter. From the technical point of view, Ebauches Co. Ltd. will help concentrate efforts in research, more especially in the field of electronic timepieces. The total output of the new group will exceed one million watches a year and its consolidated turnover will amount to nearly 100 million francs (U.S. \$23.2 million). The outstanding feature of the whole operation lies in the close co-operation established between firms belonging to different sectors of the watch industry. This "new look" merger comprises in fact a "manufacture" (Longines) (making the whole of a watch), an "établissement" (Rotary) (putting the parts together) and a manufacturer of "ébauches" (Ebauches Co. Ltd.). This is in fact the first vertical grouping in the Swiss watch industry for several decades.

Swiss Forestry Experts for Tunisia

The Swiss government has set aside a sum of 1.5 million francs (U.S. \$349,000) for training forestry technicians in Tunisia. This amount has been taken from the funds set aside for the scheme of technical co-operation with the developing countries. The Tunisian reforestation scheme requires the training of 500 new forestry technicians over the next ten years. At the end of 1968, the Tunisian government turned to Switzerland for the help it needed. On the basis of the studies carried out in Switzerland, a scheme was prepared which provides for the construction of a forestry school at Sedjenane. Five Swiss experts will train some 25 Tunisian forestry technicians there annually, the whole course lasting two years. Switzerland's financial contribution covers the salaries of the experts and the purchase of the necessary equipment for the next three years. The Tunisian government, for its part, assumes the costs of construction and administration.

Private Insurances in Switzerland

As can be seen from the latest statistics available, the population of Switzerland — during the year 1968 — spent a total of 10.9 billion francs (U.S. \$2.5 million) on private and social insurances of all kinds. Compared with 1967, the increase amounted to 846 million francs (U.S. \$200.9 million), i.e. 8.4%. The total expenditure has almost trebled in the last ten years and averaged, for the year in question, 1,775 francs (U.S. \$412) per inhabitant. For operations transacted solely in Switzerland, the Swiss and foreign insurance companies received, in 1968, 3.5 billion

francs' worth of premiums (U.S. \$814 million) i.e. 9.6% more than in 1967. However, the foreign market remains foremost in the interests of Swiss insurance companies, which took in premiums totalling 5.7 billion francs (U.S. \$1.3 billion).

The Swiss Electro-Technical Industry Throughout the World

The production programme of the Swiss electro-technical industry comprises the manufacture of all equipment used in the production, transmission and distribution of electricity. Switzerland's share in world exports during the years 1964 and 1967, calculated according to the power of the machines supplied, is as follows: for hydraulic turbines: 25.8%; for hydro alternators: 15.9%; for gas turbines: 27.6%. The power in kilowatts of the power station plant exported by Switzerland during the last five years equals that of the totality of her own power stations at the end of 1968. It is all the more remarkable as Switzerland, with an annual consumption of about 4,080 kWh per head of the population, is one of the most widely electrified countries in the world.

Pakistan: Big Order for a Swiss Engineering Consultants Firm

The Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) has commissioned the services of the Swiss firm of Motor-Columbus Engineering Consultants Co. Ltd. at Baden (canton of Aargau) for the construction of a nuclear power station at Rooppur, developing a capacity of 200,000 kW. This power station is situated some 25 miles to the west of Dacca, on the north bank of the river Ganges. The power produced is scheduled for East Pakistan. Motor-Columbus is to be responsible for the technical and economic aspects of the scheme, the supervision of the planning as well as the execution of the construction work until the new plant is put into operation in 1975.

Exports of the Swiss Textile Industry

The Swiss textile industry, which is represented in all Swiss cantons and has 118,000 employees in 1,900 firms, exported goods valued at over 1.8 billion francs (U.S. \$418 million) in 1969. These sales represent 9% of Switzerland's total exports. The textile industry thus comes fourth among the country's main exporting branches. The most important sectors were chemical fibres, cottons, silks, and artificial fabrics, embroideries, fabrics and knitted goods.

The Lonza Company in good shape

The turnover of Lonza AG, the chemical company, was 325 million francs last year. This was an improvement of 21.2 per cent over the previous year. The group has 5,477 employees, 3,264 of whom work in Switzerland. With such favourable results, the company will be able to finance its vast investment programme by its own means.