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

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1975)

Heft: 1705

Rubrik: Technical items

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. Mehr erfahren

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. En savoir plus

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. Find out more

Download PDF: 13.08.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, https://www.e-periodica.ch

TECHNICAL ITEMS

HOSPITAL PLANNING INSTITUTE

A hospital planning institute, completely independent of all suppliers, was founded at Feldmeilen (Zurich – Switzerland) in 1960, with a view to co-ordinating medical, technical and administrative planning. Its activity covers hospital planning, planning of retirement homes, extended care homes and sanatoria as well as planning in the field of public health at local, regional and national levels. The institute's planning team consists of doctors, engineers, architects, business administrators and specialists from all areas of hospital services. Operational planning comprises general and functional planning, techno-medical planning, cost planning, communications and transportation planning as well as the solution of problems as varied as equipment, electronic data processing, laundries, central kitchens and personnel. The decisive factor in the planning stage is the method by which the values obtained during the establishment of requirements are carried over into the realisation phase. This method determines to a large extent whether the available funds can be used to good effect. Consequently the administrative section occupies a central position in operational planning; it also contributes to the search for optimum solutions in all areas of hospital planning. In close co-operation with architectural and engineering offices, this institute can take over general planning, systems or development projects, provision being made for local architects and engineers to be incorporated in the project teams, depending on the work to be carried out. In addition to its planning activities, the institute is able to fully equip hospitals ready for occupancy. The institute's activities are characterised, therefore, by the fact that they offer clients optimum solutions while at the same time enabling considerable savings in investment and running costs to be made.

NEW IMPULSE GENERATOR FOR TESTING RELAYS

A Swiss firm in Basle has developed an impulse tester type P6 R for testing insulation on static protective relays according to the latest recommendations of the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), with particular regard to maximum output voltage of approximately 5.5kV, impulse energy and wave form, polarity, and self-impedance as well as pulse sequence. The generator gives a standardised 1.2/50μs impulse. It can also be used for many other purposes such as, for example, impulse tests on meters, electrical appliances and tools including their component parts, low voltage surge arresters, switchgear and electrical machinery. A remarkable feature of the generator is the built-in impulse voltmeter on which the actual output voltage is read. The generator is also provided with outputs for adjustable DC voltages up to 6kV peak and AC voltages up to about 4kV. This equipment is also available in a simplified version, without the relay testing device.

SUCCESS OF A SWISS FIRM

On 12th November, 1974, the Majestic Mill in Oldham, Lancashire, a mill belonging to the Courtaulds Ltd. group, was the scene of a special celebration, marking the delivery of the 1,000,000st Uster Automatic electronic yarn clearer. During the last two years, over 5,000 electronic yarn clearers produced by the Swiss firm have been installed in mills belonging to the Courtaulds group. The world-wide success of this yarn clearer began more than ten years ago in 1964 when the first units were delivered. By 1966 the number of clearers in operation amounted to more than 100,000 and by 1970 to more than 300,000. Today, over one million Uster clearers for eliminating defective yarns have been supplied to mills in 50 countries all over the world. The tremendous success of this product is closely bound up with the automation of winding. Over 95 per cent of all automatic winders today are equipped with electronic yarn clearers because of the need to ensure "fault-free" yarn. The Uster Automatic yarn clearer can also carry out control functions on the automatic winder and provide the necessary signals for data collection installations. Thanks to its quality control and production supervisory functions, fully automatic winding is now possible.

SWISS PARTICIPATION IN A RUMANIAN NUCLEAR POWER STATION

The first Rumanian nuclear power station, scheduled to go into operation at the beginning of the 80s, is to be built at Olt, some 60 miles from Bucharest. Developing a power of 440MW, it will be equipped with a Soviet-made reactor. The Rumanian foreign trade concern, Romenergo, recently signed a contract with the Swiss Engineering firm of Elektro-Watt, in Zurich, which it commissioned to handle the consultancy and engineering work for the scheme. The Swiss firm has already gained invaluable experience in this field, since it had been given a similar contract for the Loviisa nuclear power station in Finland, which is also equipped with Soviet reactors.

DROP IN THE SALE OF OIL PRODUCTS IN SWITZERLAND

In Switzerland, sales at wholesale-importer level of the main oil products fell off by 11.3% in 1974. This is the first time since the Second World War that such a drop has occurred. There are several causes for this falling off, in particular the restrictions on sales (quotas) decreed by the authorities at the beginning of the year, the comparative mildness of the winter, the increased taxes, and last but not least, the efforts on the part of consumers to economise in view of the oil crisis. The consumption of petrol (gasoline for automobiles) fell by 3.9% to the figure of 2.41 million tons. The monthly sales figures show clearly that demand dropped sharply after the ten centime rise in the surtax per litre of petrol introduced at the end of August. However, in spite of the continual increase in the price of crude oil, quotations on the free world market have begun to come down, so that in Switzerland too companies have started to reduce the prices charged, in this way practically offsetting the amount of the surtax. Consequently, demand strengthened again in December 1974. Sales of heating oils as a whole fell off by 14% to 8.23 million tons, owing to the comparative mildness of the winter. The

ZURICH INSURANCE

ZURICH INSURANCE COMPANY
A limited company incorporated in Switzerland in 1872.

THE BEDFORD GENERAL INSURANCE CO. LTD.
A member of the British Insurance Association.

THE BEDFORD LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY LTD.
A member of the Life Offices Association.

United Kingdom Head Office for Administration & Service:
Victory House, Havant Street,
Portsmouth PO1 3EZ.
Telephone: Portsmouth 22200

United Kingdom Executive Head Office:
Fairfax House, Fulwood Place,
London WC1V 6HX.
Telephone: 01-242 8833.

GROUP RESOURCES EXCEED £500,000,000

consumption of diesel oil dropped considerably too, i.e. by 13.5% to reach 0.66 million tons. This reduction is due mainly to the deterioration in the economic situation in the building sector. Finally, attention should be called to the remarkable stability of the sales of jet fuels, which dropped only 1.2% to settle at 0.64 million tons.

SWISS CLOTHING INDUSTRY IN 1974

In 1974, Switzerland imported 257 francs' worth of clothing (import price) per head of the population, while exports worked out at 69 francs. Whereas export prices averaging 95.60 francs per kilogram did not change, the mean import price rose from 67 to 69 francs. The difference in price between imports and exports is accounted for by the superior quality of the products of the Swiss clothing industry. The adverse balance of trade in the clothing industry increased in 1974, rising from 1,071 to 1,186 million francs. Imports increased by 10% to total 1,620 million francs and exports by 8% to reach 434 million francs. Switzerland's main suppliers were, once again, West Germany (366 million francs) and France (253 million). While, among the Swiss clothing industry's chief buyers, Austria was first once more, and by far, with 122 million francs (+ 12%), followed by West Germany (+ 12%) and Great Britain (– 9%). First among the non-European countries, Japan came sixth overall (+ 27%). Exports to the United States, on the other hand, have been on the decline for several years now owing to the big change in the rates of exchange. Whereas in 1971 the United States was still fifth, accounting for from 7 to 8% of Switzerland's total exports, it fell to 12th place last year with a share of only 2%.

SWISS MEDICINES IN GREAT DEMAND

In 1974 the Swiss pharmaceutical industry exported 1,811.5 million francs' worth of products. Compared with 1973, this represents an increase of 318.7 million francs. As the average price of these products increased by only 4.4%, in real value – that is to say after making allowances for the rise in the cost of living – the increase in exports in this sector amounted in fact to 16.2% while the corresponding increase in the previous year was only 5.1%. The Swiss pharmaceutical industry exports about 95% of its total output.

SWISS INVESTMENTS IN WEST GERMANY

The Swiss were the most important investors in West Germany last year after the Americans. They respectively spent 1.25 billion Deutschmark and 1.05 billion Deutschmark in West German portfolio. Then came the Dutch (488.4 million), the British (457.1 million), the Japanese (237.4 million) and the Belgians (225.7 million). The Swiss and the Americans have traditionally been the most important investors in the Federal Republic. They have respectively invested 6.1 and 16.5 billion marks in that country since 1961.

Conversely, Switzerland comes in second position after France among the countries favoured by West German investors. The latter have placed 3.87 billion marks in France between 1952 and 1974 and 3.85 billion in Switzerland during the same period.

SWITZERLAND'S GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT

According to the details given by the Commission for Economic Research, the value of Switzerland's gross national product amounted to 139,490 million francs in 1974. This represents a nominal increase of 7.8%; in real terms, the increase was 0.2% compared with the previous year. The gross national product per head of the population was thus 21,593 francs. Nominally, this figure is 1,476 francs, i.e. 7.3% higher than in 1973. But as the cost of living rose by 7.6%, the real gross national product, that is to say at constant prices, per inhabitant was therefore 0.3% lower than in 1973. From the economic point of view, it can be said that the general growth recorded in 1974 was nil.

INCREASE IN TRADE BETWEEN SWITZERLAND AND THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

In 1974, trade between Switzerland and the developing countries increased to a larger extent than in previous years. Swiss exports to these countries increased by 26% compared with 1973, to total 7,811 million francs; this amount represents a little over one-fifth of Switzerland's exports as a whole. Swiss imports from developing countries, on the other hand, increased even more sharply, reaching the figure of 4,628 million francs, i.e. 37.5% more than the previous year. The part played by Swiss purchases from developing countries as a percentage of total imports rose from 9.2% in 1973 to 10.8% in 1974.

AUTO SALES IN SWITZERLAND: THE SLUMP IS DEEPENING

After a boom lasting more than ten years, 1973 saw a decline in the sale of new passenger cars and station wagons that continued in 1974 at an accelerated pace. Some 259,000 vehicles were newly registered in 1972, which represents a historic high. In 1973, this number dropped by 7.8% to 238,700 and slumped again by almost 15% in 1974 to about 203,000, while the trend towards smaller models gathered strength.

The 1973 sales reduction can be attributed mainly to the restrictions on instalment purchases caused by the official credit curbs – one-fifth to one-third of all new car purchases in the past are believed to have been financed in part by loans – as well as to the restraint shown by consumers as a result of the oil crisis. The decline in 1974, however, was generated by several additional factors. The most important among these are the uncertain economic outlook and the greater price consciousness of potential buyers brought on by the general price spiral and falling real income growth rates as well as sharply higher prices for the initial purchase, the maintenance and the repair of automobiles. Insurance rates, registration fees and annual road taxes have also risen substantially. Among the psychological reasons producing lower sales, mention should be made of the frequently-voiced criticism of the automobile being a means of transportation for the individual in competition with public transportation. This disparagement of the car has noticeably dampened automobile enthusiasm and thereby affected sales figures.

FAVOURABLE 1974 RESULTS FOR SWISSAIR

Swissair's Board of Directors is to submit a favourable report on the business year 1974 to the Annual General Meeting in Zurich on 2nd May.

Total revenue climbed in 1974 to S.Frs. 1,950 million (£330.5 million) from S.Frs. 1,609 million (£213.1 million) in the previous year; costs before depreciations rose to S.Frs. 1,730 million (£293.2 million) from S.Frs. 1,427 million (£189.0 million). The resulting gross profit amounted, therefore, to almost S.Frs. 220 million (£37.3 million), against S.Frs. 182 million (£24.1 million) in 1973.

After the appropriation of ordinary and supplementary depreciations totalling S.Frs. 177 million (£30.0 million), against S.Frs. 142 million (£18.8 million) in the previous year, the net profit for 1974 amounted to nearly S.Frs. 43 million (£7.3 million), compared with S.Frs. 40 million (£5.3 million) for 1973.

Including the profit balance brought forward from the previous year, S.Frs. 47.8 million (£8.1 million) are at the disposal of the Annual General Meeting.

Swissair's Board recommends to the Meeting to distribute on the share capital an unchanged dividend of S.Frs. 30 per share, to appropriate S.Frs. 6 million to statutory reserves and S.Frs. 3 million to Swissair personnel welfare institutions, and to carry forward the resulting balance of S.Frs. 4.9 million.

VALUE ADDED BY WORK IN THE SWISS CHEMICAL INDUSTRY

In 1973, Switzerland purchased abroad 2,821,888 tonnes of various chemical products, roughly half of which consisted of raw materials for her chemical industry and the other half of finished products for the use of other industries as well as of direct consumers. The value of these imports averaged out at 1.38 francs per kilogram. During the same period, exports of the chemical industry totalled 621,004 tonnes of various specialities, whose average value worked out at 10.36 francs per kilo. This

● *to page 15*