

Innovation is the foundation of our prosperity

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At a glance

- Switzerland owes its prosperity to its strong entrepreneurial spirit and inventiveness.
- To remain a leading hub for innovation, companies need more freedom, less bureaucracy, and the best possible access to talent and international markets

Innovation rarely begins with a perfect plan. It begins with an idea, a specific problem, and above all, it begins with people who are willing to take on responsibility and risks.

As a co-founder of a startup, I've experienced firsthand what it means to turn an idea into a business. My entrepreneurial experience has taught me that innovation is not some abstract economic concept. It consists of prototypes, funding rounds, customer feedback, failed attempts, regulatory hurdles, strong teams, and sometimes even sleepless nights. When it succeeds, it creates productivity, jobs, and social progress.

Knowledge is our raw material

This is particularly important for Switzerland. Our country does not have significant natural resources. Our most important resource is our people: what they know, what they can imagine, what they dare to try, and what they develop from it.

It is only thanks to this innovative strength that a high-wage, high-cost country like Switzerland can hold its own in international competition. We cannot be the cheapest. We must be better, faster, more precise, and more reliable.

For years, Switzerland has been one of the world's leading centers of innovation. We have outstanding universities, internationally successful companies in knowledge-intensive industries, and a dual education system that uniquely combines theory and practice.

However, this strength cannot be taken for granted. Gaps in digitalization persist in some sectors of the economy. Small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular, do not always have the necessary resources to quickly adopt new technologies. If the capacity for innovation declines, an economy loses productivity, export strength, and adaptability.

Innovation Requires the Best Possible Conditions

Startups play a special role in Switzerland, a country known for innovation. Companies are emerging from universities and research centers that translate new discoveries into concrete applications. They bring speed, courage, and

technological expertise to the economy. At the same time, they challenge established companies to continue evolving.

But even the best idea needs an environment in which it can be tested, funded, and scaled. For startups, therefore, access to international markets, research networks, and qualified professionals from both Switzerland and abroad are key location factors. Equally indispensable are efficient and digital work permit procedures.

A sound innovation policy creates the conditions for this. It instills entrepreneurship and an innovative mindset early on in education, improves the framework conditions for venture capital, and relies on regulations that enable rather than hinder progress.

More Freedom for Entrepreneurial Ideas

But this is precisely where the political challenges lie. Today, Swiss companies must comply with more than 36,000 regulatory requirements at the federal level. That's about 12,000 more than twenty years ago. Young companies in particular—those that want to grow—must not be held back by excessive regulation. This makes efficient and digital government processes all the more important.

A fully digital company formation process, consolidated government services, and expedited approval procedures would ease the burden on startups. Bureaucratic costs totaling over 30 billion Swiss francs annually could be avoided if the public sector were to consistently digitize its processes and make them more efficient. The federal government and the cantons are therefore called upon to reduce the administrative burden through concrete relief measures.

If we succeed in this, Switzerland will remain a place with a bright future: a country where research, entrepreneurship, and open markets come together, where ideas become businesses, and where prosperity is continually renewed.

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