

**Landesmuseum Zürich. SCHWEIZERI  
SCHES NATIONALMUSEUM. MUSÉE  
NATIONAL SUISSE. MUSEO NAZION  
ALE SVIZZERO. MUSEUM NAZIUNA  
L SVIZZER**

**Geschichte Schweiz  
Histoire de la Suisse  
Storia della Svizzera  
History of Switzerland**



**School  
materials**  
Vol. 1  
Teachers' Notes



# Landesmuseum Zürich.

## “History of Switzerland”

School Materials | Intermediate, Secondary I & II

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#### Vol. 2 – Worksheets and solutions

### Credits

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**PH**  
**ZH**  
PÄDAGOGISCHE  
HOCHSCHULE  
ZÜRICH

In cooperation with the Zurich University of Teacher Education

# Programmes for Schools

Tours  
for Swiss schools  
are free of charge but  
should be booked in  
advance.

## Guided Tours

Intermediate level, secondary school levels I and II

### The history of Switzerland – the formation of a state and a new society

How did Switzerland evolve from a confederation into a federal state? What ran counter to this development, what were some of its early signs? What responsibilities did the new federal state assume and how was a national consciousness created? By looking at some of the most prominent objects in the exhibition students can trace the evolution of Switzerland into a national state.

### The history of Switzerland – flight and migration

Why do Swiss sometimes leave their home country? Who comes to Switzerland? What are some important reasons for migration? Are immigration and emigration a modern phenomenon or did they also exist in the past? A historical profile shows that people have always migrated for a variety of reasons. The students can examine the changing motives for immigration and emigration. They will learn what the opportunities and risks are for migrants and about how Switzerland has evolved from a country of emigration to one of immigration.

### The history of Switzerland – from the pike to the robot

Who did the Swiss mercenaries fight for and who profited from war? How did the federal constitution come into being and when did the first weaving loom come to modern Switzerland? The overview tour pinpoints the most important material testimony of Swiss history from the fifteenth century to the present. Tours with a special focus can be arranged with the reservation team. The topics currently on offer are politics, war or the economy.

The tours will be adapted to the level of the students. | Duration: 1 hour

## Visits without a guide

### Democracy tour

The room devoted to the nineteenth century is all about the formation of the state – the process by which a modern federal state evolved. There are twelve tablets available for school classes to use. They comprise six sections featuring short films, information about the objects and comprehension questions.

Duration: about 45 - 60 minutes | Reservation: +41 44 218 66 00 | reservationen@nationalmuseum.ch

### School materials

The school materials consist of work sheets designed to help students take a more in-depth look at the exhibition or at individual exhibits and topics. Download: [www.landesmuseum.ch/schulen](http://www.landesmuseum.ch/schulen)

## Introduction to the exhibition for teachers

The museum regularly offers tours for teachers with input for visiting the exhibition with school classes of intermediate level and above. Please visit our website for further details.

Information & registration

Mon–Fri 09.00–12.30 | +41 44 218 66 00 | reservationen@nationalmuseum.ch

# Introduction

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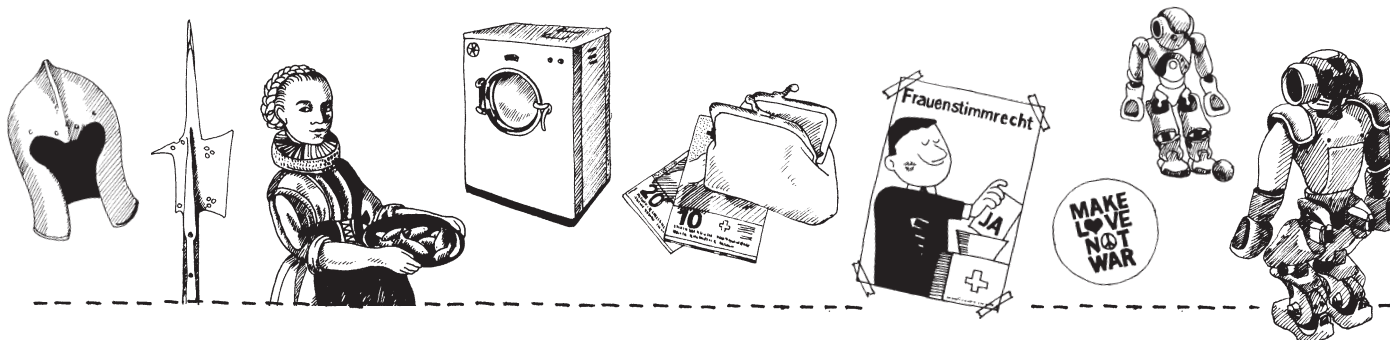
## Introduction to the exhibition “History of Switzerland”

Switzerland has not always existed in its present form. The exhibition “History of Switzerland” recounts the country’s process of “becoming”. It begins in the fifteenth century and leads chronologically through the centuries to the present.

The exhibition starts by setting the scene for the creation of the Confederation pact in the fifteenth century. To begin with, the focus is on the rural cantons, while in the sixteenth century this shifts to the Confederation and in the seventeenth, to the city republics, which were gaining in strength. Information is also provided about mercenaries and confessionalisation. The eighteenth century is presented as an age of enlightenment and sensitivity, whereas in the nineteenth century, the emphasis is on industrialisation and the establishment of the federal state.

The first room devoted to the twentieth century covers the period from the two world wars to the Cold War. Here the exhibits show how Switzerland balanced the demands and interests of the warring powers and the context within which it proved the international benefits of its neutrality. A second room tells the story of the period of economic development and social renewal. There are several series of photographic images on display, and photography plays a central role here as a contemporary medium specific to the period.

A final look at the twenty-first century invites visitors to focus on Switzerland’s future potential. Key social challenges are examined, along with the controversies surrounding them, accompanied here and there by forays into the future: robotics, migration, climate change, the implications of an ageing society, and supranational relations.



### Age recommendation

These school materials are intended for classes from Year 4 of primary school through to the upper secondary level. They are designed to help orient pupils and include exhibition texts, a timeline, and, in Vol. 2, worksheets on selected topics geared to specific levels.

### Media stations

The presentation of the objects on display is complemented by numerous media stations offering additional information. On the one hand, they introduce audio-visual sources into the exhibition – these include clips from Swiss newsreels and specially created 3D images of the Gotthard mountain fortress. On the other, they provide in-depth information about the exhibits. The twenty-first century is mainly presented by means of digital media.

### Democracy tour

The 19th-century section is all about the process of forming a state and shows how a modern federal state comes into being. For this topic the museum offers a digital democracy tour on tablets with explanatory videos and quiz questions. It is designed for pupils from secondary level 1 upwards.

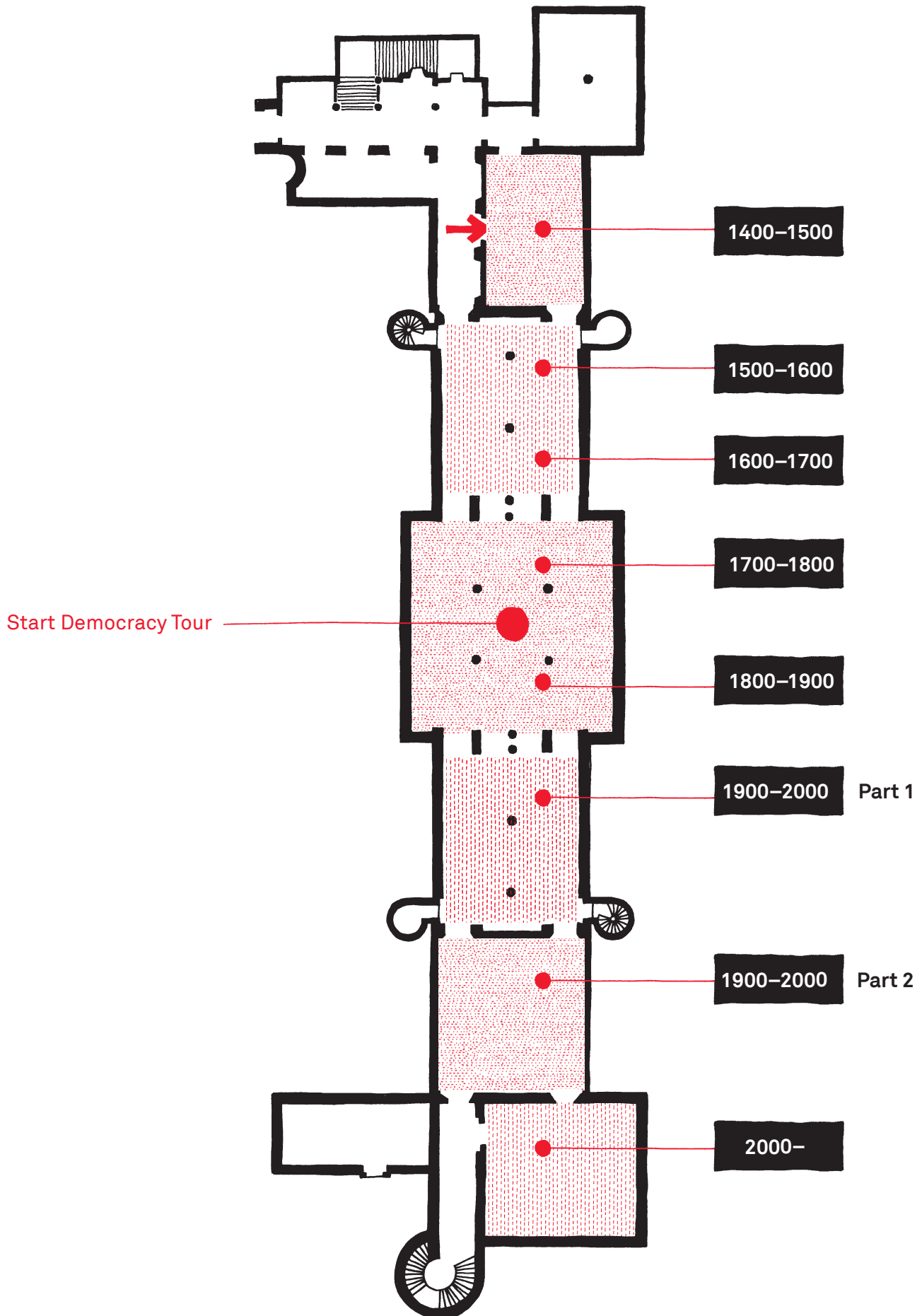
### Audio guide

You will find an audio guide in the “Landesmuseum” smartphone app. It guides pupils around various topics and objects in the exhibition in German, French, Italian, English, and Mandarin.

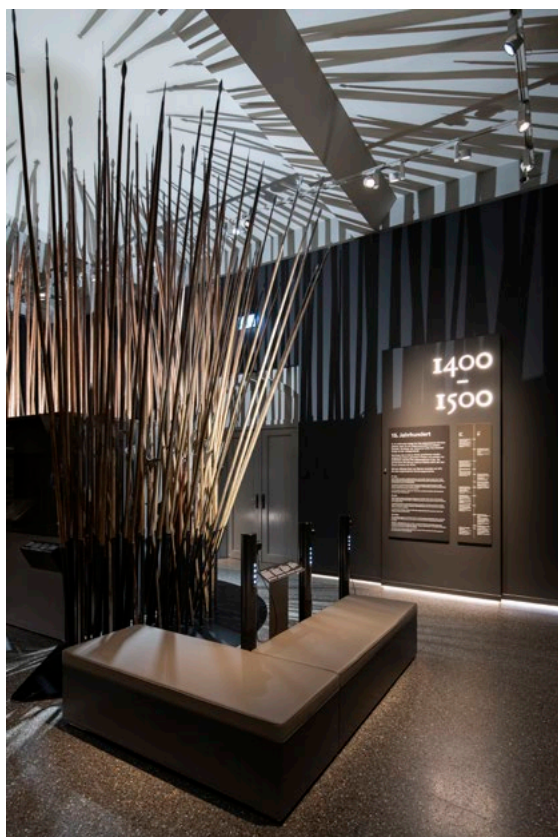
### Website

All the information about the options available for schools, such as themed tours and introductions for teaching staff, can be found on our website, [www.landesmuseum.ch/schulen](http://www.landesmuseum.ch/schulen), where you can also download the school materials for both current and past exhibitions.

# Exhibition plan "History of Switzerland"



# Exhibition tour



# Exhibition tour

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1400–1500

The confederate alliance consolidated itself in the 15th century. Each canton was a politically sovereign state. Citizens of the rural cantons conducted decision-making at the communal assembly. Alliances – concluded in the name of God – promised protection, guaranteed peace and created ties between the confederate cantons. The joint administration of conquered subject territories strengthened exchange between the cantons. The White Book of Sarnen, which appeared in around 1470, represents the first account of the Confederation's founding history.

## Collective administration

Valley communities in the rural cantons organized themselves like cooperatives. They collectively controlled the use of pastures, forests and alps, as well as thoroughfares and bodies of water. With the economic upturn in the Gotthard region, the rural cantons strove to gain more scope for decision-making. They set up communal assemblies based on traditional *Nutzungsgenossenschaften* ("private-law corporations"). These assemblies were made up of *ehr- und wehrfähigen Landleute* ("men of standing and able to bear arms") who passed laws, formed administrative bodies and elected the court.

## Warlike times

In the mid-15th century the Confederation attempted to close ranks. It forced Zurich to return to its system of alliances. Together, the confederates defeated the Duke of Burgundy in 1477, acquiring rich booty in the process. Following the Swabian War of 1499, Basel and Schaffhausen joined the Confederation. The confederate infantry were particularly effective in battle. Soldiers used long pikes to keep cavalrymen at a distance and halberds to break their way through enemy lines.

## Securing the peace

There was a network of alliances in the area of present-day Switzerland in the 13th century. Rural cantons allied themselves with one another and other cities, but also with aristocratic rulers. The alliances, which had to be renewed repeatedly, promised safe passage and guaranteed military assistance. From the mid-15th century, affiliation with the confederate system of alliances precluded cantons from forging alliances elsewhere. This consolidated the Confederation's political autonomy.

## Founding history

The formation of communities can be fostered through stories about their origins. From the mid-15th century, the confederate network of alliances was strained by tensions between the rural cantons and the cities. Moreover, the Habsburgs continued to challenge it.

The first account of the founding history of the Confederation is contained in the White Book of Sarnen, which appeared in around 1470. The *Rütli Schwur* (Rütli oath) and William Tell legends can be interpreted as tales of liberation – the citizens of Central Switzerland being freed from aristocratic oppression.



# Exhibition tour

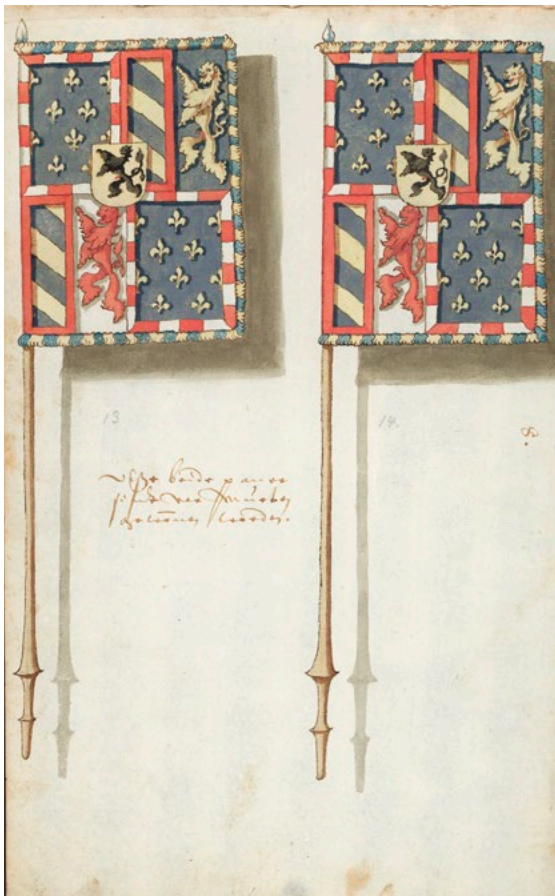
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1400–1500

- 1 Treaty of Stans, 22.12. 1481. Facsimile. The original is held by the State Archives of Zurich.
- 2 Burgonet with visor, around 1500, Francesco da Merate, Arbois. Iron.
- 3 Burgundian banner bearing the coat of arms of Charles the Bold. Booty from the Battle of Murten, 1476.

1500–1600

In 1513, the Confederation of 13 cantons found an efficient form that remained stable for a long period. The cantons coordinated themselves politically through meetings of the Diet, to which they sent envoys. Mercenary alliances had to be negotiated often. Despite their defeat at Marignan in 1515, the confederates managed to secure control of the area of present-day Ticino. The peace concluded with France led to an alignment with France. From 1523, the Reformation raged through the land, spreading from Zurich to Berne, Schaffhausen and Basel. Thereafter, the Confederation was marked by conflicts between Catholics and Protestants.

### **Confederate Diet**

The Confederation did not have a government. Political decision-making took place at meetings of the Diet, to which the sovereign cantons sent envoys. By 1500, over 20 meetings a year were being held. Meetings of the Diet generally took place in Lucerne prior to the Reformation, after which they were mostly held in Baden. A session could last for several days. Mutual obligations and foreign-policy interests were negotiated; and debates were held on mercenary alliances with warring parties or on the administration of joint dependencies.

### **Rule in the south**

The European powers – the Pope, the French king and the emperor – had been fighting over control of Milan since 1499. To that end, they needed Swiss mercenaries. The Confederation's mercenary alliances resulted in it becoming entangled in the Wars in Lombardy and becoming the protecting power of the Duke of Milan. Despite suffering a major defeat at Marignano in 1515, the confederates succeeded in securing a common administrative region that extended to Lugano and Locarno.

### **Foreign service**

In 1521, France and the Confederation regulated the use of Swiss mercenaries in the long term. Zurich – heeding Zwingli's criticism of mercenary service – was the only canton to remain outside the alliance. The Reformation fought against the trade in mercenaries supplied to serve foreign powers. In the Catholic regions of the country, however, mercenary leaders expanded their procurement of soldiers. Mercenary leaders from Protestant cities also continued to serve Catholic France, though a few lost their hereditary citizenship as a result.

### **Reformation**

Zwingli launched the Reformation in Zurich a few years after Luther's theses of 1517. The Mass, saints, and celibacy were abolished. A German translation of the Bible was published. Cities in the German-speaking part of Switzerland were the first to adopt the Reformation, while the cantons of Central Switzerland remained with the old faith. This led to conflicts and, in 1531, to war within the Confederation. Despite the Protestants' subsequent defeat, the new faith spread – especially through the efforts of John Calvin of Geneva.

### **Iconoclasm**

The Protestants banned images of saints from their churches. Such images were considered to be idols, the worshipping of which was a distraction from the true faith. Altars, statues, and paintings were damaged, removed, or destroyed. However, some church art survived in the Protestant areas of Switzerland. People may have wished to preserve artistic depictions of their cities on alterpieces, for example. A number of purified religious statues also resurfaced in the cities as fountain figures or house decorations.

### **Catholic reform**

Popes and Catholic rulers struggled to contain the spread of the Reformation. Religious wars throughout Europe led to forced migration. Protestant refugees such as the Huguenots from France found refuge in Geneva, Basel and Zurich. Between 1545 and 1563 the Roman Church convened the Council of Trent three times. An education campaign aimed at reinvigorating the old faith was launched with the help of the Jesuits. Secondary schools were established in Swiss cities such as Lucerne and Fribourg.

# Exhibition tour

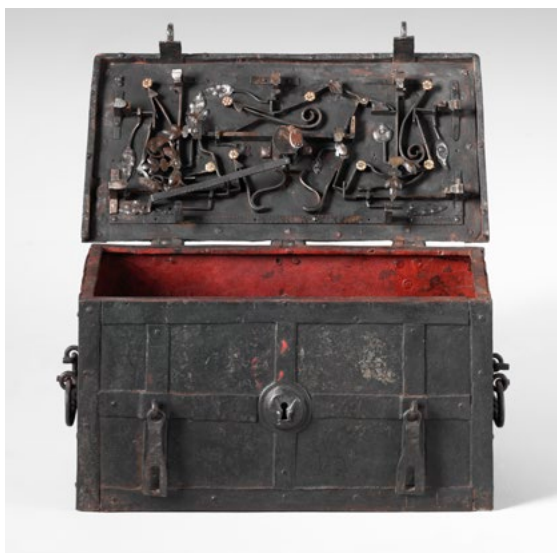
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1500–1600

- 1 Diet meeting 1531 in Baden, print, 1793, Peter Vischer, Basel. Etching on paper.
- 2 The martyrdom of the patron saints of Zurich, panel painting, 1497–1502, Hans Leu the Elder, Zurich. Tempera on wood.
- 3 Strongbox with locking mechanism in lid, around 1580, Southern Germany. Forged iron.

1600–1700

The cities became increasingly powerful in the 17th century. The urban bourgeoisie benefited from taxes levied on the subject territories. The urban economy was regulated by guilds and societies. Although the Confederation was spared direct involvement in the Thirty Years' War, confessional sympathies for the corresponding commanders and the presence of Swiss mercenaries on foreign battlefields resulted in tensions at home. In 1656, the Confederation became embroiled in a religious war once again. Seven years later, however, the Confederation – made up of Catholic and Protestant cantons – renewed its mercenary alliance with Catholic France.

### Thirty Years' War

Between 1618 and 1648, the war that was raging throughout Europe only touched the Confederation in the Bündner Herrschaft region of Graubünden. However, the deployment of Swiss mercenaries represented a challenge to cooperation between the Protestant and Catholics. At the same time, these mercenary contingents prevented the warring parties from invading. At the peace treaty of 1648, the mayor of Basel, Johann Rudolf Wettstein, succeeded in securing the Confederation's independence from the Holy Roman Empire. This was a decisive step towards sovereignty.

### Bourgeois elite

The bourgeoisie in the Swiss cities had become very self-confident by the 17th century. It safeguarded its political power against social climbers and newcomers. Civil rights were virtually unheard of. Influential families stuck together by adopting a calculating approach to marriage. Good middle-class spouses were found for sons and daughters. In Protestant cities, the elite demonstrated their status with discreet luxury. The style of dress was elegant rather than opulent.

### Influential cities

Like the rural cantons, the Confederation's cities acquired sovereignty. They ruled over their subject territory, cultivated their own diplomatic relationships and concluded alliances. The government in Zurich was made up of representatives of the guilds. In Berne, the governing patriciate lived off its agricultural revenues. All the confederate cantons were politically closely linked to France. They supplied mercenaries and profited from French trade privileges.

### Mercenary entrepreneurs

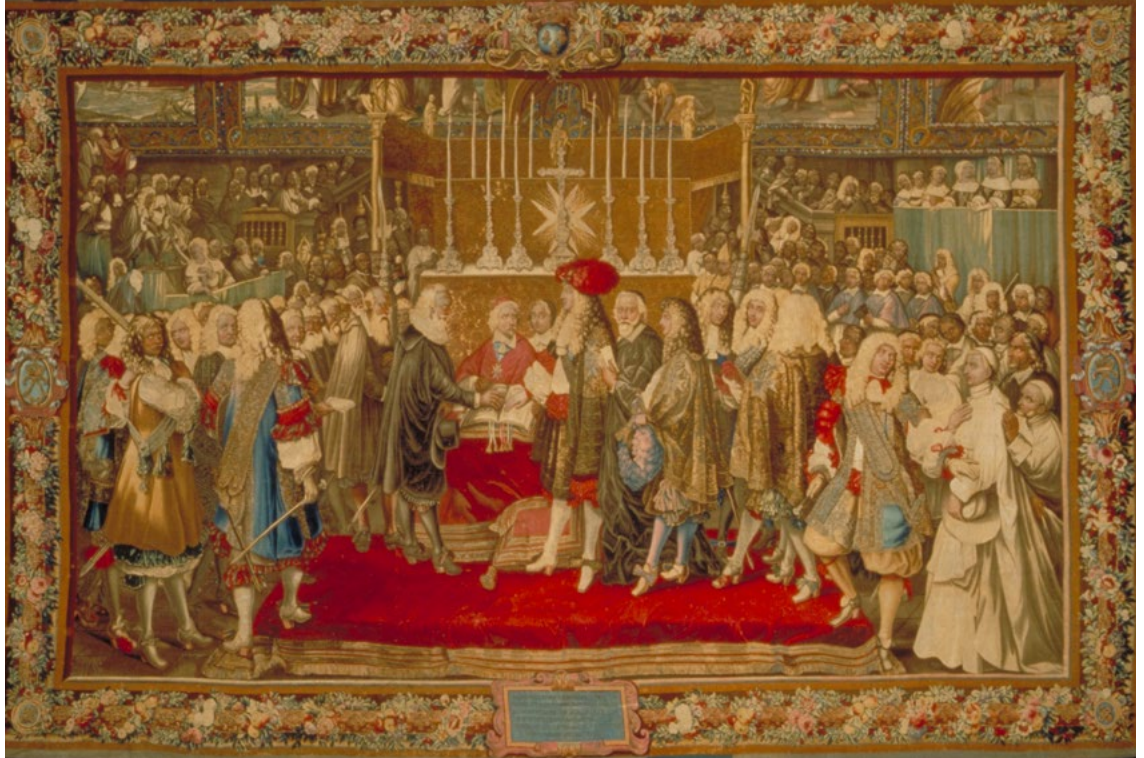
The European nobility were queuing up for mercenary contingents from "Helvetia". The mercenary trade in Catholic Central Switzerland continued to develop – partly out of tradition and partly due to a lack of economic alternatives. Mercenary entrepreneurs such as the Pfyffer family from Lucerne provided military commanders with fully equipped regiments with their own officers. This provided job opportunities in the rural areas of Switzerland, and boosted the wealth and political influence of entrepreneurial families.

### Confessionalisation

Religious conflicts in the Confederation continued to be virulent. The different denominations had to come to terms with one another within a confined area. Catholics and Protestants defended their respective faiths, each denomination striving to maintain its identity. Although Protestants and Catholics shared churches in the joint dependencies, the Protestant and Catholic cantons held separate Diet meetings. Following the War of Villmergen in 1656, the victorious Catholics consolidated their influence in the joint dependencies.

# Exhibition tour

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1600–1700

- 1 Alliance tapestry, based on a template by Charles Le Brun, around 1705–1723, Gobelins Manufactory, Paris. Wool and silk.
- 2 Tischzucht (table manners), painting, 1643, probably Johann Jacob Sulzer, probably Zurich. Oil on canvas. On permanent loan from private owner.
- 3 Body armour, owned by the Werdmüller family, around 1600, School of Pompeo della Cesa, Milan. Iron sheet.

1700–1800

Scholars spread the Enlightenment throughout Europe in the 18th century. They debated universal values and advocated political reason. At the same time, artists and literary figures celebrated romantic love and the purity of nature. Natural scientists surveyed the Swiss mountains, idealised the alpine world and attempted to increase agricultural yields. Innovative entrepreneurs started spinning and weaving at home. The Helvetic Republic was created in 1798, in the middle of the French Revolution. Swiss proponents of the Enlightenment were quick to establish a bourgeois central government, though it was short-lived.

### **Ideals of the Enlightenment**

Inspired by the salons of Paris, philosophers such as Voltaire and Rousseau transformed Geneva into a centre of the Enlightenment. Political values such as equality, freedom and progress spread from there to the rest of Switzerland. Philosophers of the Enlightenment taught at the academy, were writers or publicists. In their own societies they negotiated educational reforms or developed scientific research projects. The Enlightenment strove to rationalise all aspects of life.

### **Improving society**

Swiss Enlightenment philosophers wanted a rational economy, secular education and a bourgeois state that guaranteed equality. In 1761, they founded the Helvetic Society, the first Confederation-wide reform society. In convivial settings they pleaded for national unity and held debates on social reform. Men and women held their enlightened discussions in salons. Also on the agenda for debate was the topic of equal gender relations.

### **Optimizing agriculture**

For farmers in the 18th century the best option was to be a tenant farmer. They had to hand over part of their income to the authorities and they were often in debt. The traditional three-field rotation system was not very productive. There was also a lack of machinery. Philosophers of the Enlightenment looked for new methods of increasing agricultural yields. Natural scientists and a farmer collaborated on establishing a model farm in the countryside outside Zurich, the success of which was discussed throughout Europe.

### **Opening up the Alps**

Scholars and artists visited Switzerland more and more frequently in the 18th century. In enthusiastic accounts of their travels they proclaim mountains, gorges, and glaciers to be emblematic of Switzerland. They declare the Alps to be the cradle of liberty. Natural scientists also explored the Swiss mountains. They studied plants and rocks, and opened up new routes. Their maps paved the way for the construction of traffic infrastructure. The idealisation and surveying of the Alps got Swiss tourism underway.

### **Emotional ties**

The Enlightenment understood childhood to be a phase of life distinctly separate from adulthood. Proponents of the new educational theory argued that children's education should be child-oriented. Education was considered a recipe for success. Family relationships among the bourgeoisie became more personal and emotional. The mother saw to the education of the younger children and daughters, while the father attended to the education of the older sons. Romantic love found its way into relationships between couples. Emotional devotion was considered increasingly important for a good marriage.

### **Nature as ideal**

The image of Switzerland as a land of farmers and shepherds emerged in the 18th century. Travel reports and literati idealized the country as a land where one could live simply and in harmony with nature. Haller's glorification of the Alps and Rousseau's "retour à la nature" anchored this idealisation in the land itself. The wealthy bourgeoisie brought this rural idyll into their living rooms in the form of paintings and images on porcelain. Popular subjects included flowers, animals and idyllic landscapes.

# Exhibition tour

## Textile industry

Families from the Zürcher Oberland and Glarus regions were employed in the wool cottage industry, spinning yarn and weaving cloth. In around 1780, hand-weaving made Switzerland's textile industry among the most productive, just behind that of England. Entrepreneurs from the cities delivered the raw materials to people's homes. When the goods were collected they were paid for and taken to market. Fine fabrics for export were embroidered in St. Gallen or printed in the French-speaking part of Switzerland.

## Helvetic Republic

Inspired by the French Revolution, radical Enlightenment philosophers proclaimed the Helvetic Republic in 1798. They transformed the Confederation into a unitary state and abolished feudal rights. Conservatives and federalists resisted the development. The Helvetic government lacked funds and was in no position to prevent the French occupation. This cost the new government the support of the population. Napoleon ultimately restored federalism – though without subject territories.



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1700–1800

- 1 Weaving loom with warp beam, 1800–1900, Siat. Pine, steel and cotton.
- 2 French equipment, drum, after 1792, Zurich. Painted parchment.
- 3 Children of the Bräker family, print, around 1801, Franz Niklaus König, Berne. Etching on paper.
- 4 Lady's apron, around 1760, Neuchâtel. Printed cotton.

1800–1900

In 1848, the liberal cantons succeeded in establishing the Swiss federal state, the key principle of which is federalism. Berne became the federal capital. Customs duties were abolished and a single currency introduced. The first federal constitution granted Swiss citizens voting rights in elections and referenda. The first partial revision of the constitution ensured the emancipation of Swiss Jews. Although the economy was industrialised early on in Switzerland, poverty remained widespread. Many Swiss people emigrated overseas in search of work, while at the same time English tourists discovered the Swiss mountains.

### **Prescribed neutrality**

Under the Act of Mediation issued in 1803 in Paris the Confederation was again organized as a federation. Cantonal policies were once more coordinated at meetings of the Diet. At the Congress of Vienna the European monarchies decreed a return to the old order. Skilful negotiating ensured that the Confederation was not partitioned. The borders designated by the congress corresponded to those of present-day Switzerland; and the Confederation was pledged to a policy of armed neutrality. These conditions were accepted by the 23 cantons in the Federal Treaty of 1815.

### **Liberal awakening**

The Liberals gained power in a few cantons in the 1830s. They granted equal rights to rural and urban citizens. Secular teachers were trained at teachers' colleges. School attendance became obligatory. At the same time, Catholic-conservative cantons insisted on Jesuits being employed in higher education. To protect themselves they formed the Sonderbund ("separate alliance"), which was not accepted by the Diet. This led to the Sonderbund War of 1847, from which the liberal cantons emerged strengthened.

### **Founding of the federal state**

A few months after the Sonderbund War was over, Switzerland transformed itself into the first representative democracy in Europe. The constitution of 1848 guaranteed equal rights, the separation of powers, and suffrage for men. The introduction of the franc, the right of establishment and customs exemption for the whole of Switzerland were measures that had a positive impact on economic progress. Federalism was the principle behind the liberal federal state, from which the Catholic conservatives initially kept a distance.

### **More democracy**

Since 1850, Swiss citizenship has been based on the right of domicile in a "home municipality" that looks after any of its citizens who may require assistance. The federal state linked this welfare to an obligation to have citizens registered. Itinerant persons were not tolerated. In 1866, the right to freedom of establishment – including for the Jewish population – was granted. The constitutional revision of 1874, which introduced the referendum, initiated the shift from representative to direct democracy.

### **Demonstrating neutrality**

The Franco-Prussian War gave the new Switzerland an opportunity to test its armed neutrality. The army secured the north-western border and was responsible for the internment of embattled French troops. In early February 1871, 87,000 French soldiers were disarmed at the border and provided with civil assistance. The operation was organised by the Swiss Red Cross, which had been established in 1864.

### **Tourism**

In the 19th century, the positive image of Switzerland as a happy alpine republic led to a scramble of climbers, each keen to be the first to ascend one or more of the country's mountains. The Alpenbegeisterung ("enthusiasm for the Alps") of rich Europeans gave an impetus to Swiss tourism. Grandiose hotels were built in commanding locations in Interlaken, St. Moritz and Zermatt. Access routes were constructed and trains put into operation. In 1871, Europe's first cogwheel railway line was opened between Vitznau and Rigi.



# Exhibition tour

## Railway construction

The opening of the first Gotthard Railway Tunnel in 1882 was an important event in Europe. Crucial to the project was Alfred Escher's financing policy and the risk appetite of engineer Louis Favres. The work on early railway construction projects was mainly carried out by Italians. The development of the railway caused a boom in the Swiss industrial sector. Many people were employed in the metal and machinery industry. The Factory Act of 1877 regulated working hours at a federal level.

## Emigration

Switzerland in the 19th century was a country of emigration. Agriculture was unproductive, work in the cottage industry was precarious, and factory work badly paid. In 1850, large numbers of people started emigrating to North and South America in search of work. For the poorest emigrants, the cost of passage was covered by the municipalities from which they originated. The emigration was organised by agencies. A few emigrants amassed enormous wealth within a few years with plantations in Dutch or British colonies.

## Export industry

Textile production transformed Switzerland into an export country. The thriving textile industry gave rise to the development of the mechanical engineering industry, which supplied Swiss factories with machines for spinning, embroidery, and weaving. Factories in Geneva and the Jura region produced high-precision luxury watches for the international market. With the rise of the electrical industry, Swiss companies were successful in exporting diesel engines and generators. The major boom in the Swiss mechanical engineering industry began in around 1900.



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1800–1900

- 1 Set of the first federal coinage, 1850. Silver, billon and copper.
- 2 Federal constitution of 1848, Laurenz Lüthi, Solothurn. Gouache and calligraphy on paper.

1900–2000

## Part 1: The threat of war

During the 20th century, Switzerland was constantly threatened by war: first by the two world wars, and later by the nuclear arms race between East and West. In times of war, Switzerland had to garner acceptance for its internationally recognized neutrality. The country interned foreign military personnel and supplied goods to warring parties that were of military significance. Between 1939 and 1945 around 51,000 refugees were granted temporary sanctuary in Switzerland. During the Cold War, Switzerland served the estranged nations as a protecting power. In addition – by accepting refugees from communist countries – Switzerland cultivated its connection with the West.

### Political participation

Swiss citizens regularly vote on political issues at a municipal, cantonal, and federal level. The people must be consulted over any changes to the constitution. Since 1874, people have had the right to challenge decisions taken by the Federal Assembly by calling for a referendum. It has also been possible since 1891 to launch a popular initiative to request a partial amendment to the constitution. During the 20th century there were 415 popular votes on federal bills.

### Border security and control

When World War I broke out, Switzerland mobilised 200,000 soldiers to ensure the security of its borders. The choice of German sympathiser Ulrich Wille as General met with criticism especially in the French-speaking part of the country. Although Swiss neutrality was recognised internationally, the belligerent powers monitored Swiss exports. The Federal Council wanted better control over the immigration process and over immigrants already in the country. To that end, a special branch of the police was established in 1917 to deal with the registration of aliens.

### Resistance and adaptation

Following the defeat of France in 1940, Switzerland was surrounded by the forces of Nazi Germany and fascist Italy until 1944. Switzerland withdrew the army to the National Redoubt and constructed massive fortifications of the alpine region. A clear signal was given thereby that occupying the region would come at a high cost. At the same time, Switzerland tried through a policy of “good offices” and trading with the belligerent parties to demonstrate internationally the advantages of its neutrality.

### Refugees and internees

Switzerland took in around 26,000 civilian refugees during World War I – many of whom were conscientious objectors – and 12,000 wounded prisoners of war. During World War II, Switzerland’s refugee policy was somewhat more restrictive. A total of 51,000 civilian refugees – including 21,000 Jews – succeeded in entering the country. Of the 25,000 who were turned away, several thousand were Jews. Switzerland also interned 104,000 foreign soldiers, who were engaged in road building and agricultural work.

### Inconsistent service

The Swiss Red Cross took care of Jewish children in homes in occupied France. Doctors’ missions sent to the Eastern Front under the patronage of the Red Cross tended only to the German wounded, whereas the Swiss-run ICRC in Geneva supported prisoners of war throughout the world. The Swiss ambassador to Berlin, Hans Frölicher, ignored the persecution of the Jews for a long time, whereas Vice Consul Carl Lutz in Budapest saved tens of thousands of Jews from deportation.

### Spiritual national defence

The Federal Council wanted to strengthen national resilience against fascism and National Socialism. To promote intrinsically Swiss values the Federal Council established the public foundation Pro Helvetia and launched the Swiss weekly news film Schweizer Filmwochenschau. Spiritual national defence became popular with the “Landi” (Swiss National Exhibition) of 1939. The exhibition stylised Schweizerart als Bauernart (“Swiss style as farmer style”), celebrated dialects and folk music, and strengthened people’s will to resist. During the Cold War this spirit of resistance was then directed against communism.

# Exhibition tour

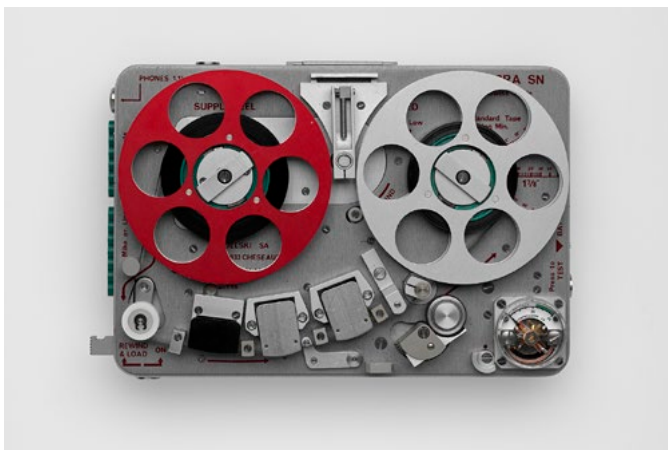
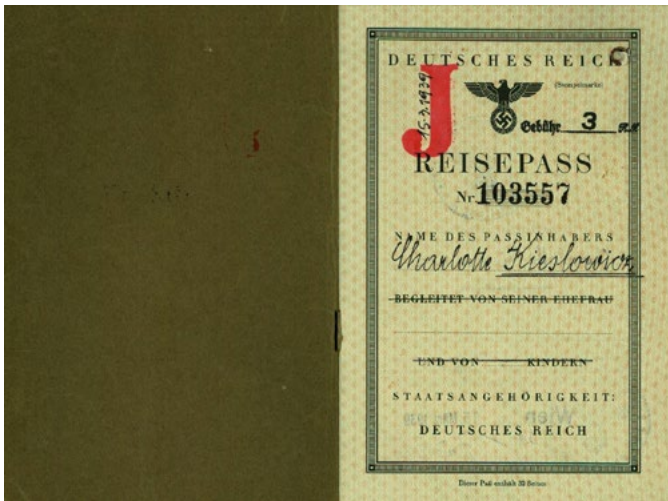
## Arming and state security

The possession of nuclear arms was a crucial factor in the East-West arms race. Between 1958 and 1969, Switzerland considered acquiring nuclear weapons. The air force was supplied with combat aircraft capable of carrying nuclear weapons. In preparation for a possible nuclear attack, civil defence facilities were constructed and bunkers modernised. At the same time, state security stepped up domestic surveillance, focusing its attention on communists, the New Left and foreigners.

## Orientation towards the West

The fact that Switzerland's neutrality was recognised allowed the country to operate as a protecting power. In 1973, Switzerland acted as a mediator for 24 nations. Following the Hungarian Uprising of 1956, Switzerland started accepting refugees from communist countries generously. It thereby demonstrated its affiliation with the capitalist West during the Cold War. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, however, it was no longer a matter of course that refugees from former socialist Yugoslavia would be accepted.

1



2



3

1900–2000

- 1 German passport with J stamp, 1939, Police headquarters, Berlin. On loan from Schweizerisches Bundesarchiv, Bern.
- 2 Tape recorder. NAGRA SN. Espionage recorder. Manufactured by Kudelski. 1973.
- 3 Swiss corporal and Polish internee, ceramic tile, 1943, Laufen. Painted and glazed ceramic tile.

1900–2000

## Part 2: Economic boom and social movements

The General Strike of 1918 brought some crucial social questions to Switzerland's political agenda: restrictions on working hours, mandatory retirement provisions, and women's suffrage. The economic boom that started in the 1950s created jobs on building sites and in the services sector. Supermarket chains such as Coop and Migros catered to a growing consumerism. The movement of 1968 demanded spaces for young people and tried out new ways of living. Swiss women finally won the right to vote in 1971, after a struggle that had lasted for decades. Opposition to nuclear power made environmental protection a constant political issue.

### More frequent popular initiatives

Following the General Strike of 1918, social balance issues in Switzerland were increasingly debated during popular initiative campaigns. In 1947, voters said "yes" to compulsory unemployment insurance. Bills on immigration and naturalisation were heavily contested. In 1977, 70.5 per cent of voters said "no" to the third popular initiative against foreign domination. The initiative "Equal rights for men and women" was approved in 1981; and environmental protection issues were increasingly decided at the ballot box.

### Social questions

The merger of the Grütli Union and the Social Democratic Party in 1901 gave a boost to the Swiss labour movement, which then intensified its fight for shorter working hours and better wages. Soldiers called up during World War I were not compensated for loss of wages. This – in addition to food shortages – led to social tensions that culminated in a general strike in November 1918. The strike placed the 48-hour working week, old-age provision, and women's suffrage on the political calendar in the 20th century.

### Foreign workers

Accompanying the economic boom was an increase in energy demand and in the mobility of a growing population. The Swiss economy needed additional workers for the construction of dams and motorways. By 1964 the increasing number of mostly Italian migrant workers, and the prospect of their families joining them, was causing unease among the Swiss population. Between 1968 and 1977 right-wing conservative circles launched four *Überfremdung* ("superalienation") initiatives, all of which were rejected at the ballot box.

### Consumer culture

Secure jobs and rising wages improved the standard of living in Switzerland. The economic miracle and a boom in advertising stimulated a culture of consumerism. From 1948, Migros and Coop added finished products to the range of goods sold at their self-service outlets. The rich assortment on offer was made possible by importing numerous goods. In 1972, Switzerland signed a free trade agreement with the European Community. Major food distributors also started stocking sustainable products following the certification of organic and Fairtrade products in 1992.

### Work in the office

The services sector grew rapidly from the 1950s. By the end of the century the sector employed three-quarters of the Swiss labour force. Secretarial jobs represented the largest occupational category for women. Secretaries worked at the office, using typewriters and – from the 1980s – computers. Switzerland's development as a financial centre resulted in banks and insurance companies becoming major employers. In the 1990s, they employed up to 10% of the Swiss labour force.

### Cultural awakening

Youth culture in the 1950s was electrified by jazz, beat and rock 'n' roll. The sedate bourgeoisie was shocked by the appearance of teenagers dressed in the latest "gear". Elvis caused a furore; and Louis Armstrong's concert in Zurich in 1959 provoked outrage. In 1962 the Beatles released "Love Me Do". Young men and women met in smoky basement bars where they drank and danced as they pleased. They pitted their own culture against the puritanical climate that prevailed.

# Exhibition tour

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## Left-wing rebellion

Young men's hair got longer and women's skirts got shorter. The Pill came onto the market in 1961. The first Wohngemeinschaften (shared houses/flats) were considered scandalous. From 1965, opposition to the Vietnam War stirred people into action in Swiss cities: peace activists, non-conformists, young communists and left-wing students. They organized demos and happenings to protest against capitalism and to demand more participation in decision-making and more spaces for young people. In 1968, this rebellion culminated in the "Globus Riots" in Zurich.

## Environmental protection

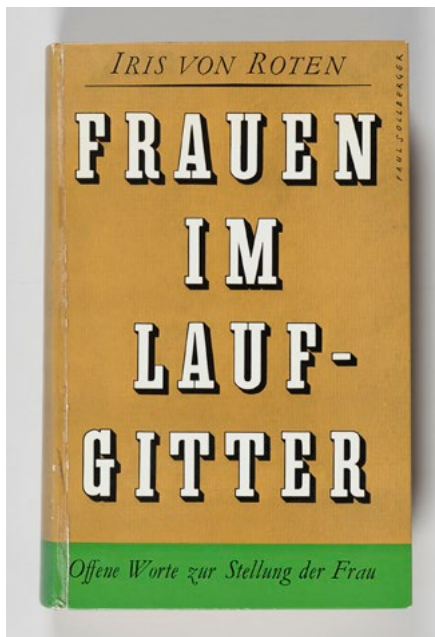
The report "The Limits to Growth" and the oil crisis of 1973 made it clear that energy resources were becoming scarcer and that nature was under threat. In Switzerland, the ecological movement began with the protest against nuclear power stations. The catastrophic nuclear accident at Chernobyl and a chemical spill in Basel, both of which occurred in 1986, stirred people into action on environmental protection. In the following year, the Green Party of Switzerland tripled its seats in the National Council. Waste separation, organic products and solar energy were fully accepted by many people in the 1990s.

## Voting rights for women

Virtually all European countries granted women voting rights after the two world wars. With the exception of Switzerland – although the Swiss labour movement and middle-class women's associations had been demanding women's suffrage for a long time. The first national referendum on the issue was held in 1959, but the proposal was rejected by 70% of the male voters. When the Federal Council moved to sign the European Convention on Human Rights without women's suffrage, feminists demonstrated in Berne. Women's suffrage was finally introduced in Switzerland in 1971.

## New Women's Movement

In 1971, after the first federal elections in which women could vote, eleven women entered parliament. Thirteen years later the first female Federal Councillor was elected. The New Women's Movement brought "the private" into the political arena. Under the slogan *Mein Bauch gehört mir* ("My belly belongs to me"), women demanded the right to legal abortion. A compromise known as the *Fristenlösung* (abortion on demand within the first three months) came to the vote in 1977. However, the proposal failed to secure a majority of the votes until 2002.



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1900–2000

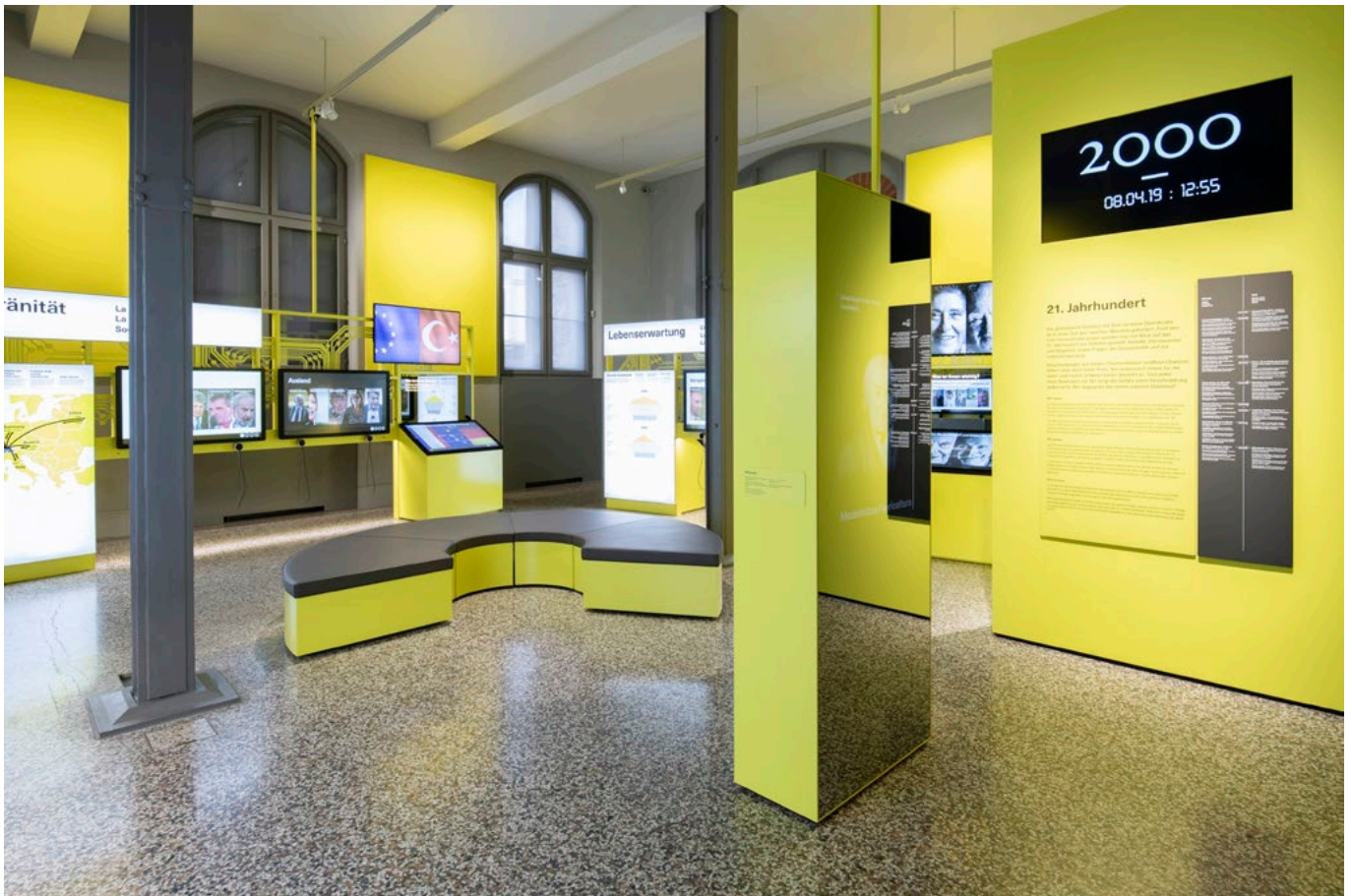
- 1 Book. Iris von Roten: *Frauen im Laufgitter*, 1958.
- 2 Pentecost March to the Leibstadt NPP, 3.6.1979. *Actualités Suisses Lausanne*.

# Exhibition tour

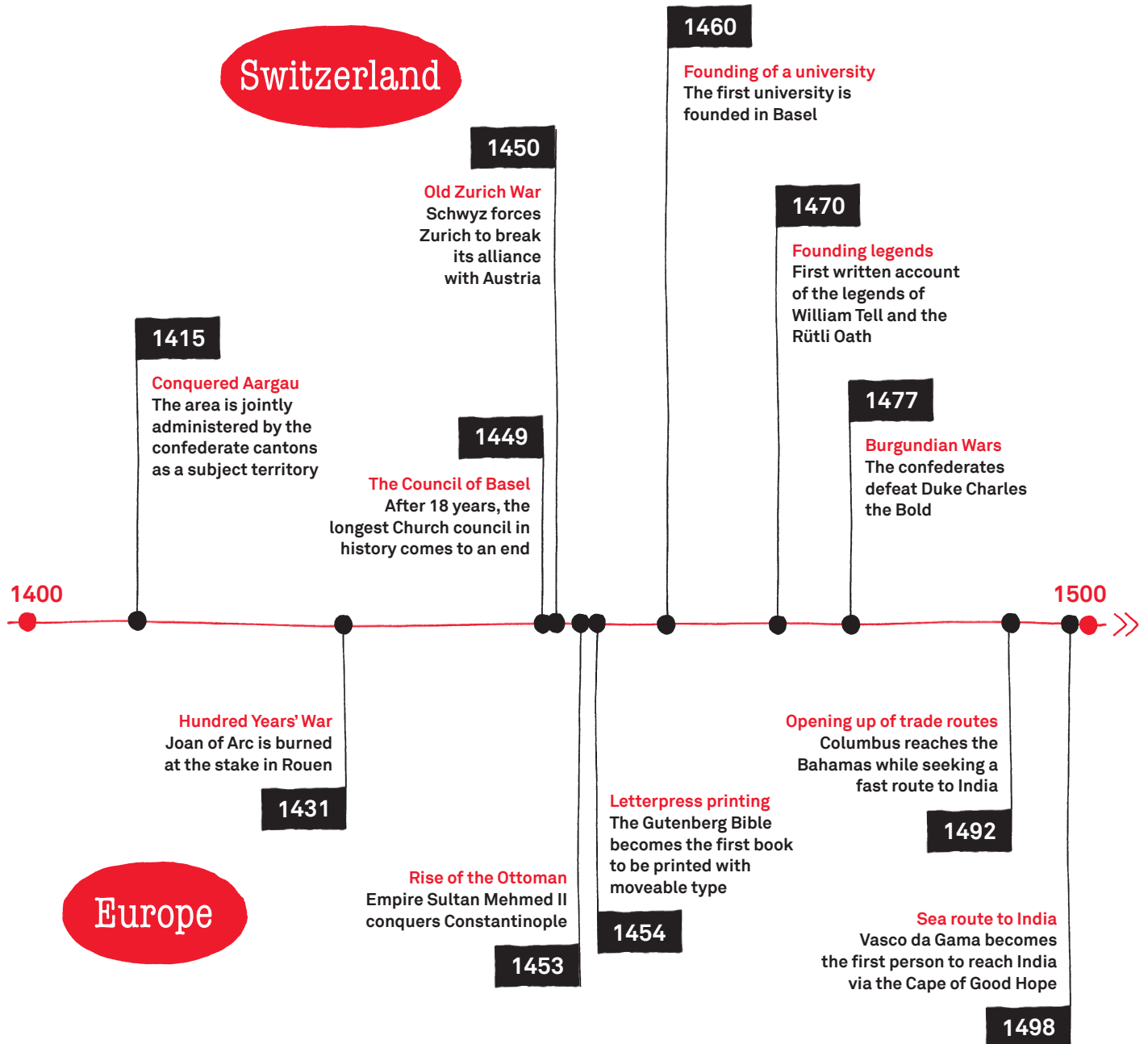
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2000–

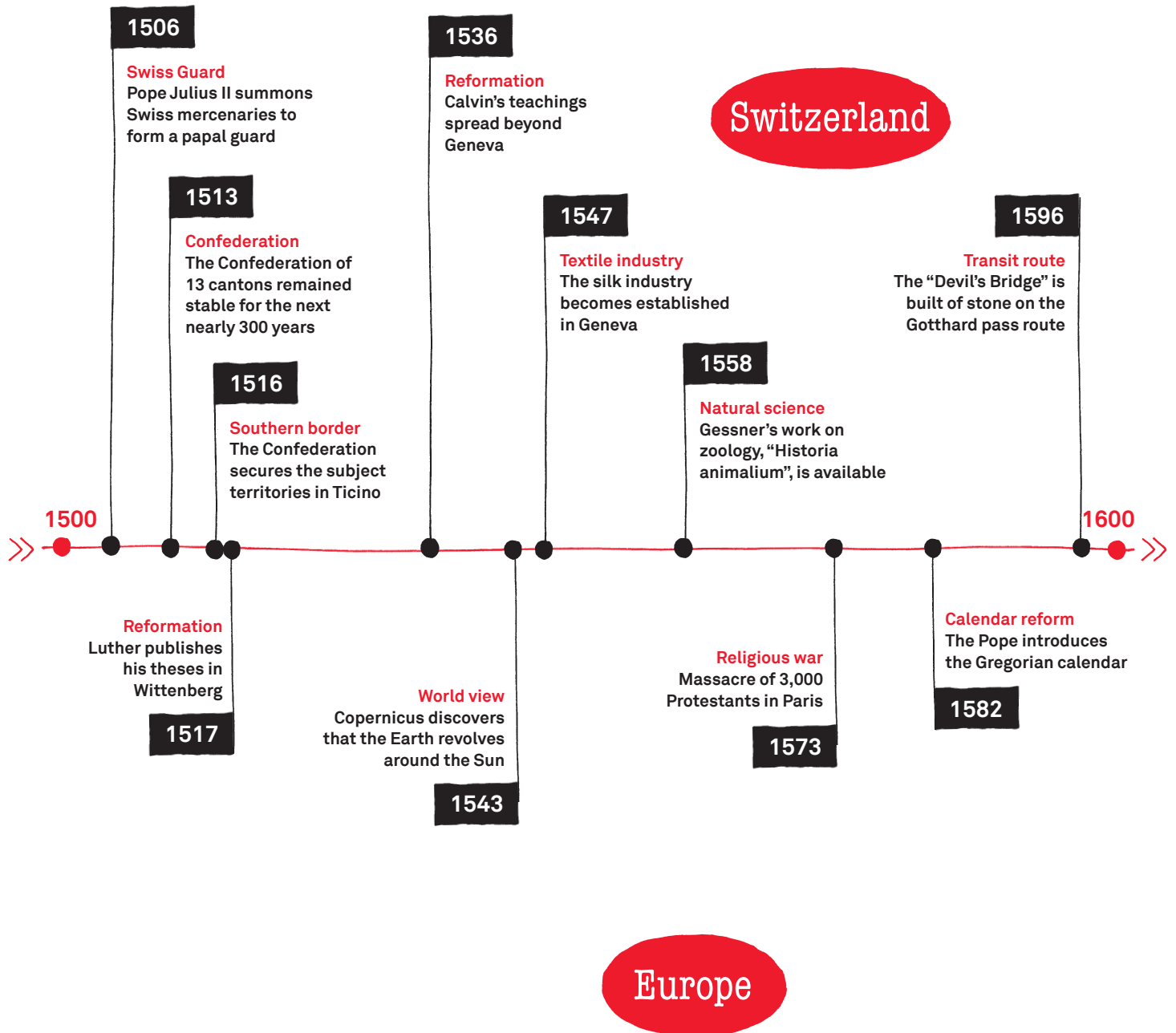
In an age of rapid change, globalized Switzerland and its direct democracy face a number of problems. Here we explore five key challenges facing us in the 21st century: robotics, climate change, migration, sovereignty, and life expectancy. Although decisions made in these areas open up opportunities, these come at a price. Things are improved for some, while others are expected to make sacrifices. And every step forward in a given area entails the risk of constraints elsewhere. How should such dilemmas be dealt with?



# Chronological table 15th century

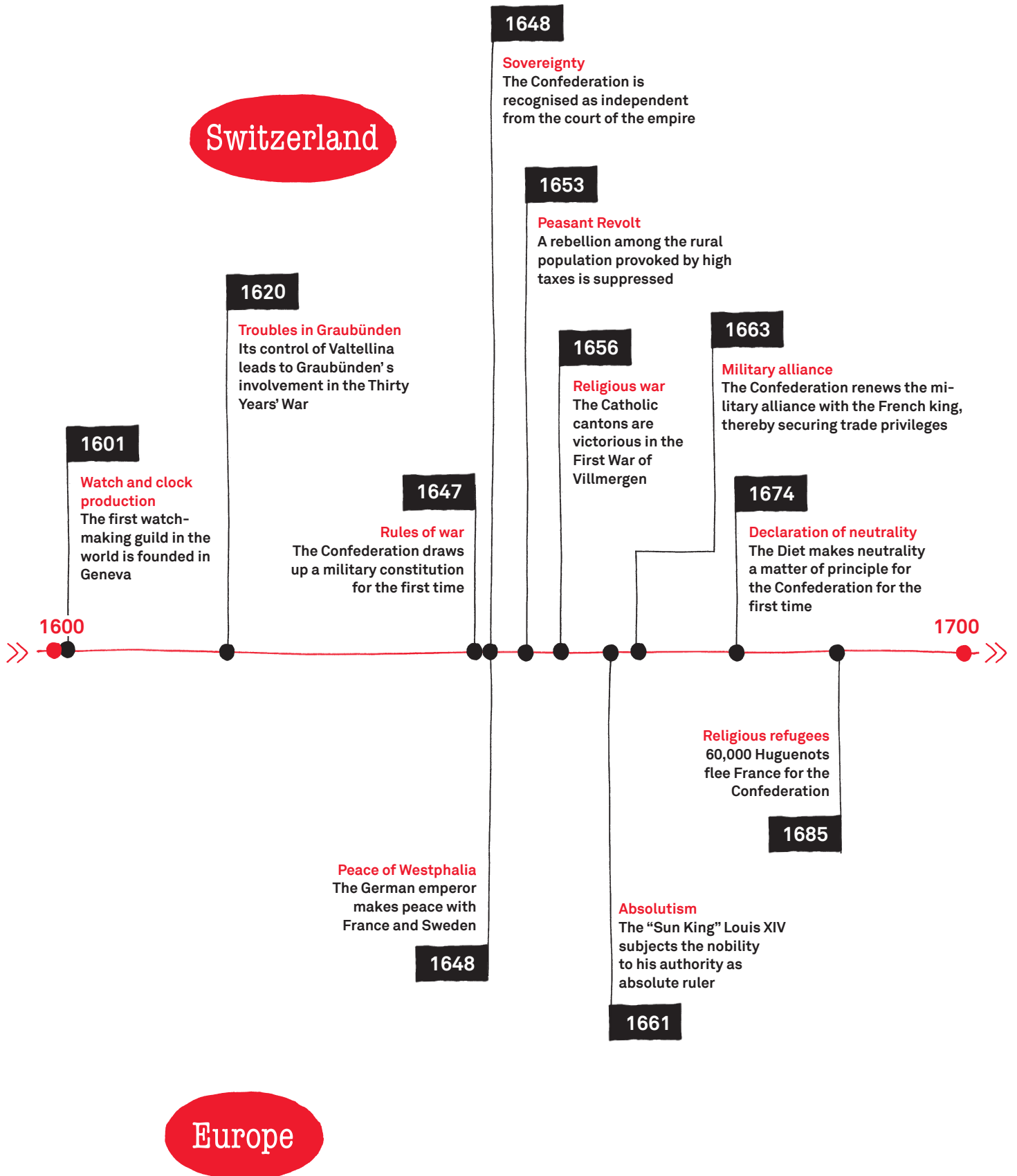


# Chronological table 16th century



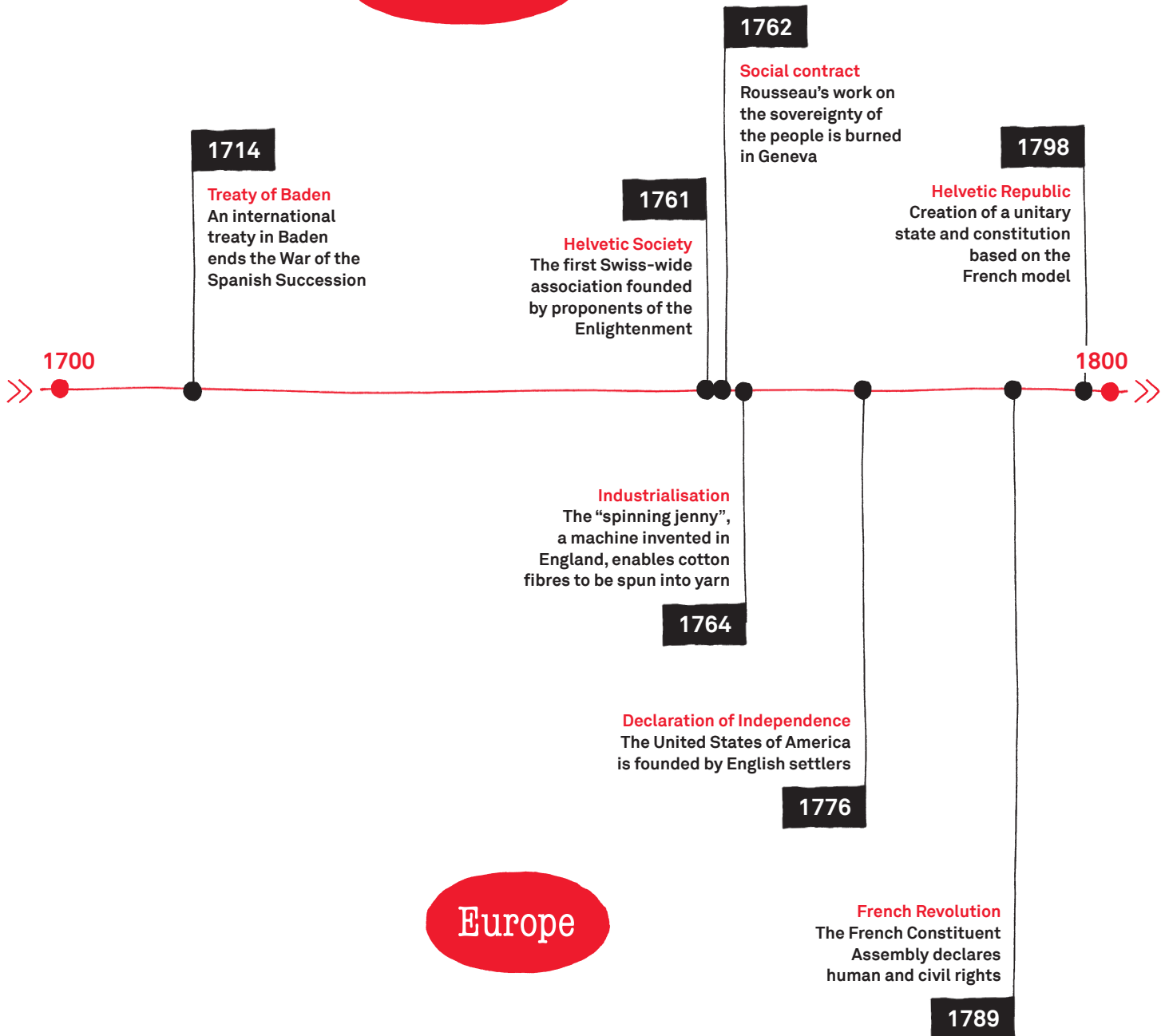


# Chronological table 17th century



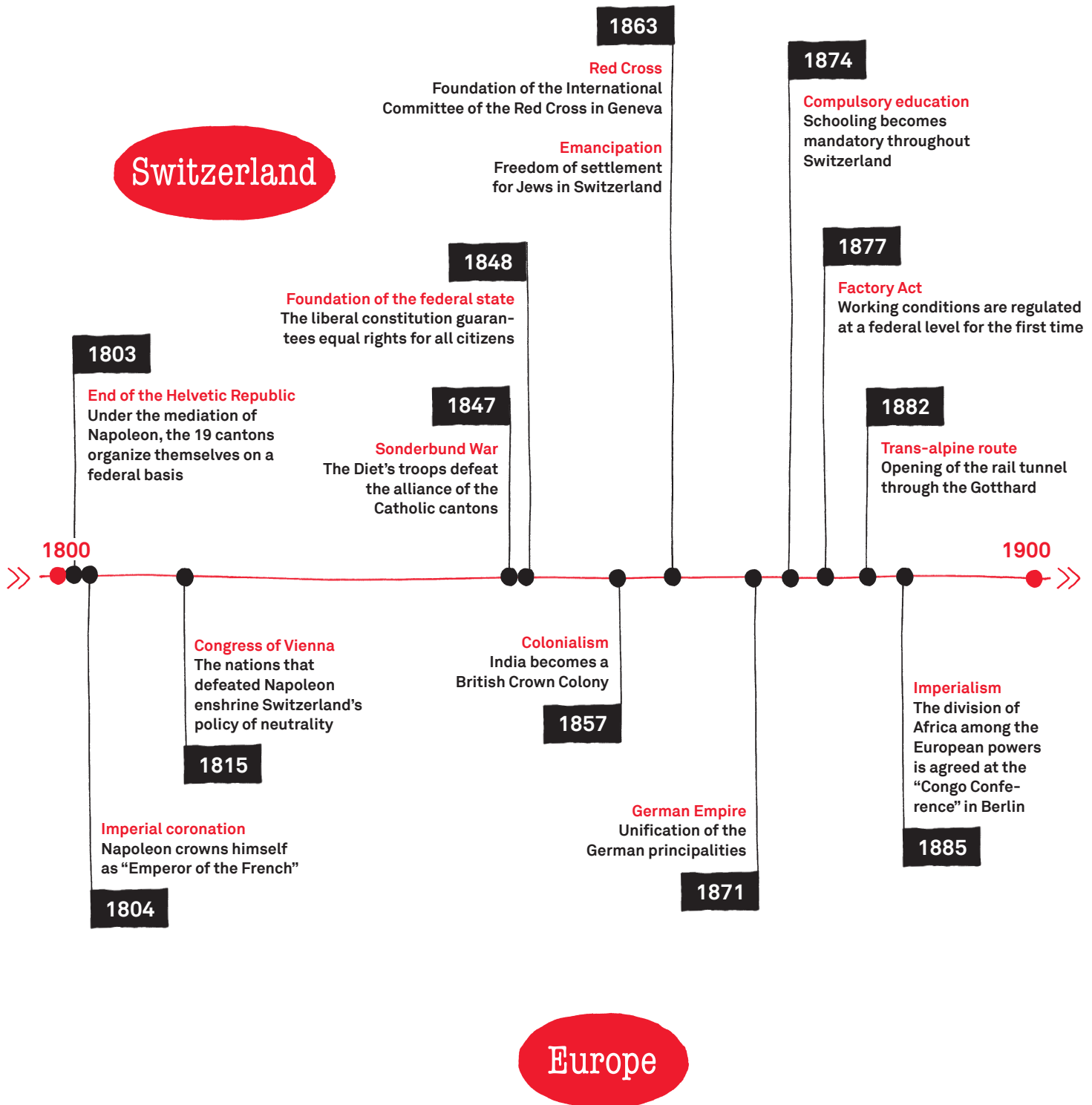
# Chronological table 18th century

## Switzerland



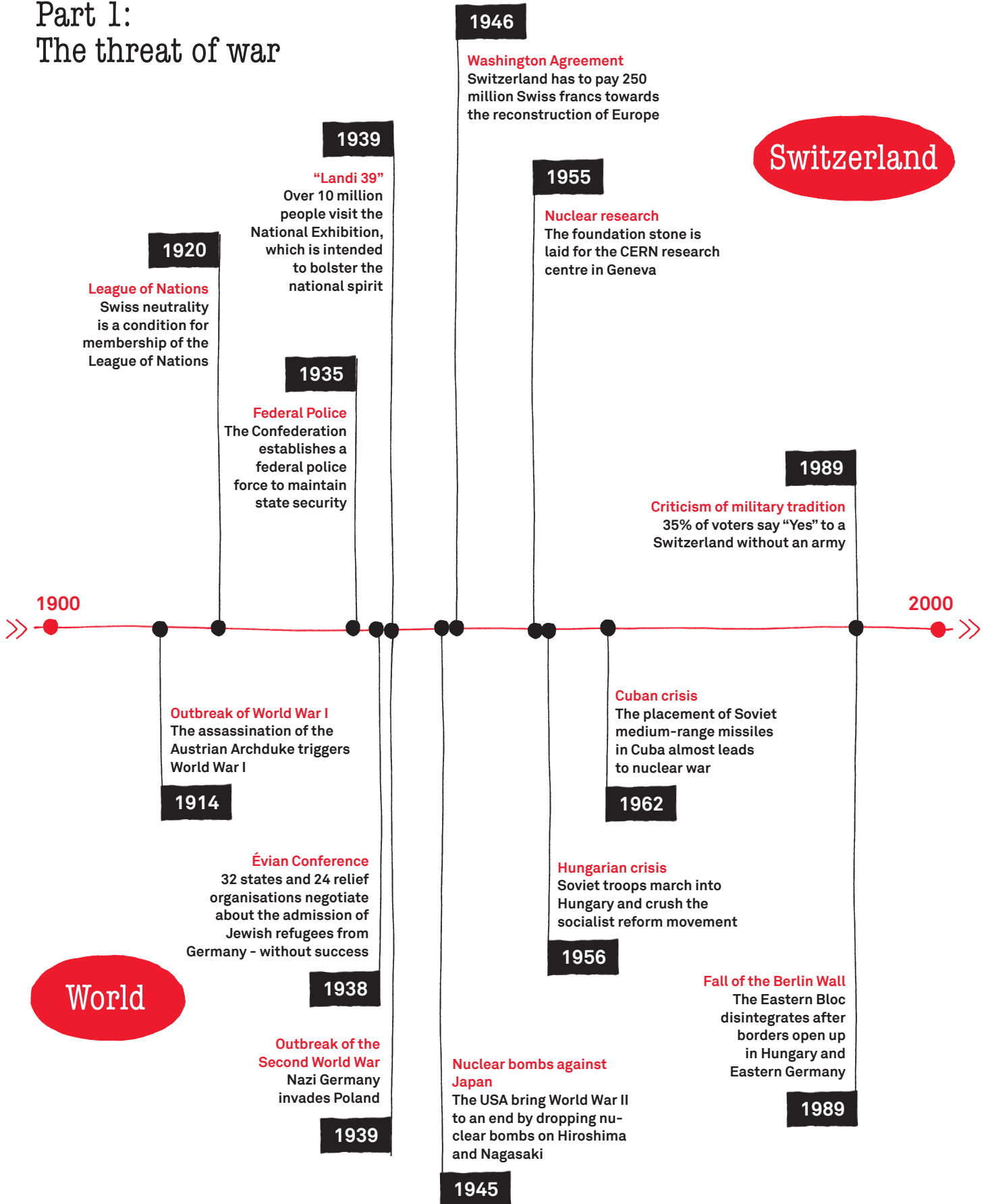
## Europe

# Chronological table 19th century



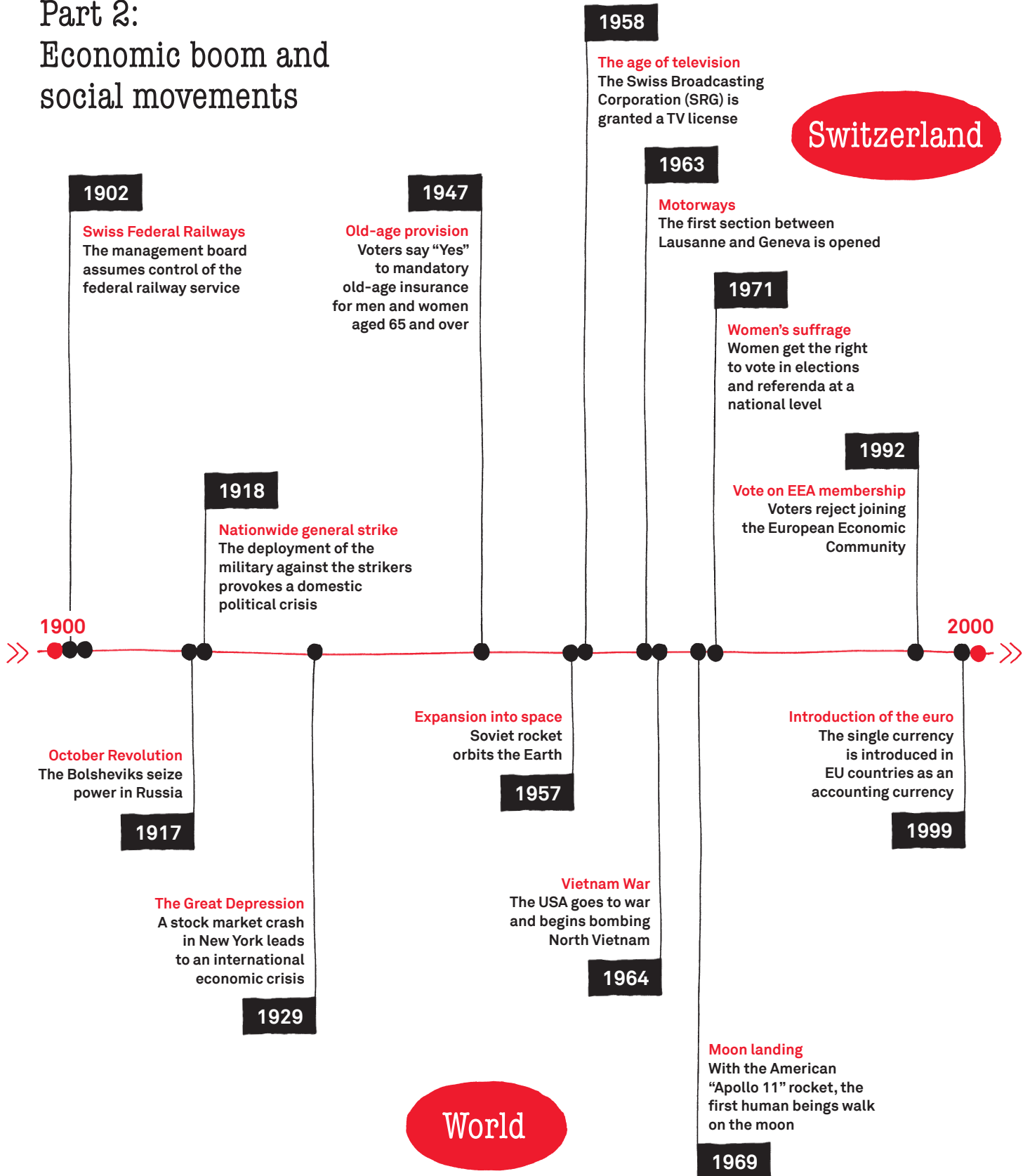
# Chronological table 20th century

## Part 1: The threat of war

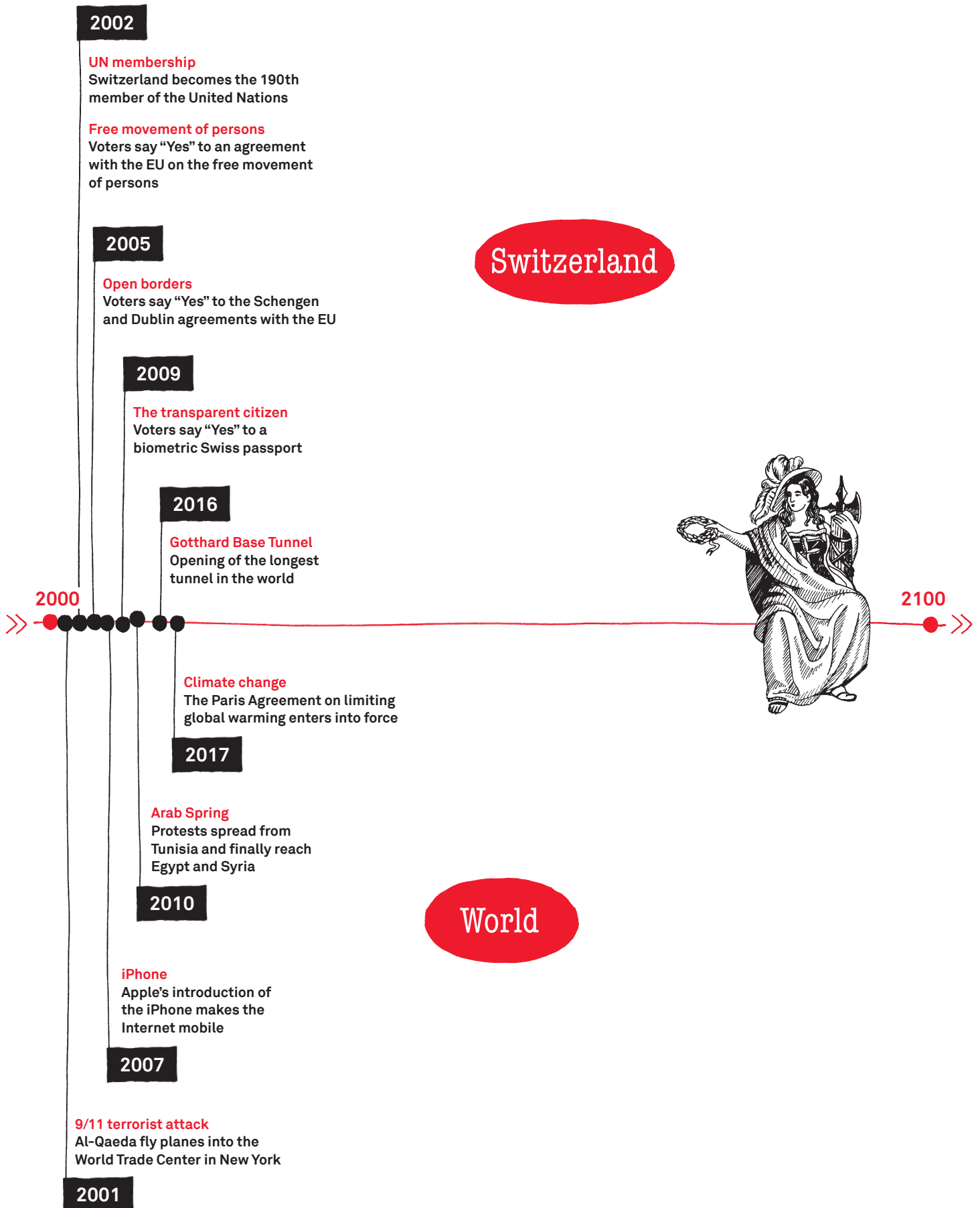


# Chronological table 20th century

## Part 2: Economic boom and social movements



# Chronological table 21st century



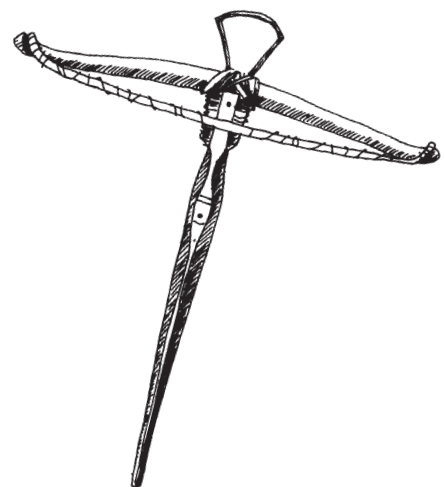
## 1. Swiss history in the classroom – What’s the point?

Swiss history is an important subject in the national educational system. The curricula in primary and secondary schools – vocational schools and grammar schools – include numerous guidelines and a range of recommendations. One central question here is, Why should schoolchildren be expected to study Switzerland’s history in the first place? What can or should be taught and learned?

In the light of current teaching plans, it is a matter of supporting pupils to develop a body of knowledge necessary for understanding key modern-day phenomena that have evolved historically. This includes traditions, institutions, and principles that govern our social coexistence: they serve to forge a sense identity, but may also excite opposition and be rejected. Examples of this include federalism, semi-direct democracy, the cultural diversity of the regions, the foreign policy maxim of armed neutrality.

In general, the process of analysing the past should also encourage thought about society and social change and create the conditions for tackling past and ongoing developments in an educated way: What motivated people in the past? How did they deal with the challenges they faced? What motivates us today? How do we deal with key social issues and problems today? What values do we choose to help direct our actions? What are the challenges of the future? How do we want to meet them? In other words, classes on Swiss history should lead to the development of historical knowledge.

Of equal importance, however, is the cultivation of a certain competency and of specific attitudes. The schoolchildren should appreciate and be able to explain the historical dimension of the present in all its different shapes and forms. They should learn to recognise and interpret society’s handling of history. They should learn to think with a historical perspective. And last but not least, they should acquire an appetite to engage with history later on as adults.



# Connections to the school curricula

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## 2. Curricular guidelines

The guidelines on Swiss history in the curricula of different school years and types<sup>1</sup> are applied in very different ways. This relates to the level of concretisation and the degree to which they are binding. The guidelines or recommendations cover

- a) Topics from Swiss history and politics
- b) Intellectual processes and ways of working
- c) Teaching methodologies

The anchoring of Swiss history in the syllabus is at its clearest and most mandatory in “Curriculum 21”, especially in the course “Räume, Zeiten, Gesellschaften” (Places, Times, Societies, Years 7–9). This course includes the competency area “Understanding Switzerland in Tradition and Change” and establishes a link to the history of the country in two further areas of competence. The following tables offer insights into the relevant syllabus specifications. They impart a picture which, while incomplete, is apposite.

### a) Topics from Swiss history and politics

#### Curriculum 21 (primary and compulsory secondary schooling)

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Subject area	Cycle	Topics from Swiss history (selection)
Nature, Man, Society	2nd cycle (Years 4–6)	Genesis of the Confederation (Federal Charter of 1291, Old Confederacy, legend of William Tell)
Places, Times, Societies	3rd cycle (Years 7–9)	Important lines of development and milestones along the way to creating modern Switzerland (birth of the Confederation, the Reformation, establishment of the federal state in 1848, Switzerland during the world wars, Switzerland during the Cold War, economic boom, women’s suffrage, neutrality, etc.)

#### Basic Vocational Training: Curriculum for Generalist Classes (advanced secondary level)

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Study area: Society	Topics that can be covered in connection with Swiss history and politics (selection)
Ethics	Freedom, customs and morals, civil courage
Identity and socialisation	Cultural diversity, migration issues
Culture	Everyday culture, exhibitions, art history
Politics	Types of democracy, federal politics, federalism
Law	Constitutional state, constitution, international law
Economy	Trade, consumer society, foreign trade



# Connections to the school curricula

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## b) Intellectual processes and ways of working

Schoolchildren should learn to think and work with a historical perspective. This requirement covers the following competencies:

- The ability to perceive history consciously
- The ability to formulate reasonable hypotheses in response to specified questions
- The ability to come up with one's own questions about history
- The ability to search for information and extrapolate materials appropriately
- The ability to challenge statements about the past, and to check and critique them as necessary
- The ability to place historical knowledge in a larger context and to present it verbally or in writing

### Curriculum 21

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Subject area	Cycle	Intellectual attainment and ways of working (selection)
Nature, Man, Society	2nd cycle (Years 4–6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Pupils can infer duration and change in their own experience and in their own lifeworld and environment.</li><li>- Pupils can understand how history is reconstructed from the past.</li><li>- Pupils can differentiate between history and stories.</li></ul>

### Curriculum for Matura Schools

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Subjects	Indicative targets, basic skills (selection)
History and Civic Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Grasping the historical dimensions of the present</li><li>- Processing historical sources and literature appropriately and with a critical mind, and understanding them in context</li><li>- Identifying myths in history</li><li>- Framing historical and current phenomena in suitable language and connecting them with one another</li></ul>

## c) Teaching methodologies

The educational goals connected with the teaching of history are ambitious. In order to be able to work towards these goals, teaching and learning situations must be designed in a particular way. Problem orientation and activity focus are important principles here. History should be presented to pupils not as a fixed truth to which there is nothing more to be added, but rather as a living engagement with the past that encourages questions and inspires them to undertake their own investigations and exchange ideas on different perceptions and insights.

### 3. Asking questions of the past – The issue of how to deal with history

What we read in history textbooks at school or see in the exhibition History of Switzerland is not a complete and objective image of the past, nor can it ever be or aspire to be such. It is rather an attempt to reconstruct a piece of the past. History is a reconstruction of past events. It is always partial and location-dependent. This understanding is crucial when we approach history. It leads us to key questions that can be regarded as a framework for orienting the study of history.

- a) What do we know about the past?
- b) How do we attain an understanding of the past?
- c) How do we tackle history?

Using these three questions as a way of orienting the study of history would seem to be a suitable approach, for example, in exploring the birth of the Confederation in the High Middle Ages:

- a) What do we know about the genesis of the Confederation?
- b) What are the sources that provide us with this knowledge? What do these sources tell us? What information do they withhold? How much of our knowledge is verified? How much is conjecture? What points are controversial?
- c) What is the function of epic tales, myths, and legends? What role did the epic account of William Tell play in Swiss history? How is Tell presented in the History of Switzerland exhibition? How do I relate to William Tell?

#### How do we tackle history?

A visit to the History of Switzerland exhibition is an excellent opportunity to show schoolchildren a piece of historical culture. It is a chance to learn: there is nothing coincidental about the fact that we have a Swiss National Museum. It is no accident that the National Museum Zurich is hosting an elaborately designed exhibition on Swiss history. There are some important social concerns informing this.

The issues here are:

- Why is there an exhibition on Swiss history showing at the National Museum Zurich?
- Who actually creates an exhibition of this kind?
- What are the key considerations in play here?
- What do I take home with me from a visit to the History of Switzerland exhibition?
- Is it important for me that this exhibition has been mounted?

# List of Media

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## Films

Lyssy, Rolf.

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104 min. Switzerland, 1978.

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Imhoof, Markus.

**Das Boot ist voll.**

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**Reise der Hoffnung.**

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## Links

[www.sozialarchiv.ch](http://www.sozialarchiv.ch)

[www.hls-dhs-dss.ch](http://www.hls-dhs-dss.ch)

