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EXCERPTS FROM LITRA

Michael has translated some of the information provided by LITRA

TRANSPORT ON DEMAND

During the last decade there has been a marked increase in the provision of transport on demand, taking in buses, cable-cars, ships and ferries which are all available just by picking up the phone. This system combines the known advantages of public transport with a more flexible pick up and drop system and which is almost as good as having your own personal private public transport system

After a cautious start, the idea of services on demand has gained a large foothold in Switzerland, the numbers rising from 30 in 1993 to 249 today. Supplementing the existing cable cars and boats, many urban and rural bus routes now offer the service. Strenuous efforts are made to run these services economically. It does mean that thinly populated areas, which previously had no public transport, can now be served by transport on demand. An idea, which began in 1993 in Cantons Luzern, Aargau and Graubünden, has now spread successfully over the whole country. The increased use of mobile telephones has made access to the new services much easier.



One of the demand responsive buses used by Der Post. ©Der Post

From Verkehrs-Informationen, 23.3.2004 -No. 4

THE LIBERALISATION OF SWISS RAILWAYS IS UNDERWAY

For the second time, a European study into the economic opening-up of rail transport has been made. Switzerland is amongst the top of the European league in this regard. Seven EU member states were accorded this rating, along with Switzerland, which performs very well in the category of rail-borne competition (4th place) and open access to its rail network (5th place).

The study includes all EU states as well as Norway and of course Switzerland. It deals with two main topics. Firstly: how far is a country's legislation encouraging competition on the railways, and how difficult are the conditions and hurdles for entering the business? Secondly: How easy is it for a railway company to acquire access to another network?

The final report declares only a few countries to be giving satisfaction with regard to the above guidelines. The authors divided the countries into three categories: those who were actively working on the economic opening-up process, such as Britain, Sweden, Germany, Holland, Denmark and Switzerland. Italy and Portugal have recently also been making their contribution. These countries allow open competition and open access to new entrants.

The second category contains those whose progress has been slower: Austria, Luxembourg, France, etc. In the third category (Greece, Ireland, Spain, etc.) the process has barely begun.

While Switzerland is pleased with the findings, it does have problems with its neighbours, (Austria and, above all, France), who are lagging behind with the opening-up of their rail networks. France has not yet put the necessary legal requirements in place.

The study comes to the conclusion that Switzerland offers easy access to its rail system for third parties. There are some problems with rail vehicles from abroad, some of which are not

really compatible on Swiss railways. Older vehicles are preferred, which have been in long and constant use in the various EU member states.

RAIL, BUS AND TRAM JUBILEES IN 2005

This year, numerous rail, bus and tram lines will be celebrating birthdays. In round figures no fewer than eight railways were opened 150 years ago. Of the railways which are 100 years old this year, eight have been closed and replaced by buses.

The first railway line on Swiss territory was the one between Strasbourg and Basel, which, on 15th June 1844, opened between St Louis and a temporary station near St John's Gate. The first permanent station did not open until later within the city walls.

Almost eleven years later, the *Grossherzoglich Badischen Staatseisenbahn* was the next to reach Swiss territory, comprising a stretch from Haltingen to the then Baden Station in Basle, which opened on 20th February 1855, i.e. 150 years ago. It took another 18 years before passengers could enjoy a through rail link to the rest of Switzerland, when the Basle link line crossed the Rhine.

Among other such jubilees, eastern Switzerland can number a few, such as the line from Wallisellen to Zurich Oerlikon, opened in December 1855.

A rarity in Switzerland, the 75cm-gauge line from Liestal to Waldenburg, opened on 1st November 1880, and so is 125 years old. In its first year there were six steam hauled return journeys each day taking an hour to travel the 13km. Nowadays the line is electrified with the service increased to 40 return trips taking only 25 minutes each way.

Although a number of railway lines and funiculars have since been shut down, two may be mentioned which have actually grown since being opened in 1905: the Montreux-Oberland line from Gstaad to Zweisimmen and the Jungfrau railway from Eigwand to Eismeer.

For the sake of completeness some of the more important Jubilees are listed below.

150 Jahre	20. February 1855	Haltingen–Basel Badischer Bahnhof
	7. May 1855	Bussigny–Yverdon
	16. May 1855	Winterthur–Romanshorn
	1. June 1855	Liestal–Sissach
	1. July 1855	Bussigny–Renens–Morges
	14. October 1855	Wil–Winterthur
	25. December 1855	Flawil–Wil
	27. December 1855	Zürich Oerlikon–Wallisellen–Winterthur
125 Jahre	1. November 1880	Liestal–Waldenburg
100 Jahre	1. May 1905	Nyon–Crassier–La Rippe
	6. July 1905	Gstaad–Zweisimmen
	25. July 1905	Eigerwand–Eismeer
	1. August 1905	Brunnen–Morschach–Axenstein
	7. August 1905	Schwanden–Elm
	8. August 1905	Neuhausen Rheinhof–Schleitheim–Oberwiesen–Stühlingen
	3. November 1905	Crassier–La Rippe–Divonne–les-Bains
75 Jahre	6. June 1930	Brig–Visp
	5. October 1930	Vésenaz–Corsier–Veigy Nord

75 YEARS OF GLACIER EXPRESS

This is the subject of an earlier article in this edition and is mentioned here for completeness.

From Verkehrs-Informationen 18.11.2004 - no. 11

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