



swissuniversities

annual re port



2018



The Swiss higher education sector commands a leading position when compared internationally. This has been achieved through the excellence of its performance in the areas of research and teaching as well as international networking. The success factors for universities are co-operation and competition. They cut a profile for themselves in the competition for ideas and results. Competition leads to the best in their field working together to develop the best for research and teaching.

The wide range of universities has a common voice. Under the swissuniversities banner, they develop coordinated positions. At the end of 2018, the Swiss higher education establishments made a joint contribution to the 2012-2024 Dispatch on the Promotion of Education, Research and Innovation (ERI Dispatch) In this way, swissuniversities is addressing challenges that encompass the whole of the higher education system, such as digitalisation, promoting young talent, and the development of healthcare. It is important for swissuniversities to face the challenges in the years 2012 to 2024 as a united front to perpetuate the outstanding quality of teaching and research in Swiss universities. In this way, Swiss universities can contribute to Switzerland's prosperity and continue to play a leading role on the international stage.

Prof. Dr Michael O. Hengartner
President swissuniversities

Digitalisation: Open Science and Digital Skills

In May 2017, the Higher Education Council of the Swiss Conference of Higher Education Institutions asked swissuniversities to look into measures that could be swiftly implemented to enhance digital skills in teaching. Consequently, swissuniversities provided the Council with a suggestion based on the system of project-related grants. This was accepted by the Higher Education Council at its May 2018 meeting. The programme, which is coordinated by swissuniversities, has been designed as a so-called impulse programme to enable higher education establishments to develop projects tailored to their own needs. A total of one hundred projects have been developed based on the total budget of CHF 10 million agreed for 2019 and 2020. The topic Digitalisation of Teaching is now, once again, a priority in the working programme for the Teaching delegation. At the same time, the digitalisation represents an additional challenge for science and universities. It not only has an effect on tools and methodology but is also having an ever-growing impact on the subject matter of scientific research itself. All this has generated the Open Science concept, which aims to make scientific progress and its possible repercussions for society at large much more accessible and participatory. One of the main challenges in this area with the Open Science concept is to make scientific publications available free of charge, as today they mostly have to be pur-

chased from scientific publishing houses. There are two possible ways forward: publications are made available after a waiting period (Green open access) or are available immediately (Gold open access). At the behest of the federal government and with the support of its partners, swissuniversities has developed a strategy which means that by the year 2024 all scientific publications that have received State funding will be accessible totally free of charge in Switzerland.

The current challenges for the digitalisation process are the introduction of open source science and the development of digital skills.

This strategy was decided in 2017 and fleshed out in 2018 with an action plan incorporating a roadmap for implementation. Roll-out was agreed in October 2018 at a national conference in Lausanne. In addition, the federal government has requested a similar approach for Open Research Data, i.e. free access to research data. This is currently being implemented through the development of a national open science strategy. swissuniversities has suggested the start of an implementation programme for this strategy in its 2021–2024 planning.

Highlighting the Promotion of Young Talent

The promotion of young talent within the various profiles of each higher education establishment was high on the list of priorities in 2018. swissuniversities coordinated various projects, including programmes which receive project-related State funding. An inventory of university staffing and measures in favour of promoting young talent has formed the basis for identifying and solving issues at post-doctoral level. Furthermore, a study on career paths in universities of teacher education (UTES) has meant greater visibility of qualification opportunities for young talents already within these organisations.

Different types of university have exchanged ideas on how they can make better use of each other's strong points at doctorate level. This should be seen in the context of the programme for the development of doctorate programmes at universities (UNIs) and cooperation between universities of applied sciences and art (UASAs), UTES and UNIs, or other qualifying institutions, at home and abroad. swissuniversities has also issued a call for participation in the joint thesis management programme "Cotutelles de thèse": State mobility grants are newly available for doctorate students in universities of applied sciences and art (UASAs) and universities of teacher education (UTES) as part of partnership schemes with foreign universities.

Further development of specific profiles for young talent in UASAs and UTEs features in two further programmes which got underway as planned in 2018. Firstly, this has provided support in the universities for various projects designed to expand scientific skills amongst teaching staff. Secondly, projects are strengthening the dual competencies profile of graduates from UASAs and UTEs by bringing the academic world and current practices closer together.

The ambition of achieving balanced gender make-up and equal opportunities has been furthered through another programme that has fuelled action plans at individual uni-

The doctorate plays a key role in all three higher education institutions in promoting one's own young talent.

versity level. In addition, cooperation projects were launched in 2018 in which the universities are jointly implementing innovations and are dealing with a variety of dimensions in the area of inequality of opportunity.

Strategic Planning

The Higher Education Council of the Swiss Conference of Higher Education Institutions has entrusted swissuniversities to determine key points for the ERI period 2021–2024 and to propose an allocation of tasks in particularly costly areas (article 38; 40 HEdA). This is the first time swissuniversities has undertaken strategic planning since its inception, and workflows have therefore had to be revamped. The overriding aim for 2021–2024 is to maintain the excellent quality of universities so as to contribute to Switzerland's prosperity and leading international role in the future. In order to reach this goal, swissuniversities initially laid down common key issues for all university types. In particular, these include digitalisation, the promotion of young talent, the development of healthcare, profile sharpening/portfolio streamlining and the reduction in student abandonment of studies. Secondly, all three university types have specified the topics of digitalisation and promotion of young talent or other key issues, e.g. shortage of qualified staff in the STEM disciplines or in subject-specific didactics. Finally, swissuniversities proposes seven areas: scientific information, veterinary medicine, high-performance computing, biomedical imaging, particle and astroparticle physics, animal husbandry and animal testing, and precision medicine. All these areas involve costly infrastructures and existing partnerships. There is a division of tasks in veterinary medicine, where Vetsuisse covers Swiss needs.

swissuniversities has applied for the following funds pursuant to HEdA: a 3.13% increase in basic grants from Cantonal universities and universities of applied sciences and arts to cover the growth in student numbers and for individual university measures in favour of promoting

In its first-ever strategic plan, swissuniversities has laid down its major issues for the ERI period 2021–2024.

young talent and digitalisation; CHF 125 million in project-related grants for the cooperative implementation of such measures; CHF 2 million in grants for common infrastructure facilities: enhancement of the Coordination Office for Scientific Information.

Horizon Europe and ERASMUS+

There were several discussions held in 2018 on the future European training and research framework programmes Horizon Europe and ERASMUS+. Participation in these programmes is extremely important for Swiss universities. International cooperation (particularly European) in the areas of

Competition and international cooperation are the two cornerstones of success for Swiss universities.

research and training represents a decisive success factor for the Swiss scientific community. In all this, swissuniversities is working closely with SwissCore and the Swiss mission to the EU and its academic partners, such as the European University Association (EUA), to ensure that the interests of Swiss universities are represented to the maximum in Brussels. The conditions for Switzerland to become associated with these European framework programmes are under discussion but are currently not very favourable. In the course of all this, swissuniversities is committed at a domestic level and has taken a position regarding the importance for universities of the framework agreement that is currently being negotiated. In the same vein it opposed the self-determination initiative, which endangers the stability of the framework conditions on which Swiss universities depend in order to compete internationally.

National Research Funding

Excellent research work is the basic condition for a successful higher education sector. swissuniversities is fully engaged in seeking the best framework conditions. This is why, in 2018, it submitted an opinion to the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) on the ways of implementing and further developing national research priorities and Doc.CH personal grants. It has continued its dialogue with Innosuisse.

swissuniversities has initiated and supervised the preparation of a new career instrument by SNSF which supports transfer into universities by strengthening the research skills of practitioners in the field with a view to taking

Seamless research funding based on excellence is central to the success of the higher education sector.

a position at lecturer level. In cooperation with the Gebert Rűf Foundation, two initial calls for the joint venture First Ventures were launched, providing support for university of applied science and arts graduates who have put forward innovative business ideas.

Issue Management

The framework conditions for players in the fields of education, research and innovation (ERI) are laid down by political decisions and views. The public work undertaken by swissuniversities covers political processes and societal issues as well as the expectancies of universities. In June 2018, the swissuniversities Board gave instructions to the Issue Management working party to coordinate communication on higher education policy issues. The working group identifies politically sensitive issues and suggests possible measures and reactions on the part of ERI organisations.

In September 2018, the working group on Issue Management was able to contribute to the publication of swissuniversities' positions on the framework agreement and the

Information on the consequences of political decisions.

self-determination initiative. Central to this were details of the consequences of the political framework conditions for the results and financing of ERI organisations. Their communication gave facts and arguments that were integrated in the decision-making process.

IT in Secondary Schools

Following the EDK's partial revision in August 2018 of the Maturity Diploma Recognition Regulations, IT is to be included as a compulsory secondary school subject by 2022/2023 at the latest. In order to be able to meet the need for well-trained teachers, swissuniversities, together with the interested universities, has begun work on a training course for existing secondary school teachers. It is intended to offer teaching modules that are distributed locally throughout Switzerland and incorporated in a nationally coordinated programme. The course should lead to an EDK-recognised teaching diploma for existing secondary school teachers.

Training consists of decentralised modules incorporated in a nationally coordinated programme.

A programme committee has been set up for content, which consists of one representative per participating university. The University of Fribourg has offered to coordinate implementation of the national training programme, and began work on this at the end of 2018.

Teaching Assessment

Ever since 2016, the assessment of teaching has been an integral part of teaching and studies at swissuniversities. On 8 June 2018, the Teaching Delegation network organised an event on this subject at PHBern. Around a hundred participants from all Swiss universities took the opportunity to have discussions on various topics related to teaching assessment. The event highlighted both the approaches to teaching assessment as a whole as well as the evaluation of courses. The speakers demonstrated that the issue of assessment is

Teaching assessment is a concern for universities today on a strategic and operational level.

of topical importance on a strategic and operational level. Afterwards, a lively exchange of experiences and challenges in this subject area took place in topic-based workshops. Numerous examples from the universities themselves sparked discussions. The event clearly highlighted the many assessment processes used in Swiss universities.

study in switzerland+

In August 2018, swissuniversities launched the Swiss universities' new collective website www.studyinswitzerland.plus. swissuniversities developed study in switzerland+ in order to re-position the promotion of Swiss universities abroad based on state-of-the-art marketing principles. The project has been financed by swissuniversities and SERI (State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation).

study in switzerland+, a new business card for the Swiss higher education sector abroad.

study in switzerland+ offers prospective students comprehensive information on studying in Switzerland. Visitors are guided through specific aspects of the Swiss higher education system and can obtain a wide range of details on living in Switzerland. The word image with the “+” awakens the curiosity of prospective students and emphasises special advantages such as employability, scientific quality or the diversity that is typical of Switzerland.

study in switzerland+ is communicatively supported by a printed flyer and a video clip.

30th EAIE Conference in Geneva

The 30th EAIE conference was held in Geneva in September 2018. The EAIE is a conference organised once a year in Europe for specialists in internationalisation and mobility. Geneva played host to 5,700 visitors from 95 different countries. The fact that EAIE 2018 was organised in Switzerland contributed significantly to enhancing the visibility of Swiss universities and the widening of their partner network. This is especially significant after the vote in February 2014, a decision which makes it even more important to remind people of the academic anchoring of Swiss universities in Europe.

*Swiss universities at the centre
of the world for one whole week.*

Swiss universities were able to be clearly visible with their 120 sq metre exhibition stand. This was the result of collaborative work with Presence Switzerland and it was constructed totally from recycled cardboard, thereby demonstrating the commitment of Swiss universities to sustainable development. The graphic design and key messages were inspired by www.studyinswitzerland.plus, the new information website for international students.

At the reception in the Palace of Nations, the responsibility of Swiss universities in the face of the challenges of our world and their contribution to finding answers through the development of interdisciplinary research were apparent.

Scientific Information

The swissuniversities organisational regulations provide for the establishment of networks to bring together specialists in particular disciplines so as to make use of their know-how in the higher education community. Consequently, as part of the Scientific Information programme, one network has been set up in recent years and one is currently under construction. The completed network is the Network ICT Services for Swiss Higher Education (NICT) that brings together the IT departments among Swiss universities. The network was approved in 2016 by swissuniversities and brings

Networks bring university specialists together; two networks have been set up as part of the Scientific Information programme.

together earlier examples among the different higher education institutions (ASIUS, FID, PH-ID) and facilitates discussions on common topics of interest. The second is a similar initiative taken by university libraries known as Swiss Library Network for Education and Research (SLiNER), which was approved by swissuniversities in June 2018. Work on the construction of this network, which will be a successor to KUB, the Conference of Swiss University Libraries, is still ongoing. Both networks are active in the swissuniversities Scientific Information programme.

Swiss 3R Competence Centre (3RCC)

In research projects today involving animal experiments, the 3R principle (replace-reduce-refine) enshrined in the Animal Welfare Act must be observed. There are 3R Competence Centres in most European countries, but there was not one in Switzerland. Consequently, SERI and the Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office entrusted swissuniversities in January 2016 with the development of a concept for a 3R Competence Centre (3RCC) in Switzerland.

*Transposing 3R in the field of
life sciences research.*

As a result of thinking undertaken jointly by universities, industry, government and animal welfare organisations, the 3RCC was founded in March 2018 under the auspices of swissuniversities in the form of a non-profit association. Its mission is to facilitate its application in the field of life sciences by promoting relevant research, education and communication.

Today, swissuniversities works closely with the 3RCC, mainly through the coordinator of the Swiss Animal Facilities Network (SAFN), who is a member of the swissuniversities Board.

Recommendations on Flexibilisation and Part-Time Studies

A large majority of students work, and many students are active in associations, politics, culture, in the social field or in top-level sport. The proportion of students with children is on the increase, and these students are taking up studies at a later stage in life. Such commitment is definitely positive, contributes to a vibrant civil society and promotes the development of cross-discipline skills, all of which contributes to the employability of graduates. Flexibilisation can also better take into account the specific needs of disabled or chronically ill students, which makes their higher education easier.

Study flexibilisation promotes diversity and equal opportunity.

Studying is at the centre at this stage of life and cannot be undertaken as a sideline. However, in order to take account of the diversity of the student population and to improve equal opportunities, swissuniversities has developed and published recommendations on flexibilisation and part-time study.

Stances vis-a-vis Federal Policy

As social and economic players, the universities are seeking to defend their views on federal policy. For this purpose, swissuniversities has joined forces with other players in the fields of education, research and innovation (SNSF, academies, ETH Board, Innosuisse) within the FUTURE network. On the one hand, this network deals with the dissemination of information about the academic sector in the Federal Parliament; on the other hand, it is concerned with heightening the awareness of parliamentarians to the legal and financial needs of universities. For example, four-year planning in education, research and innovation and the resulting annual budget are among the applications submitted by

The FUTURE network defends the positions taken by universities in the Federal Parliament in order to ensure a favourable legal and financial framework for them.

the FUTURE network. Furthermore, the network is involved in sector-specific propositions, such as Open Access (the introduction of a secondary publication right in the Code of Obligations) or the legal framework for human and animal experiments. Of course, the promotion of Switzerland's association with European framework programmes in the Federal Parliament is one of the current tasks of the FUTURE network.

Welcoming Foreign Delegations

swissuniversities regularly welcomes foreign delegations in order to present the special features of the Swiss research and education system as well as to expand the partner network of Swiss universities. Three important meetings took place in 2018: at the end of March, a delegation from the Canadian Quality Network for Universities came to Switzerland for one week. This visit took place in the context of the renewal of a joint statement of 25 January 2018 in Davos, the aim of which is to deepen mutual cooperation in the fields of science, technology and innovation.

*swissuniversities – the voice of
Swiss universities abroad.*

In April, a delegation from Universities UK, an organisation representing the interests of UK universities, met with a swissuniversities delegation to discuss the future of bilateral relations between Switzerland and the UK after Brexit.

In November, swissuniversities and the China Education Association for International Exchange organised a Sino-Swiss innovation and technology transfer forum that provided a platform for sharing best practices between our two countries.

2018: A Year of Further Advancement

The Plenary Assembly confirmed Michael O. Hengartner as President of swissuniversities in the early summer of 2018. He begins his second term of office at the start of 2019 determined to continue along the current path. His aim, therefore, is to further strengthen confidence and cooperation within, and among, higher education establishments. To this end, universities and research institutes should be more active in the political arena.

An internal evaluation by swissuniversities the previous year had examined the organisation, processes and topics. The results were then embodied in decisions taken by the Board. These were put into action during 2018. And so, new elections were held for the four Delegations – teaching, research, strategic planning and coordination, and international relations.

On the basis of experience and appraisal discussions, it became clear that the Organisational Regulations of swissuniversities needed to be revamped. The regulations were therefore fine-tuned to concentrate more on major higher education issues. The Higher Education Council of the Swiss Conference of Higher Education Institutions approved the revised Organisational Regulations in November 2018, so enabling them to

take effect at the start of 2019. In addition, a secondary level was introduced for purely operational issues that the Board could deal with alone in the form of enabling regulations.

A process for Organisational Further Development was also initiated within the General Secretariat. This placed particular emphasis on processes, roles and interfaces in order to optimise the use of existing staff and technical resources.

*Further strengthen confidence within universities
and cooperation among universities.*

The results are sometimes injected into daily routines, and sometimes implementation or planning forms the basis of a project.

The results achieved over recent years would not have been possible without the constructive work undertaken with our partner bodies in the universities and at federal government and Canton levels. We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to them.

Members

The following universities are members of the rectors' conference (pursuant to article 2 paras. 2 and 4, article 19 para. 2, article 30 and article 75 of HEdA):

- **Bern University of Applied Sciences, BFH**, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Herbert Binggeli;
- **EPFL – Swiss Federal Institute of Technology**, represented by its President, Prof. Dr Martin Vetterli;
- **ETH Zurich, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology**, represented by its President, Prof. Dr Lino Guzzella;
- **FNHW University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland**, represented by its President, Prof. Dr Crispino Bergamaschi;
- **FHO University of Applied Sciences of Eastern Switzerland**, represented by its Director, Dr Albin Reichlin;
- **University of Teacher Education HEP-BEJUNE**, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Maxime Zuber;
- **University of Teacher Education Fribourg, HEP-PH FR**, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Pascale Marro, and from 1 October 2018 by its Co-Rector ad interim, Dr Lukas Lehmann;
- **University of Teacher Education in the Canton of Valais, HEP-VS/PH-VS**, represented by its Director, Patrice Clivaz;
- **University of Teacher Education, State of Vaud, HEP-Vaud**, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Guillaume Vanhulst;
- **HES-SO University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland**, represented by its Rector, Dr Luciana Vaccaro;
- **University of Applied Sciences of Special Needs Education, HfH**, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Barbara Fäh;

- **Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, HSLU,** represented by its Rector, Dr Markus Hodel;
- **Kalaidos University of Applied Sciences, Kalaidos UAS,** represented by its Rector, Dr Jakob Limacher;
- **Berne University of Teacher Education, PHBern,** represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Martin Schäfer;
- **University of Teacher Education of Grisons, PHGR,** represented by its Rector, Dr Gian-Paolo Curcio;
- **University of Teacher Education Lucerne, PH Luzern,** represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Hans-Rudolf Schärer;
- **Teacher Training Education Schaffhausen, PHSH,** represented by its Rector, Thomas Meinen;
- **University of Teacher Education Schwyz, PH Schwyz,** represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Silvio Herzog;
- **University of Teacher Education St.Gallen, PH St.Gallen,** represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Horst Biedermann;
- **Thurgau University of Teacher Education, PHTG,** represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Priska Sieber;
- **University of Teacher Education Zug, PH Zug,** represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Esther Kamm;
- **Zurich University of Teacher Education, PHZH,** represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Heinz Rhyn;
- **University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland, SUPSI,** represented by its Director, Prof. Franco Gervasoni;
- **University of Basel, Unibas,** represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Andrea Schenker-Wicki;
- **University of Bern, Unibe,** represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Christian Leumann;

- **University of Fribourg, Unifr**, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Astrid Epiney;
- **University of Geneva, UNIGE**, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Yves Flückiger;
- **University of Lausanne, UNIL**, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Nouria Hernandez;
- **University of Lucerne, UniLU**, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Bruno Staffelbach;
- **University of Neuchâtel, UniNE**, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Kilian Stoffel;
- **University of St. Gallen (HSG)**, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Thomas Bieger;
- **Università della Svizzera italiana, USI**, represented by its Rector, Prof. Boas Erez;
- **University of Zurich, UZH, represented by its Rector**, Prof. Dr Michael O. Hengartner;
- **Zurich University of Applied Sciences and Arts, ZFH**, represented by the ZHAW Rector, Prof. Dr Jean-Marc Piveteau.

Rectors of Universities of Teacher Education that are part of a University of Applied Sciences and Arts and benefit from a designation right under article 29 HEdA in conjunction with article 8, para. 3 of the Accreditation Guidelines may participate in Plenary Assemblies as guests.

- **FHNW School of Education, PH FHNW**, represented by its Rector, Prof. Dr Sabina Larcher Klee;
- **Department of Education and Learning SUPSI, SUPSI-DFA**, represented by its Head of Department, Dr Alberto Piatti.

Board

The Board of the Rectors' Conference is composed of the President, the Presidents of the three Chambers as Vice-Presidents ex officio and one member of each Chamber elected by the Plenary Assembly for a term of three years on a proposal from the Chamber. The Secretary General attends meetings in an advisory capacity. The Board meets at least five times a year.

- **Prof. Dr Michael O. Hengartner,**
Rector of the University of Zurich, UZH, President of swissuniversities
- **Prof. Dr Crispino Bergamaschi,**
President of FHNW, University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland, President of the Chamber of Applied Sciences and Arts, Vice-President ex officio
- **Prof. Dr Hans-Rudolf Schärer,**
Rector of the University of Teacher Education Luzern, PH Luzern, President of the Chamber of Universities of Teacher Education (UTES), Vice-President ex officio
- **Prof. Dr Thomas Bieger,**
Rector of the University of St.Gallen (HSG), President of the Chamber of Universities, Vice-President ex officio
- **Patrice Clivaz,**
Director of the University of Teacher Education in the Canton of Valais, HEP-VS/PH-VS, Vice-President of the Chamber of Universities of Teacher Education (UTES)
- **Prof. Franco Gervasoni,**
Director of the University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland, SUPSI, Vice-President of the Chamber of Applied Sciences and Arts
- **Prof. Dr Astrid Epiney,**
Rector of the University of Fribourg, Vice-President of the Chamber of Universities
- **Dr Martina Weiss,**
General Secretary of swissuniversities (with an advisory vote)

Balance Sheet

Balance Sheet at 31 December (CHF)

Assets

Current assets	2018	2017
Cash and cash equivalents	8 498 331	6 557 742
Accounts receivable	2 529 268	4 811 265
Prepaid expenses/accrued income	386 732	709 536
Total current assets	11 414 331	12 078 543

Fixed assets

Financial fixed assets	40 040	40 040
Tangible fixed assets	109 691	116 416
Total fixed assets	149 731	156 456
Total assets	11 564 062	12 234 999

Liabilities & equity

Current liabilities

Accounts payable	237 451	276 532
Current interest-bearing liabilities	1 423 870	1 250 330
Other current liabilities	40 378	27 096
Accrued expenses/deferred income	3 387 544	6 253 813
Total current liabilities	5 089 243	7 807 771

Long-term liabilities

Other long-term liabilities	4 317 928	2 369 633
Long-term provisions	275 113	250 334
Total long-term liabilities	4 593 041	2 619 967
Total liabilities	9 682 284	10 427 738

Equity

Reserves	1 429 476	1 429 475
Retained surplus (losses) b/fwd	377 786	252 748
Surplus (loss) for the year	74 516	125 038
Total equity	1 881 777	1 807 261
Total liabilities/equity	11 564 062	12 234 999

Income Statement

Income statement for the year ended 31 December (CHF)

	2018	2017
Membership fees	2 966 866	2 542 291
Members' projects	17 454	172 021
State grants per HEdA	1 494 856	1 332 822
State grants repaid per HEdA	-181 530	-226 301
EU project grants	10 934	6 953
State grants per regulations	785 332	600 668
State grants repaid per HEdA	-144 828	-43 182
Project-related State grants	1 839 334	1 887 318
Project-related State grants repaid	0	-95 651
Other State project grants	50 000	384 183
Other State project grants repaid	0	-64 793
Canton grants per HEdA	1 494 856	1 332 823
Canton grants repaid per HEdA	-181 530	-226 301
Contractual/regulatory Canton grants	343 422	595 700
EMS-qualifying examination fees	654 192	814 579
Prior-year EMS-qualifying examination fees	129 659	0
Third-party donations	150 311	260 991
Provision and reserve income	213 576	352 607
Operating income	9 642 904	9 626 728

Cotutelles project costs	-63 184	-194 002
Write-back of long-term liability Cotutelles	63 184	194 002
TPC-P4 project costs	0	15 161
Write-back of long-term liability TPC-P4	0	-15 161
P-1 ETH-Rat project costs	0	38 064
Write-back of long-term liability P-1 ETH-Rat	0	-38 064
P-1 SBFI project costs	0	1 276 072
Write-back of long-term liability P-1 SBFI	0	-1 276 072
P-3 Project Mesurer project costs	0	176 854
Write-back of long-term liability P-3 Project Mesurer	0	-176 854
P-2 Scientific Information project costs	-71 280	-4 241 943
Write-back of long-term liability P-2 Scientific Information	71 788	4 180 936
Implementation & Coordination project expenses	0	80 902
Write-back of long-term liability Implementation & Coordination	0	-80 902
Joint project costs	0	16 907
Write-back of long-term Joint projects	0	-16 907
P1 TP1 current doctorate HEU expenses	-4 964 128	-2 968 893
Write-back of long-term Liability P1 TP1 current doctorate HEU expenses	4 964 755	2 969 672
P7 Module A Action Plan project costs	-2 121 009	-1 633 392
Write-back of long-term P7 Module A Action Plan project costs	2 121 330	1 634 280
P11 pilot project costs	-1 646 879	-769 000
Write-back of long-term P11 pilot project costs	1 647 323	769 202

SUDAC project costs	-767 839	-224 925
Write-back of long-term SUDAC liability	770 297	226 138
P9 TP1 specialist project costs	-2 372 300	-2 131 060
Write-back of long-term P9 TP1 specialist project costs	2 372 959	2 131 750
P9 TP2 specialist project costs	-2 937 940	-2 639 186
Write-back of long-term P9 TP2 specialist project costs	2 938 728	2 639 879
TP1 HEU new doctorate project costs	-1 424 523	-1 419 758
Write-back of long-term TP1 HEU new project costs	1 424 745	1 420 130
P1 TP2 CH cooperation doctorate project costs	-1 328 185	-364 113
Write-back of long-term P1 TP2 CH cooperation doctorate liability	1 328 577	365 489
P1 TP3 CH foreign cooperation doctorate project costs	-540 850	-275 190
Write-back of long-term liability P1 TP3 Doctorate in foreign cooperation	540 968	275 320
P7 module B cooperation project costs	-741 257	0
Write-back of long-term P7 module B cooperation liability	741 478	0
P5 project costs	-4 107 454	-3 693 722
Write-back of long-term P5 liability	4 116 388	3 700 161
	15 692	-48 225
Salaries	-4 839 985	-4 580 631
Consultancy fees	-254 806	-269 578
Social insurance contributions	-1 014 357	-995 590
Other staff costs	-154 051	-130 479
Staff costs	-6 263 199	-5 976 278

Building overheads	-428 501	-423 828
Repairs & maintenance, leasing costs	-14 919	-15 969
Third-party services	-1 599 337	-1 994 780
Property insurance costs	-6 840	-6 764
Energy and waste disposal expenses	-15 431	-15 980
Administration costs	-382 646	-220 179
Library	-6 008	-6 036
IT expenses	-170 244	-132 693
Advertising costs	-444 477	-364 156
Other operating expenses	-193 916	-235 054
Financial expenses	-23 943	-30 834
Financial income	2 610	3
Machinery & equipment depreciation	-32 465	-26 376
Office fixtures & fitting depreciation	-7 652	-6 687
Other operating expenses	-3 323 769	-3 479 333
Prior-year expenses	6 650	3 848
Miscellaneous operating expenses	1 040	954
Prior year expenses	-4 803	-2 656
Non-recurring income/expenses	2 888	2 146
Surplus (loss) for the year	74 516	125 038

Notes

1. Accounting policies applied in the financial statements

The financial statements of swissuniversities, Bern, were prepared in accordance with Swiss statutory principles, notably articles covering commercial bookkeeping and the accounting rules of the Swiss Code of Obligations (articles 957 to 962).

The following accounting policies were applied in the financial statements:

The accounting records include estimates and judgements from the General Secretariat which may affect the value of assets, liabilities and contingent liabilities as at the balance sheet date, as well as income and expenditure in the reporting period. The General Secretariat is responsible for determining the application of existing statutory valuation and accounting policies. Pursuant to the principle of prudence, depreciation, impairment and other provisions in addition to the economically required level may be set aside in the interests of the association.

Tangible fixed assets:

Tangible fixed assets are depreciated directly. Depreciation takes place under the straightline method.

The General Secretariat decides to write off all capital expenditure immediately where allowed under tax regulations. Depreciation is calculated by applying the following useful lives and depreciation methods:

Asset description	Useful life	Method
Furniture	10 years	10% straight line
Server hardware	5 years	20% straight line
Workstation hardware	4 years	25% straight line

Revenue recognition

Revenue is recognised as at invoice date.

Foreign currency accounts

Foreign currency accounts have been converted into CHF at the following rates:

Foreign currency	Income statement		Balance sheet	
	2018	2017	2018	2017
Euro	1.127	1.17	1.127	1.17

The above balance sheet exchange rates were applied for the 31 December balance sheets. Rates applied for the income statement and transactions during the year were based on the average rate for the financial year.

HEdA/membership fee funding allocation

Costs of the Rectors' Conference are allocated as specified under article 5 paras 1 and 2 of the swissuniversities Organisation Regulations as follows:

"1. Costs from carrying out duties attributed to the Rectors' Conference under HEdA and ZSAV-HS shall be borne equally by the Federal Government and the Cantons pursuant to the Higher Education Concordat Agreement (article 8 para. 3 (A) and ZSAV-HS article 8 para. 1 (a))."

"2. Costs for further duties in members' interests shall be covered by membership fees or other resources."

In any event, it is not possible or reasonable to break down which duties should be allocated to swissuniversities per HEdA and ZSAV-HS (article 5 para. 1 Oreg-RK) and which duties are carried out on behalf of and in the interests of members (article 5. para. 2 Ore-RK). Accordingly, a general cost allocation key is required and this was introduced by the General Secretariat as from financial year 2015.

2. Notes and disclosures of balance sheet and income statement accounts

Third-party	31.12.18	31.12.17
Receivables	2 529 268	4 811 265
Accounts receivable	2 529 268	4 811 265

Total third-party

Receivables	237 451	264 032
Financial suspense and control account	0	12 500
Total third-party payables	237 451	276 532

Current interest-bearing liabilities

State payable	336 625	342 198
Canton universities payables	1 087 245	908 132
Total current interest-bearing liabilities	1 423 870	1 250 330

Other long-term liabilities	31.12.18	31.12.17
Cotutelles	83 816	64 998
P1 TP 1 existing HEU doctorate	38 594	0
P5	2 769 715	1 149 839
P7 Module 1 action plans	3 680	115 720
P11 pilot projects	2 305	0
SUDAC network programme	741 429	273 862
P9 TP1 education	3 840	0
P9 TP2 subject didactics	3 416	0
TP1 HEU doctorate new	39 405	0
P1 TP2 CH cooperation doctorate	38 783	322 311
TPC P4	0	15 215
P1 TP3 doctorate in foreign cooperation	39 697	14 626
P7 Module B cooperation	53 052	0
Economic information P-2	500 196	308 870
Implementation and coordination	0	80 974
Joint projects	0	23 218
Total other long-term liabilities ¹⁾	4 317 928	2 369 633

¹⁾ See note 6 “Total value of assets used to secure liabilities and assets under reservation of title”.

Provisions	31.12.18	31.12.17
ENIC legal provision ²⁾	55 113	55 113
EMS provision	0	64 220
Provision ³⁾	220 000	131 000
Total long-term provisions	275 113	250 334

²⁾ swissuniversities is involved in a legal action relating to its ordinary activities. While the outcome of this litigation cannot be determined at the present time with certainty, swissuniversities assumes that said litigation will not have a material effect on the operations or financial position. Expected costs from said litigation have been accrued accordingly.

³⁾ swissuniversities staff are governed by Swiss employment law. Staff have unlimited-term employment contracts. Work is performed by some 12 to 15 full-time employees based on limited funding which may be shortened or rearranged at short notice. If this arises, swissuniversities needs to fund a comprehensive social plan. In accordance with the principle of prudence, as at 31 December 2018 around one third of the CHF 200,000 risk has been accrued under provisions.

3. Headcount

Average number of FTEs	< 50	< 50
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4. Off-balance sheet leasing liabilities

	31.12.18	31.12.17
Off-balance sheet leasing liabilities maturing more than 12 months after the balance sheet date	29 203	41 453
Long-term lease contracts expiring more than 12 months after the balance sheet date	2 049 853	596 298

In autumn 2018 swissuniversities exercised an option to prolong the lease contract for a further five years from 2019.

5. Social Security liabilities

	31.12.18	31.12.17
Social Security liabilities	0	0

6. Total value of assets used to secure liabilities and assets under reservation of title

Assets under reservation of title (accounts administered under mandate)	4 317 928	2 369 633
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7. Contingent liabilities

As at 31 December 2018 there are no contingent liabilities.

8. Notes to extraordinary, non-recurring and prior-year income statement accounts

Prior-year expense: Sundry non-material accounts	-4 803	-2 656
Total extraordinary, non-recurring and prior-year expense:	-4 803	-2 656
Prior-year income: CO ₂ breakdown	6 650	3 523
Sundry non-material accounts	0	326
Total extraordinary, non-recurring and prior-year income:	6 650	3 849
Net extraordinary, non-recurring and prior-year items:	1 848	1 193

9. Equity reconciliation

Equity prior to 2018 accounts general meeting resolution:

	31.12.18	31.12.17
PH Chamber reserves	313 923	313 923
FH Chamber reserves	183 201	183 201
UNI Chamber reserves	582 352	582 352
SWU general reserves	350 000	350 000
Surplus b/fwd	377 787	377 787
Surplus for the year	74 516	74 516
Total	1 881 778	1 881 778

In 2018, CHF 13,110.15 was spent on the PH Chamber projects. This amount reduced the 2018 surplus accordingly. A recommendation will be made at the general meeting to reduce the PH Chamber reserve and increase the SWU general reserve by the same amount.

Equity after general meeting resolution (if recommendation accepted):

	31.12.18
PH Chamber reserves	300 812
FH Chamber reserves	183 201
UNI Chamber reserves	582 352
SWU general reserves	363 110
Surplus b/fwd	377 787
Surplus for the year	74 516
Total	1 881 778

10. Material post-balance sheet events

There have been no events after the balance sheet date until general meeting approval of the financial statements that could have a material impact on the 2018 financial statements and would need to be disclosed here.

Board Recommendation Regarding Retained Surplus Appropriation ¹⁾

General meeting appropriation	2018	2017
Surplus b/fwd	377 786	860 848
Reserves / use	0	-608 100
Surplus for the year	74 516	125 038
Retained surplus	452 302	377 786
Total general meeting appropriation	452 302	377 786

¹⁾ In view of the 2018 change in accounting for reserves, figures for both financial years are not comparable.

Board recommendation

Retained surplus	452 302	377 786
Retained surplus b/fwd	452 302	377 786

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swissuniversities at a Glance

Association

Rectors' Conference of Swiss Higher
Education Institutions

Start of Operation

2015

Number of Members

34 members

12 universities,

8 universities of Applied Sciences
and Arts and

14 universities of Teacher Education

Number of Students 2018/2019*

Universities: **150 268**

Universities of Applied Sciences
and Arts: **78 477**

Universities of Teacher Education: **20 372**

Total 249 117

Jobs/Full time equivalent*

59 862

Employees in the General Secretariat

The General Secretariat

has **48** employees

(at 39.1 full-time-positions)

**Federal Statistical Office, March 2019*

All other data as at 31.12.2018

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