

Generation 3.0

Strategy 2017 – 2019

Mission

Avenir Suisse is an independent think tank that works for the future of Switzerland by developing evidence-based, liberal, free-market ideas.

This is at the heart of our mission.

Avenir Suisse was established in 1999 by 14 large Swiss companies as the Foundation for the Future of Switzerland. Two years later the foundation started operations, initially with a five-year funding agreement, with sociologist Thomas Held as its first director. In 2004, it was decided to prolong the foundation's activities on an indefinite basis and open the support group to additional donors. In 2010, economist Gerhard Schwarz took over as director, followed in spring 2016 by business administration expert Peter Grünenfelder. The appointment of Avenir Suisse's third director marked the board of trustees' desire to move into Avenir Suisse Generation 3.0.

Since its establishment, Avenir Suisse has become Switzerland's foremost think tank. As a free market thought leader, it forms an important link between business, politics, the scientific and academic world, the media, and the public. Its evidence-based policy recommendations and long-term reform strategies have enjoyed a broad positive response.

Avenir Suisse engages in public debate through different publication formats ranging from books, cantonal monitoring studies and discussion papers ("avenir debate") to shorter thought leadership reports ("avenir standpunkte") and opinion pieces in prominent media. In recent years, its website blogs have become a central communications tool. Additionally, Avenir Suisse's experts regularly participate as speakers at various events and are interviewed on national and international radio and television.

Avenir Suisse has to keep ahead of the times and take the lead in terms of shaping opinion on

important issues affecting Switzerland's future. In the interests of transparency toward our donors and the public, our Strategy 2017–2019 sets out the key objectives of our work.

Peter Grünenfelder
and the Avenir Suisse team

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A Think Tank for Switzerland

Avenir Suisse develops ideas for Switzerland's future. We identify relevant topics, give early warnings when action is required, and recommend solutions. Avenir Suisse's ideas are designed to prepare the political and social ground for reform. The motivation behind Avenir Suisse's work is the long-term preservation and enhancement of Switzerland's prosperity.

Independent

Avenir Suisse develops its views independently and free of political constraints. This autonomy is guaranteed by our donors' commitment to long-term funding and our clear corporate governance rules. As a non-profit foundation focused on thought leadership and research requiring absolute independence, in contrast to other interest groups and lobbies, Avenir Suisse does not participate in the consultative phase of legislation or in Swiss referendum campaigns.

Evidence-based Policy Research

Avenir Suisse's own researchers work with institutions in Switzerland and abroad to formulate evidence-based, primarily economically-founded reforms. A particular emphasis is fostering open dialog with policymakers and business leaders,

and communicating its findings clearly and appropriately to its target audiences.

Liberal

Avenir Suisse's approach is firmly rooted in liberal social principles and free market economics. It's driven by the conviction that the best basis for widespread prosperity is a liberal state and open society that promote individual enterprise, individual responsibility, and modernization.

Privately Financed

Avenir Suisse is privately funded. Its support group includes small and large companies from all economic sectors and regions of Switzerland, as well as private individuals. Thanks to this wide backing, the think tank is free of special interests and is able to address uncomfortable issues and political taboos.

Board of Trustees

In its capacity as Avenir Suisse's most senior body, the board of trustees selects the members of all committees and the director. The trustees meet once or twice a year to approve the budget, the annual report, and the financial statements.

Andreas Schmid (Chair)

Management Committee

The management committee supervises the foundation's operations, approving thematic priorities, overseeing the finances, and preparing meetings of the board of trustees.

Andreas Schmid (Chair)

Nomination Committee

The nomination committee is responsible for selecting candidates for all the foundation's committees and its management.

Thomas Knecht (Chair)

Program Committee

The program committee advises the director on setting research priorities, as well as guiding project work and assuring the methodological quality of Avenir Suisse's work. It meets three times a year to discuss individual projects in detail.

Committee representatives are also in close dialog with think tank staff outside formal meetings.

Prof. Marius Brühlhart (Chair)

Finance Committee

The finance committee supervises the financial affairs of Avenir Suisse. It checks quarterly figures, annual results, and the budget.

Markus Neubaus (Chair)

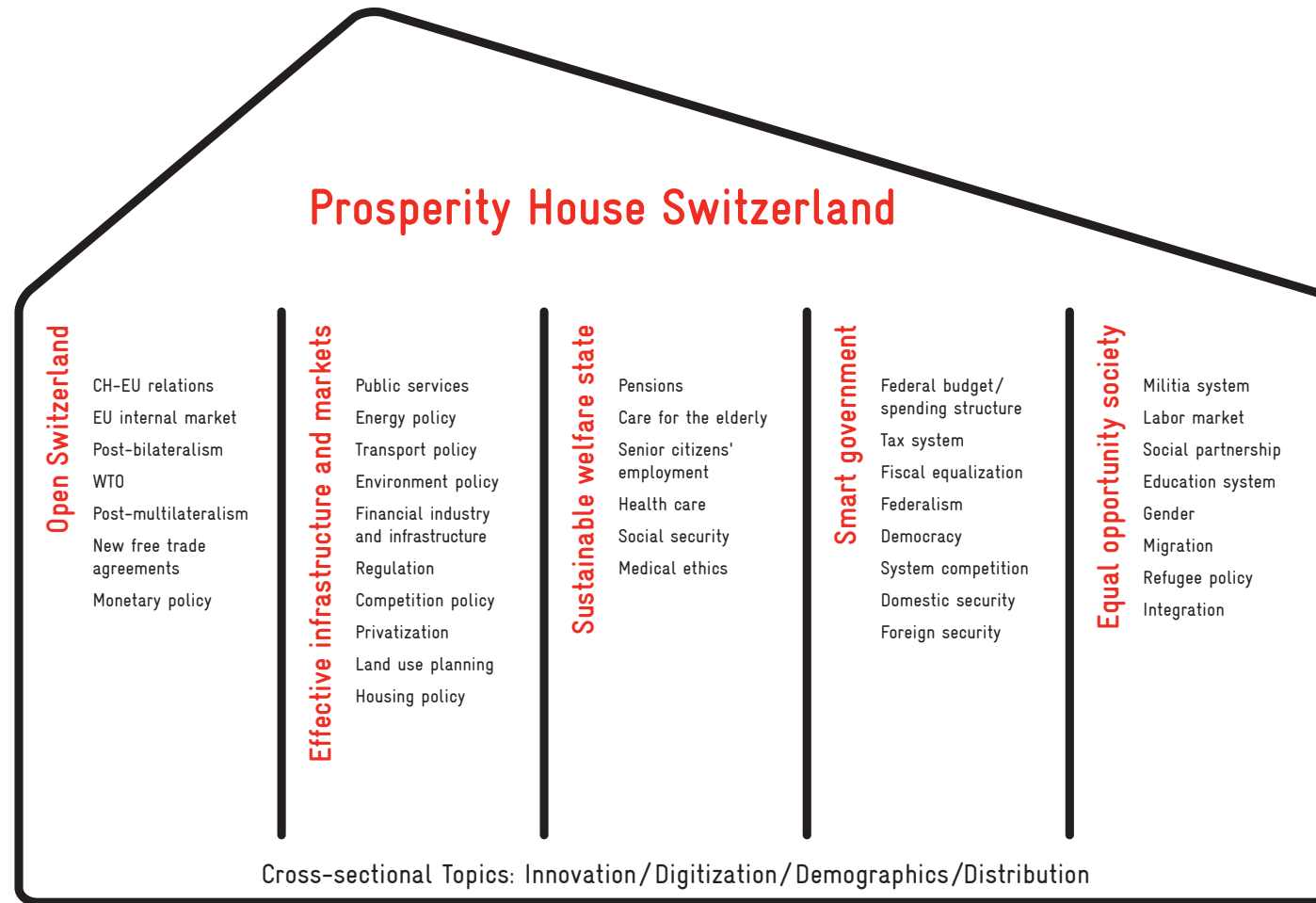
Support Group

An extensive support group of donors ensures that the foundation's activities are funded sustainably for the long term. It comprises organizations and individual donors that have made a significant contribution on a one-off or ongoing basis. The support group serves as a sounding board for Avenir Suisse's project activities.

Thomas Hammer (Chair)

Our Program: Focusing on Five Drivers of Prosperity

Avenir Suisse wants to contribute to ensuring and increasing the prosperity of broad sections of the Swiss population on a long-term basis. To do so, our research focuses on five drivers which we see as key to the further development of “Prosperity House Switzerland.” Additionally, we look at cross-sectional themes such as digitization and innovation which influence all the drivers and are therefore incorporated in all our proposed solutions.



Driving
Prosperity

A Pillar-based Strategy

Over the past two decades, dark clouds have cast a shadow over Prosperity House Switzerland. Many factors have contributed to this re-emergent isolationism: hesitant market opening in infrastructure, a social security system unprepared for an aging society, incorrect priorities in tax policy, a general tendency to regulate, and delays in reforming Switzerland's financial architecture and competition within the federal state structure. For Switzerland's further social and economic development, every driver of prosperity matters.

Open Switzerland

Switzerland's economic success and prosperity are based on the country's openness and the unhindered exchange of goods and services, capital, people, and ideas. Avenir Suisse develops strategies for foreign policy and trade, for Switzerland's bilateral and multilateral relations, and participation in supranational organizations. Avenir Suisse draws attention to issues where emphasis should be placed to strengthen Switzerland in the long term.

Effective Infrastructure and Markets

Switzerland has room for improving the effectiveness and openness of its markets and infrastructure—for example by barriers to market entry or public sector companies. To strengthen market forces, Avenir Suisse advises on what strategies should be pursued by the public and private sectors to ensure better and cheaper services. We work on policy suggestions to improve the efficiency of public services and on intelligent regulations to boost competition—for example in energy, transport, or the environment.

Sustainable Welfare State

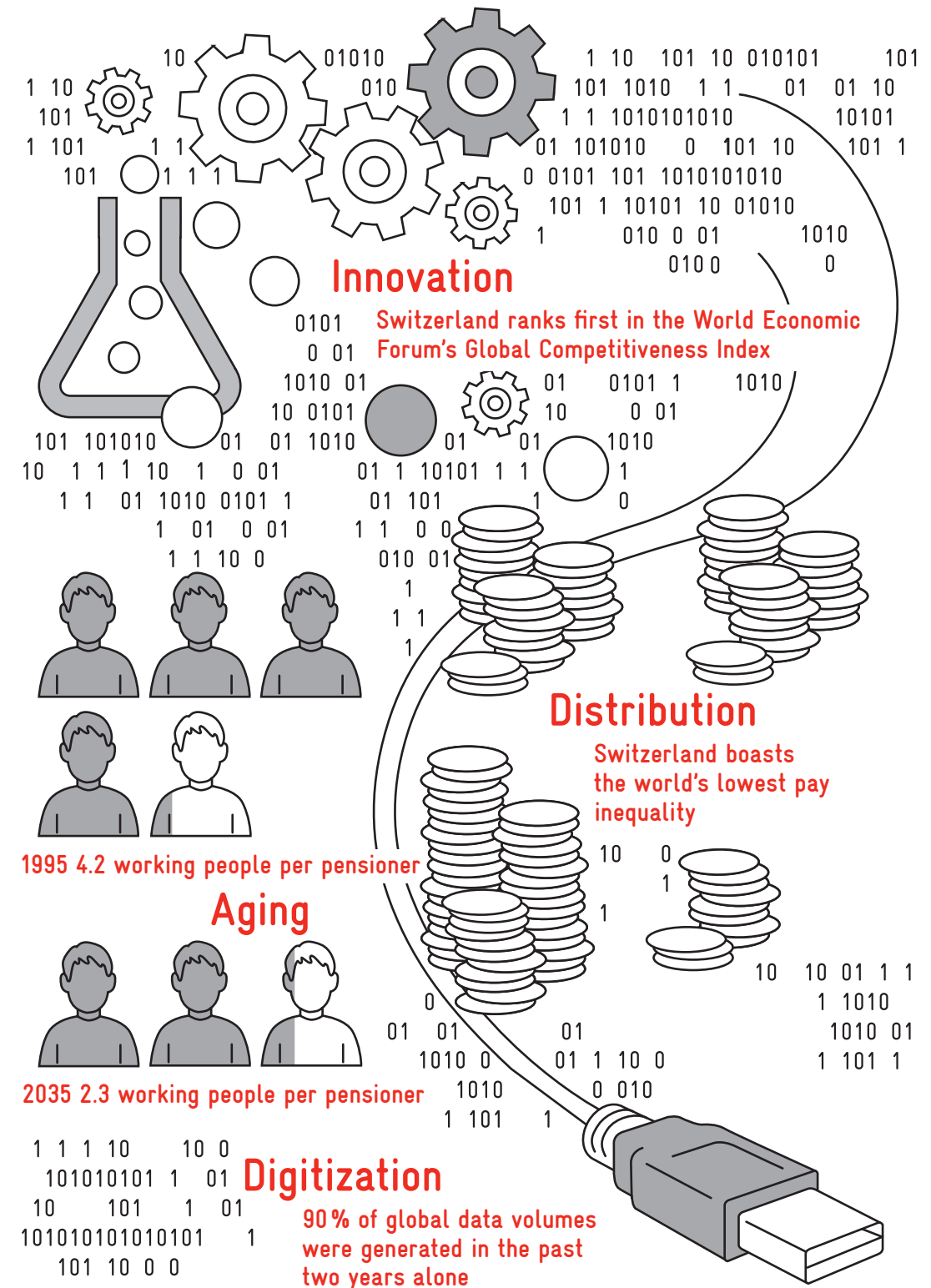
Demographic developments are tying up ever more cantonal and federal tax revenues. In the coming decade, spending on social security and health will account for a good two thirds of all government spending—to the detriment of other important tasks such as education. Avenir Suisse develops strategies for the federal, cantonal, and municipal authorities that allow Switzerland's social security system to (again) become financially sound in the medium and longer term.

Smart Government

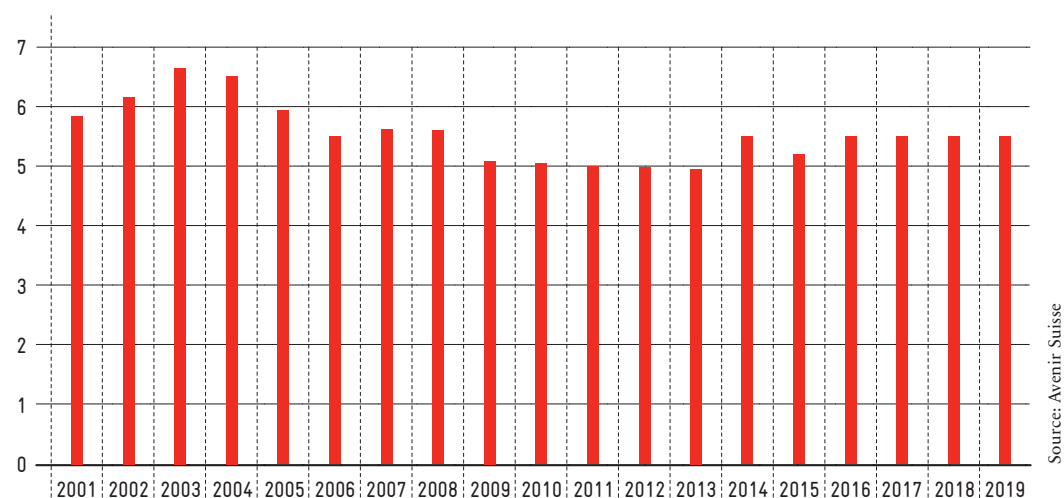
By 2020, half of the labor force will comprise members of the so-called Generations Y and Z. Digitization will affect ever more aspects of life and work. The public sector cannot ignore such developments. Avenir Suisse works on strategies for the digital development of our democracy. With the public sector's room to manoeuvre eroded by the constantly rising share of planned spending in federal and cantonal government, we also prepare proposals for economic policy reforms. Avenir Suisse's solutions range from increasing discretionary spending to budget cuts and tax reforms. To raise competition within the federal system, we propose possible ways of reforming the new fiscal equalization system and the division of responsibilities between federal government and the cantons.

Equal Opportunity Society

The potential capacity of the Swiss domestic labor force is declining due to an ageing society. Estimates show that by 2030, the number of people leaving the workforce will be about 65% higher than those entering it. Avenir Suisse develops strategies for an efficient labor market, greater integration of women in the workforce, a lasting social partnership, and a modern and innovative educational system. Immigration will remain an important factor to satisfy the labor market's need for qualified specialist staff.



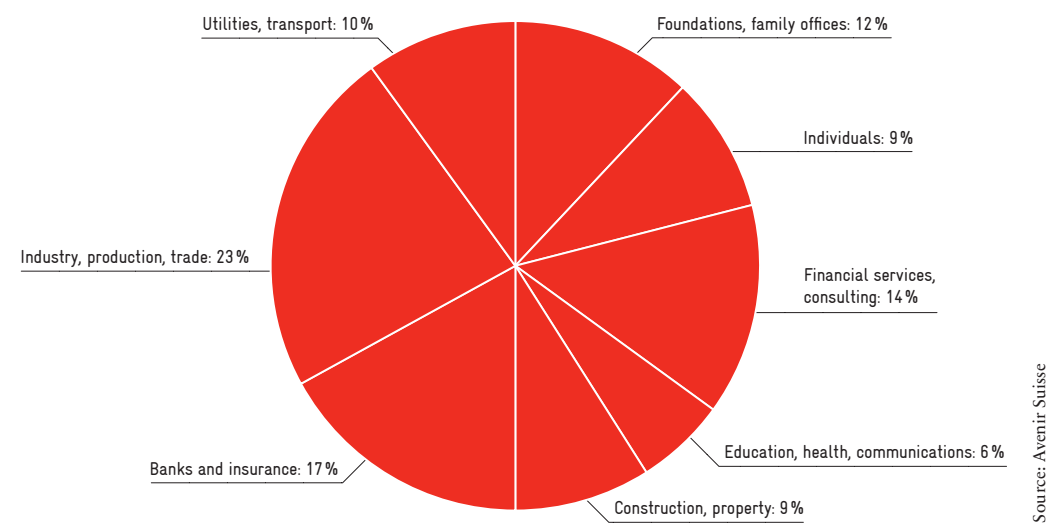
Budgeted spending, 2001 to 2019, million francs



Our Plan: Stability and Broad-based Growth

Avenir Suisse is a non-profit foundation. Spending on research, publications and communications is financed by contributions from donors. In 2001, our founding year, expenditure amounted to 5.8 million francs. Between 2010 and 2015, expenses were about 5 million francs annually as more research was brought in house. The budget for 2016 is around 5.6 million francs. Because of strong demand for Avenir Suisse's services, expanding regional activities (particularly in Italian-speaking Switzerland), and the need for a broad, liberally based discussion about renewal in Swiss politics and society, we plan to strengthen our five pillar-based research activities. Spending should remain stable at about 5.5 million francs a year in the forthcoming period.

Donors by sector (2015)

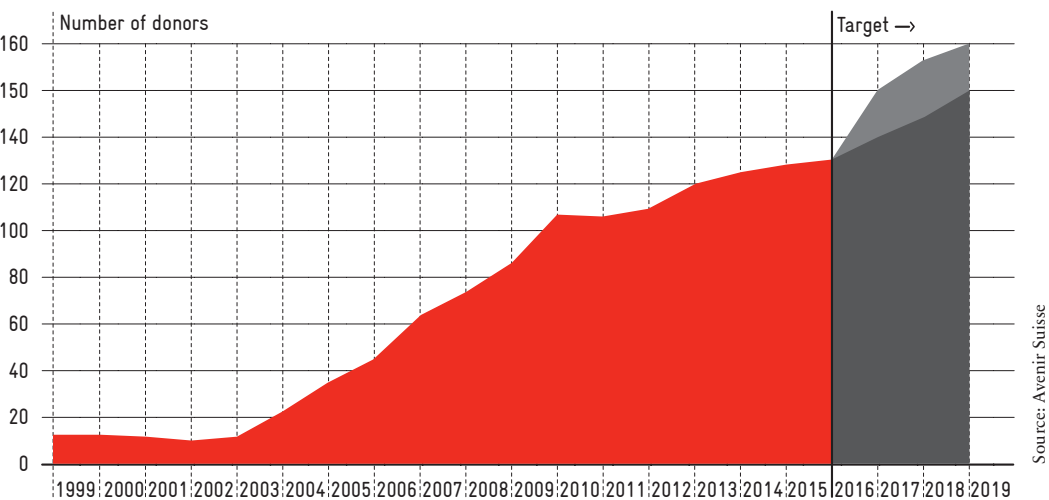


Source: Avenir Suisse

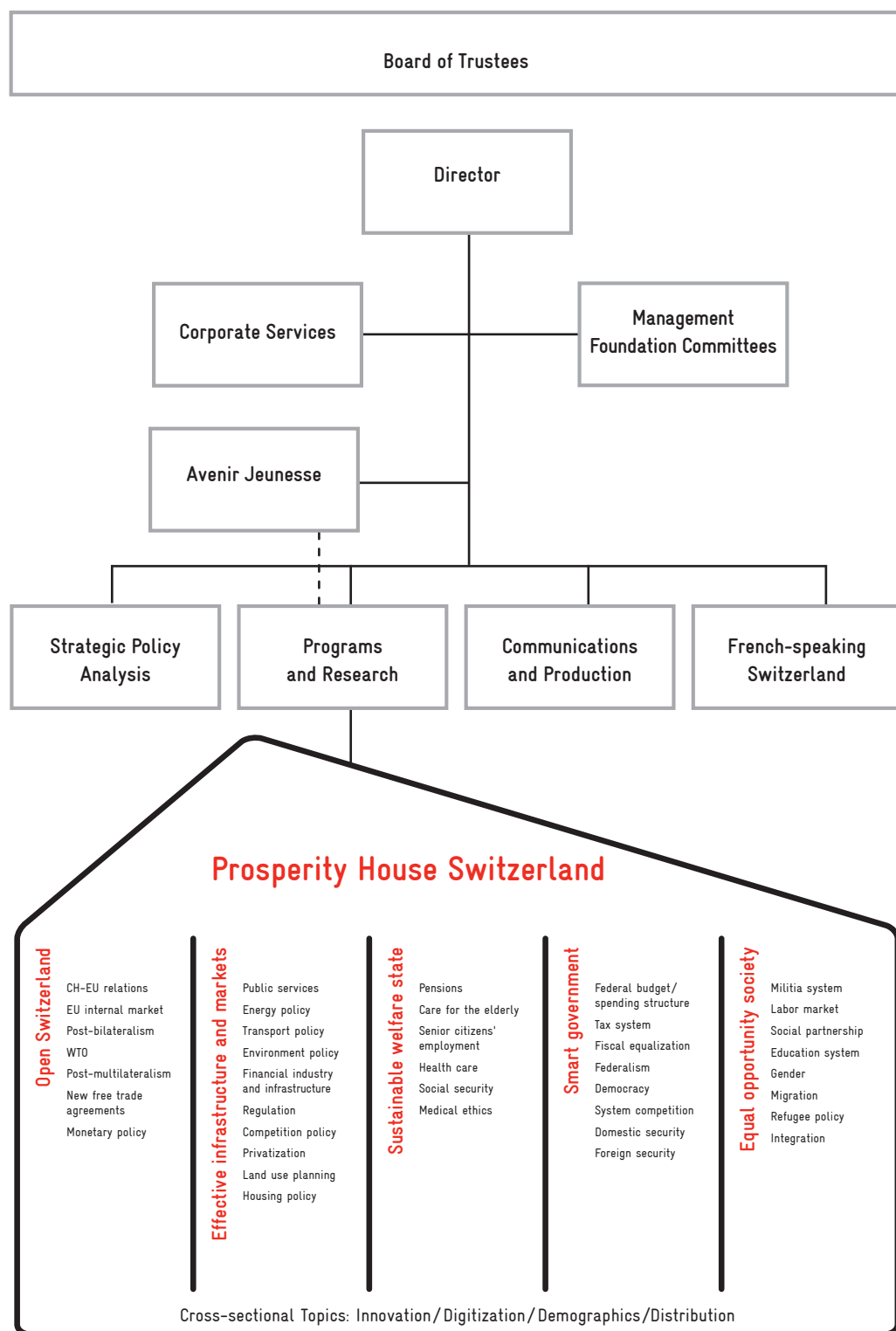
**Our Support Group:
Broader Sectoral and
Regional Diversification**

Over the current planning period the aim is to broaden the support group and make it more diverse in terms of economic sectors and regions. In Avenir Suisse’s early years, around half our donors came from finance, industry, manufacturing, and trade. Since creation of the support group in 2005, our donors have become more diversified, covering additional sectors and regions. Numerous private donors and foundations have also offered their support. In line with our strategy of broad-based growth, the plan is to increase this diversification during the current period and maintain it at a stable level from 2018.

Broad support from all sectors and regions



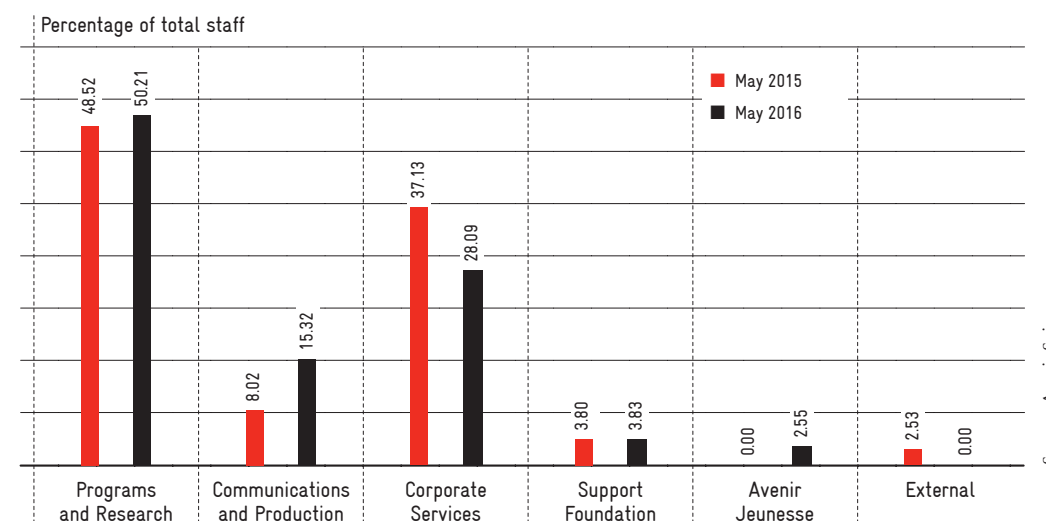
Source: Avenir Suisse

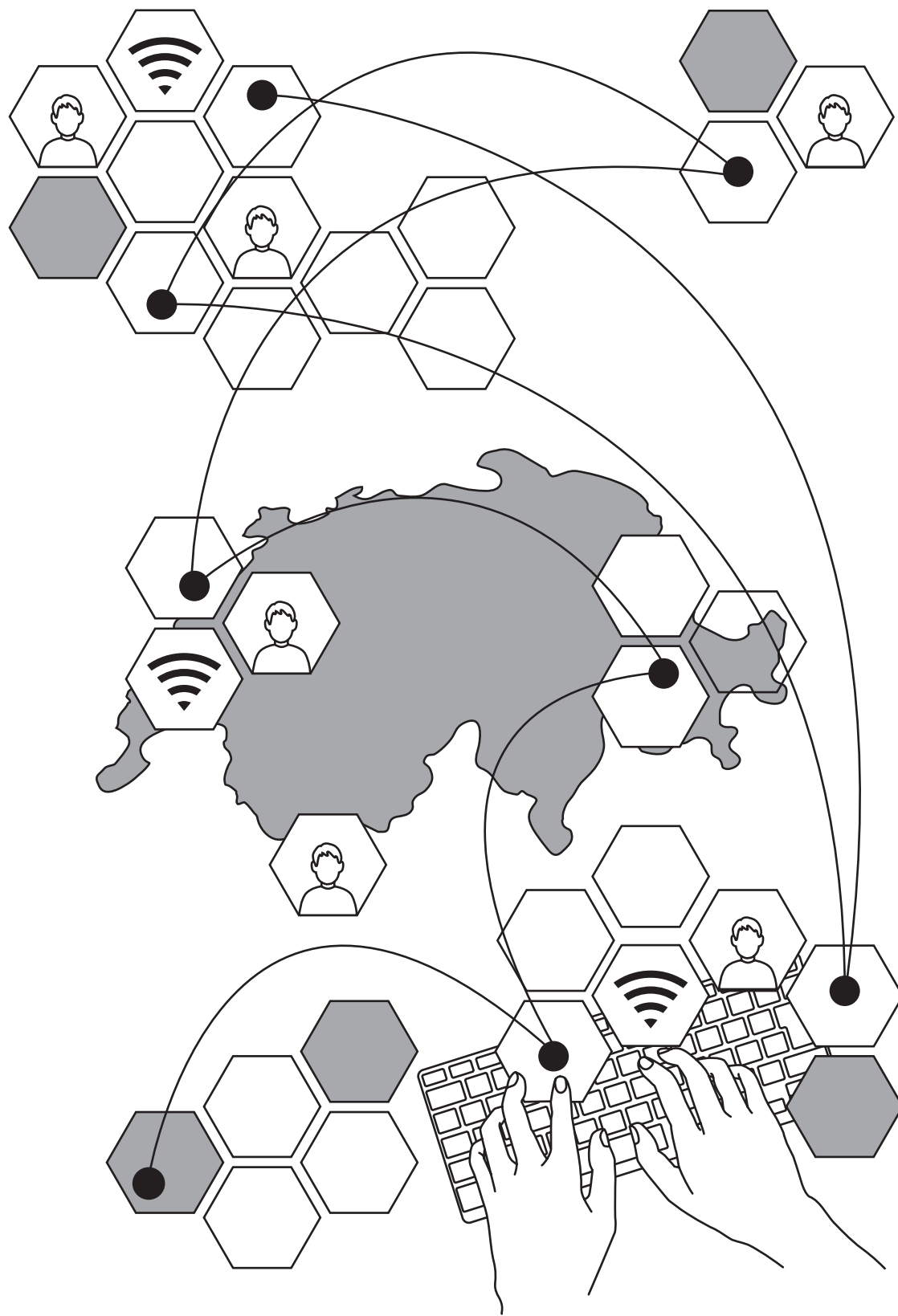


Human Resources Strategy: Priority for Research and Communications

We are a team of about 35 (about 20 full-time equivalents). Our development strategy for 2019 aims at strengthening our research activities and communications.

Breakdown of staff by area





Avenir Jeunesse

Today's youth is tomorrow's future. Avenir Jeunesse is creating formats to get young people interested in Avenir Suisse's concerns and excited about liberal reform. Accordingly, themes are chosen that are particularly relevant to the younger generation. Avenir Jeunesse offers a platform for bringing together interested young people at different types of events to exchange views and discuss Switzerland's future.

Avenir
Jeunesse



Clear Messages

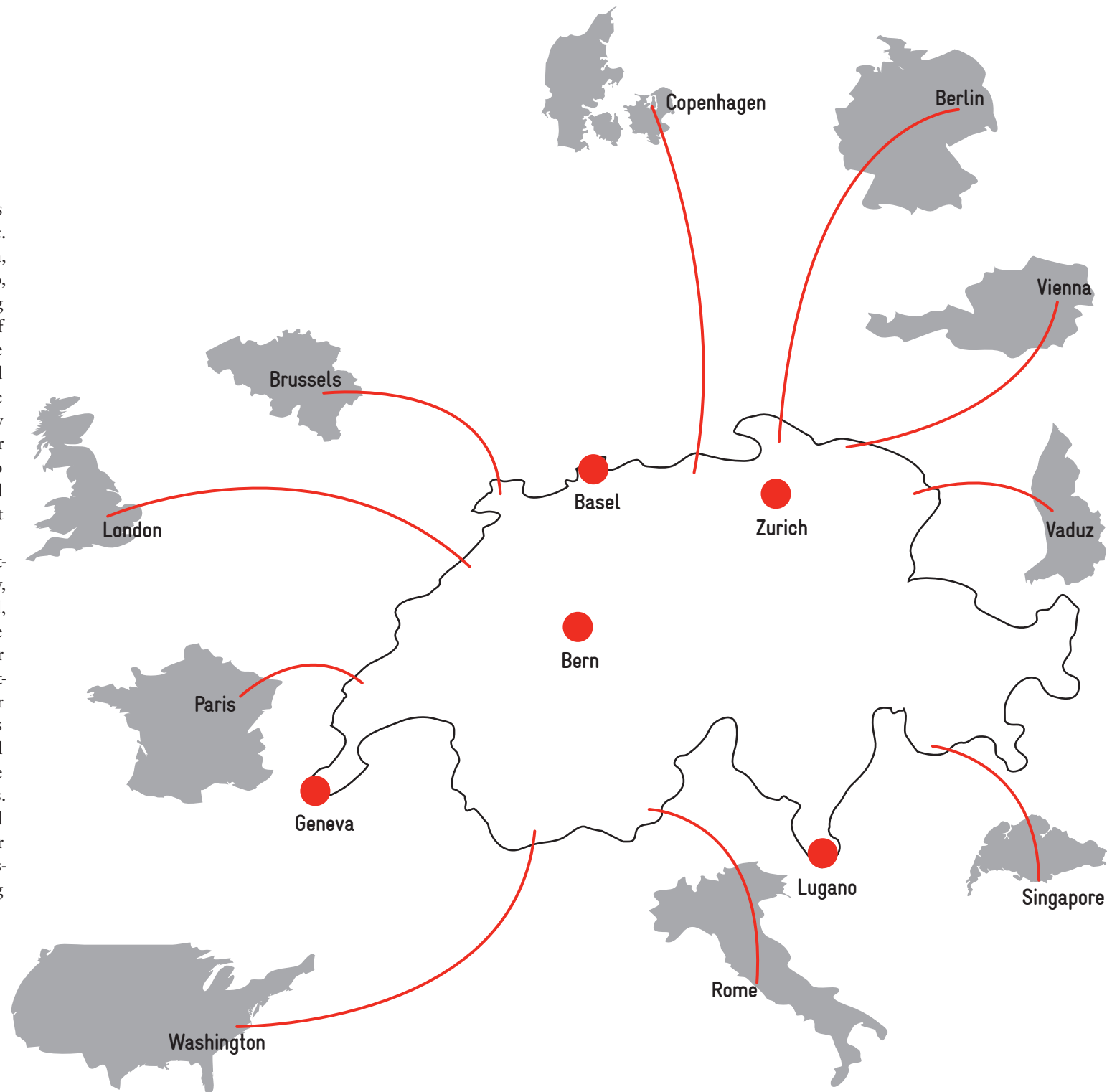
Avenir Suisse sets specific communications goals for each of its prosperity drivers. Messages are conveyed in tailor-made and highly targeted forms. By stepping up our presence in Bern we want to strengthen our direct exchange with policymakers and members of the administration, for example at strategy events and committee hearings. Public awareness of our activities should also be strengthened by opinion pieces in major media. Shifting media consumption and new technologies will also create new opportunities for communicating. Already, about half of our media presence is via the internet. In the new online world, the effectiveness of established publications like “avenir debate” and “avenir standpunkte” will be supported by targeted use of multimedia formats such as videos or podcasts, as well as digital storytelling.

In the future we want to step up the dissemination of our reform proposals by way of personal contacts, talks by our experts, increased participation in discussion forums, and through our own events.

Regional Roots and International Network

Avenir Suisse's research focuses on pan-Swiss themes but can also be canton- or region-specific. While most of the current team is based in Zurich, since 2002 we have had an office in Geneva too, underscoring the importance of French-speaking Switzerland in our activities. And while most of our publications are in German and French, we also produce a selection of work in Italian and English. In addition to our existing work, since January 2017 we have also produced a monthly English digital newsletter as well. Alongside other closely related organizations worldwide, we also aim to inform expatriates in Switzerland and Swiss diplomatic representations abroad about our activities.

Switzerland is one of the world's best networked countries. In today's globalized society, few problems recognize national borders, and many countries face similar challenges. All are interested in "best practice" elsewhere. Avenir Suisse intends to strengthen its international network, particularly through contacts with other think tanks and in areas that directly affect Swiss prosperity. From 2017, we plan to host an annual international think tank conference to boost the exchange of ideas with like-minded institutions. Avenir Suisse will also build up its national and regional network. Along with reinforcing our presence in the federal capital of Bern, we envisage putting more emphasis on Italian-speaking Ticino in our regional activities.



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