

“Turning Crises into Opportunities”

Avenir Suisse turns 25 – and calls for an antifragile Switzerland

Switzerland has always thrived when the world was at its most turbulent. But this very strength is now at risk of being lost. With a new book and a national campaign, Avenir Suisse shows what it will take to ensure that crises remain opportunities in the future.

Crises are becoming more frequent. Over the past five years alone, Switzerland has faced the Covid-19 pandemic, the collapse of Credit Suisse, rising geopolitical tensions, and most recently, a global trade conflict.

The country has weathered all these turbulences remarkably well. Yet the series of shocks is leaving deeper and deeper marks. Many people feel increasingly overwhelmed. Society as a whole is under noticeable strain.

This strain is also showing up as the first cracks in the institutional building blocks of our country. Cantons are increasingly shifting responsibilities to the federal government; instead of a vibrant federalist culture, a petitioning mindset is spreading. At the same time, cherished Swiss virtues such as the willingness to serve in the militia system and the commitment to consensus are coming under pressure.

Many recognize that the system is hitting its limits. Yet at the same time, expectations that the state should fix, safeguard, and rescue everything are becoming more common. As a result, future crises will confront a Switzerland in which trusted institutions are already showing fractures—while citizens themselves increasingly feel a loss of control.

Antifragility: Switzerland’s recipe for success

To navigate this situation as a society, we need a quality that has historically made Switzerland strong—and is more important today than ever: antifragility. Antifragility is not simply another word for resilience. Rather, antifragile people and countries do more than withstand shocks—they grow stronger from them. For a small country, the concept of antifragility is essential: Only if we become stronger under external pressure will Switzerland remain a place of freedom, security, and prosperity in the future.

But how can Switzerland become (again) antifragile? A good answer to this question seems crucial in today’s turbulent environment. That is why, more than a year ago, we decided to explore this topic in depth with the entire think tank and together with a neuropsychologist. The result of this work is

condensed in a handbook. “Antifragile Switzerland: 17 Strategies for a World of Disorder” illustrates how we—both as individuals and as a country—can become antifragile.

The book is therefore a dual call to shape our future:

- **Strengthen and further develop our institutions.** Switzerland should return to the principles that historically made it antifragile: decisions made close to those affected, competition of ideas, room for local experimentation, and trust in citizens and businesses.
- **Promote individual resilience.** A free and democratic country can prosper only if its citizens are themselves antifragile. Here, every one of us has a responsibility. Long-term crisis management cannot simply be delegated away. Switzerland is likely the country where the following holds most true: The state—that is all of us. An extraordinary privilege, but also a call to action.

This call to work on the country and on oneself—to succeed in a world of disorder—is nonpartisan and not directed at any specific generation. An antifragile Switzerland concerns everyone. That is why Avenir Suisse is breaking new ground. Our think tank is accompanying the topic with a national campaign: with posters in high-traffic locations, debate formats during the parliamentary session in Bern, social-media initiatives, and other actions.

Because antifragility is not a state that, once achieved, lasts forever. It is a capability that must be continuously renewed—both as a country and as individuals.

Media assets and further information:

- [Onepager](#) (German and French)
- [Images from the poster campaign](#)
- [Book cover](#) (German and French)
- [Information page on antifragility](#) (German and French)
- [Order the book](#) (German and French)

Voices on the book:

“Why is Switzerland a successful country? Anyone who reads this book will know.”

Tobias Straumann, Professor of Economic History, University of Zurich

“An inspiring look at Switzerland’s strengths—and a wake-up call to actively develop them further.”

Ruth Metzler-Arnold, President of Swiss Olympic, former Federal Councillor

“Curiosity, risk, and change create new things. This book reminds us how Switzerland can remain innovative—even when it gets a little uncomfortable.”

Thomas Zurbuchen, Head of ETH Zurich Space, former NASA Science Director

«Antifragile Schweiz» (German)

17 Strategien für eine Welt der Unordnung

Jürg Müller, Christoph Eisenring and Patrick Leisibach (ed.)

Versus Verlag, Zurich

224 pages, paperback/bound

ISBN 978-3-03909-368-7 (print), ISBN 978-3-03909-868-2 (e-book)

«Une Suisse antifragile» (French)

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ISBN 978-3-03909-369-4 (print), ISBN 978-3-03909-869-9 (e-book)

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