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Editorial.



Jean-François Roth,
president of
Switzerland Tourism.

“An important boost in a time of crisis.”

What did the 2012 impulse programme achieve?

Funds totalling 12 million Swiss francs were granted by parliament, and an additional 0.8 million Swiss francs came from our tourism partners and from us. This spending generated more than one million additional overnights, and accelerated our expansion in strategically important markets.

Parliament rejected the 2013–2015 special programme?

Yes, by a few votes. It was intended to play a decisive role in speeding up market diversification. At the end of March 2013, we submitted a detailed report to the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (Seco) regarding the different impulse programmes undertaken by ST since 2009.

Has this impulse programme had any impact yet?

The results clearly show the powerful effect of this spending. The individual impulse programmes have produced a lasting reinforcement of our presence in China, India, the Gulf states and in Southeast Asia. As a result, Switzerland has succeeded in gaining important market share.



Jürg Schmid,
CEO of
Switzerland Tourism.

“A dual strategy is essential.”

What was the greatest challenge for ST in 2012?

Without doubt it was the combination of the strong Swiss franc and the tough economic situation in Europe. To face it, we needed to maintain our full range of marketing activities in Europe and the US and at the same time expand our presence in the highly promising distant markets. This dual strategy is essential, but it is also a great challenge.

What is the most positive trend of the year, in your view?

Our geographical diversification is bearing fruit. In Switzerland, the growth in overnights by tourists from China, India, Russia and the Gulf states is clearly outpacing the growth registered in the last five years by our European competitors for the same nationalities (page 15).

And the most unwelcome trend?

The fact that we lost ground in Germany over the whole year, without being able to discern any signs of recovery. Between 2009 and 2012, the number of overnights by our German guests fell by 25%. One of our most important challenges in 2013 will be to reverse this trend.

