

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 42 (2015)
Heft: 1

Rubrik: news.admin.ch

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Visions for shaping the Switzerland of the future

Green spaces in urban areas, less traffic and a greater sense of community – this scenario is the focal point of the “Swisstopia” project with which the “Haute école du paysage, d’ingénierie et d’architecture” (hepia) in Geneva won the ideas competition “tomorrow? Switzerland”



The winning team from hepia with Federal Councillor Doris Leuthard

Students from five universities of applied sciences were invited to present ideas about life in 2035 as part of this competition organised by the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications (DETEC). The jury chaired by Federal

Councillor Doris Leuthard reached its decision at the end of October.

What will Switzerland look like 20 years from now? For once this question was not put to professional forecasters but instead to five selected universities of applied sciences from all parts of the country. The students tackled the competition task of developing ideas for the Switzerland of the future and presenting them visually in very different ways.

After intensive discussions, the jury declared the “Haute école du paysage, d’ingénierie et d’architecture de Genève” (hepia), a department of the “Haute Ecole Spécialisée de Suisse occidentale” (University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland), the winner with its competition project “Swisstopia”. In the view of the jury, the hepia entry developed solutions outstandingly well in a key future area of urban development – the populated landscape. The authors displayed courage by

accommodating the desire of some of the population to live in a productive landscape. Their entry also contained certain values. It attached greater importance to the community, while work was attributed a different status.

The entries for the competition, which was launched by Federal Councillor Leuthard in spring 2014, are of particular interest to DETEC given that, as an infrastructure department, it has major influence over the future organisation of Switzerland. The aim was for the entries to be incorporated into practical politics as far as possible.

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Participating universities

The following universities of applied sciences took part in the “tomorrow? Switzerland” competition

- Hochschule für Technik Rapperswil (HSR), Fachhochschule Ostschweiz (FHO), Rapperswil-Jona St Gallen
- Hochschule Luzern – Design & Kunst (HSLU), Fachhochschule Zentralschweiz, Lucerne
- Hochschule für Gestaltung und Kunst (HGK), Fachhochschule Nordwestschweiz (FHNW), Basel
- Haute école du paysage, d’ingénierie et d’architecture de Genève (hepia), Haute école spécialisée de Suisse occidentale (HES-SO), Geneva
- Dipartimento ambiente costruzioni e design (DACD), Scuola universitaria professionale della Svizzera italiana (SUPSI), Manno TI

More information on the competition, the participants and their projects can be found at:
<http://www.are.admin.ch/demainlasuisse/index.html?lang=de>

The law on the Swiss schools abroad entered into force on 1 January 2015

The new law gives Swiss schools abroad greater operational flexibility while also enhancing the way in which Swiss culture and education are imparted. Basic vocational education and training and new Swiss schools abroad can now also receive funding.

In addition to the proportion of Swiss pupils, the total number of students is now also taken into account when calculating federal government’s funding contribution. The minimum quota of Swiss students previously prescribed no longer applies. To enable the Swiss schools abroad to plan better, a multi-year budget in line with the dispatch on culture will apply from 2016.

Federal government today supports 17 Swiss schools abroad worldwide: 7 in Europe, 8 in Latin America and 2 in Asia. They are attended by a total of 7,200 children of whom 1,800 hold a Swiss passport.

See also: www.bak.admin.ch/schweizerschulen

FEDERAL OFFICE OF CULTURE (FOC)

IMPRINT:
“Swiss Review”, the magazine for the Swiss Abroad, is in its 41st year of publication and is published in German, French, Italian, English and Spanish in 14 regional editions. It has a total circulation of 400,000, including 165,000 electronic copies. Regional news appears four times a year. The ordering parties

are fully responsible for the content of advertisements and promotional inserts. This content does not necessarily represent the opinion of either the editorial office or the publisher.
EDITORS: Barbara Engel (BE), Editor-in-Chief; Stéphane Herzog (SH); Marc Lettau (MUL); Jürg Müller (JM); Peter Zimmerli (PZ), responsible for

“news.admin.ch”, Relations with the Swiss Abroad, FDFA, 3003 Berne, Switzerland
TRANSLATION: CLS Communication AG
LAYOUT: Herzog Design, Zürich
PRINT: Vogt-Schild Druck AG, 4552 Derendingen.
POSTAL ADDRESS: Publisher, editorial office, advertising: Organisation of the

Swiss Abroad, Alpenstrasse 26, 3006 Berne, Tel.: +41313566110, Fax: +41313566101, Postal account (Swiss National Giro): 30-6768-9. Email: revue@aso.ch

COPY DEADLINE for this edition: 15.12.2014

All Swiss Abroad who are registered with a Swiss representation receive the magazine free of charge. Anyone else can subscribe to the magazine for an annual fee (Switzerland: CHF 30 / abroad: CHF 50). Subscribers are sent the magazine direct from Berne.
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Federal government acts as a role model in energy efficiency

The federal administration, the semi-public enterprises and the ETH Domain (the Federal technical universities and research institutes) are seeking to improve their energy efficiency. Federal Councillor Doris Leuthard, the CEOs of Post, Federal Railways SBB, Swisscom and Skyguide as well as the President of the ETH Board have signed a declaration of intent.

Around 2 % of Swiss energy consumption is accounted for by the federal administration, the ETH Domain and the semi-public enterprises SBB, Post, Swisscom and Skyguide. They have continually increased their energy efficiency and reduced their energy consumption for a number of years now. As part of the 2050 Energy Strategy, the Federal Council is now providing a set of measures which aims to improve the energy efficiency of the federal administration, the semi-public enterprises and the ETH Domain by 25 % by the year 2020 compared to 2006. Federal Councillor Doris Leuthard and the CEOs of the semi-public enterprises signed a joint declaration of intent to this effect on 27 November 2014.

Energy efficiency at the SBB thanks to adaptive control

Swiss Federal Railways, the SBB, plans only to use electricity from renewable sources for its operations by 2025. It increased its energy efficiency by around 14 % between 2006 and 2013, while transport volumes rose annually at the same time. Train drivers are able to reduce energy consumption thanks to an energy-saving way of driving. Adaptive control provides direct in-cab speed recommendations. The rolling stock is also becoming more energy-efficient. For example, trains are only heated or cooled when they are in operation.

The Post uses electric scooters

The Post reduced its energy requirements by 6 % and increased energy efficiency by 19 % between 2006 and 2013. This was primarily achieved by using vehicles with alternative drives. With 5,500 electric scooters used for the delivery of letters, the Post has the largest such fleet in Europe. Electricity requirements are entirely met with certified green power. Further measures concerning logistical operations and its computer centres are planned for the coming years. PostAuto is testing the use of battery-operated buses.

Swisscom's customer energy efficiency measures

Thanks to measures already implemented, Swisscom increased energy efficiency by 24.5 % compared to 2006. The recently opened Swisscom computer centre in Bern-Wank-

dorf will produce further improvements in energy efficiency and in the use of waste heat. In total, energy savings were made by customers equivalent to the power consumption of around 15,000 households and the CO₂ emissions of 70,000 cars.

Skyguide: systematic deployment of LED

Switzerland's air traffic control company is not only pursuing measures to improve efficiency in the management of air traffic. Skyguide replaced ceiling lighting with LED fixtures at its control centre in Wangen near Dübendorf in 2013, for example. Specific measures concerning approach control and airspace management are being implemented and will achieve significant energy savings for the airlines.

Energy efficiency and research in the ETH Domain

The Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology in Zurich and Lausanne as well as the Paul Scherrer Institute and other research institutions have increasing student numbers and maintain energy-intensive, large-scale research facilities. Lecturing and research in new fields and technologies have been expanded. Despite this growth, per-capita energy consumption fell and energy efficiency was improved. A good example is the new building of the Swiss National Supercomputing Centre (CSCS) in Lugano, which is one of the most energy-efficient computer centres in the world. In the field of energy research, the ETH Domain is making targeted investment in training, science and direct technology transfer to industry.

Federal administration: effective programme for cutting environmental pollution

The programme adopted by the Federal Council in 1999 concerning systematic resource and environmental management (RUMBA) is the federal administration's main instrument for reducing its environmental pollution. At the buildings of the RUMBA sections, energy consumption fell by 8.4 % from 2006 to 2013. The use of heating oil and natural gas was reduced by 45 %. Through RUMBA, the Federal Council intends to cut the federal administration's environmental pollution by at least 20 % from 2006 to 2020.

The 2014 initial report "The Confederation: exemplary in energy" of the Swiss Federal Office of Energy provides an overview of the measures aimed at increasing energy efficiency in the aforementioned areas.

<https://www.energie-vorbild.admin.ch/vbe/en/home.html>

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Federal Councillor Doris Leuthard travels eco-consciously

In 2012, Switzerland called for the green economy to be put on the climate agenda at the climate conference in Rio de Janeiro. Federal Councillor Doris Leuthard, head of the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications (DETEC), is contributing to the improvement of energy efficiency by setting a good example, choosing a Tesla 85 as her new official vehicle. A purely electric car, it fits perfectly with DETEC's strategy of reducing CO₂ emissions and adopting an economical and efficient approach to energy resources.

There are already many charging stations throughout Switzerland for recharging the batteries of electric vehicles, some provided by the suppliers themselves, others attached to federal government's own buildings and facilities. If necessary, electric vehicles can also be charged up using an ordinary power socket.

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Federal referenda

Two proposals will be put to the vote on 8 March 2015:

- Popular initiative of 5 November 2012 "Strengthen families! Tax-free child and educational allowances" (BBl 2014 7221);
- Popular initiative of 17 December 2012 "Energy tax instead of VAT" (BBl 2014 7217).

All information on the proposals (voting pamphlet, committees, party statements, electronic voting, etc.) can be found at www.ch.ch/en/votes/.

Other referendum dates in 2015: 14 June, 18 October (federal elections), 29 November.

You will find facts, instructions, useful information and additional links concerning the federal elections on 18 October 2015 at www.ch.ch/en/elections2015/ – a joint website provided by the Fed-

eral Chancellery, Parliamentary Services, the Federal Statistical Office and ch.ch.

Popular initiatives

The following new federal popular initiatives had been launched at the time of going to press (deadline for the collection of signatures in brackets):

- "Zur Ausschaffung krimineller Männer" (For the deportation of male criminals) (18.05.2016)

The list of pending popular initiatives can be found at www.bk.admin.ch under Aktuell > Wahlen und Abstimmungen > Hängige Volkssinitiativen.

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