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ZUGWEST.

THE PLACE TO BE



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CHAM
HÜNENBERG
RISCH ROTKREUZ

STRONG THROUGH CHANGE



F. l. t. r.: Georges Helfenstein, President
Renate Huwyler, Vice-President,
responsible for the Regional Commission
Peter Hausherr, Board Member, Finance
Pascal Meyer, Board Member,
Representative Economic Commission

Dear Entrepreneurs

As early as 500 BC, the Greek philosopher Heraclitus coined the phrase Panta rhei – 'Everything flows' – capturing the timeless insight that change is the only constant in life. Change is therefore nothing new: the economy, society, and the world of work have always been subject to change. Looking back, we can also see that change has not only been managed but has often been the starting point for progress, innovation, and new opportunities.

Today, we are once again experiencing a phase of profound transformation. Technologies are developing rapidly, markets are changing, and demands are rising. Artificial intelligence, robotics, automation, and digital processes are shaping job profiles, processes, and expectations. For businesses, this means providing direction and making decisions while still remaining agile.

It is precisely in such an environment that we see what really matters today: strength does not mean clinging to the tried and tested, but embracing change and actively shaping it. 'Strong through Change' is therefore the theme of this issue and an aspiration that guides many businesses in their day-to-day operations.

At the ZUGWEST spring event on robotics, it became clear just how closely the future and everyday life are already intertwined. Insights from research and practice demonstrated the extent to which the world of work is changing: automation is taking over routine tasks, new skills are becoming increasingly important, and forms of collaboration are evolving. It also became clear that, despite all this progress, people remain central as the driving force behind the use of technology.

This issue highlights various facets of this transformation – from the perspective of companies, locations, and specific projects. It invites you to make sense of these developments and reflect on your own role within them.

We hope you find this a stimulating read – and that it provides ample inspiration for what lies ahead.

Yours sincerely
Georges Helfenstein
President, ZUGWEST Economic Region Association



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Cham

MUCH MORE THAN JUST A BUSINESS LOCATION



What makes a location attractive and liveable in the long term? The key lies in the interplay between economic strength and quality of life. It is often not new developments that make the difference, but the targeted use and further development of what is already there.

Today, decisions on where to locate are guided by new criteria. Alongside traditional factors such as taxation and accessibility, the focus is shifting to the bigger picture: how well can people work, live, and thrive here? The Zugwest region offers an environment in which these factors are closely intertwined – with short distances, reliable infrastructure, and a high quality of life.

This is particularly evident in the diverse local recreational opportunities. Walking and cycling paths along the Lorze and Reuss rivers as well as access to lakes, green spaces, and sports facilities are just as much a part of everyday life here as modern workplaces. In the competition for skilled workers, such qualities are becoming increasingly important: there is growing demand for living environments that offer more than just functional infrastructure and that meaningfully combine work and private life.

At the same time, existing developments are being purposefully enhanced: in all three municipalities, existing sites are being transformed and opened up

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> IN CHAM, I SEE EVERY DAY HOW ECONOMIC DYNAMISM AND A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE GO HAND IN HAND AS A MATTER OF COURSE. THE PROXIMITY TO THE LAKE AND GREEN SPACES, AS WELL AS THE SHORT DISTANCES INVOLVED, MAKE OUR LOCATION ATTRACTIVE TO BUSINESSES AND EMPLOYEES ALIKE.
>
> Georges Helfenstein
> Mayor of Cham



Rotkreuz

Hünenberg





"

THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN THE ECONOMY, EDUCATION, ACCESSIBILITY, AND LOCAL RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IS PROVIDING A STRONG BOOST TO THE MUNICIPALITY OF RISCH. I AM DELIGHTED THAT, BECAUSE OF THIS AND THROUGH DIALOGUE WITH RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES, CONCRETE PROJECTS ARE EMERGING STEP BY STEP – FOR A VIBRANT TOWN CENTRE, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND QUALITY OF LIFE.

Peter Hausherr
Mayor of Risch

"

WHAT INSPIRES ME ABOUT HÜNENBERG IS THE SENSE OF COMMUNITY: AN ACTIVE VILLAGE LIFE, SHORT DISTANCES, AND AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH FAMILIES AND BUSINESSES ALIKE CAN PUT DOWN ROOTS. THIS QUALITY OF LIFE IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT IN THE COMPETITION FOR SKILLED WORKERS AND IS THE REASON WHY SO MANY PEOPLE FEEL AT HOME HERE.

Renate Huwyler
Mayor of Hünenberg

for new, diverse uses. Locations close to nature are being linked with infill development, and residential, commercial, and educational areas are being strengthened step by step. This creates a diverse, vibrant environment that builds on what already exists and develops it with a clear focus on the future. The region's strength therefore lies not so much in rapid change as in continuity – and in the ability to preserve existing qualities over the long term while developing them in a targeted manner.

INTERVIEW

THE FACTORS THAT DEFINE A LOCATION

Which trends are shaping the market, and how is the Zugwest region faring in the competition? An analysis with Daniel Stocker, Head of Research Switzerland at JLL.

When it comes to competition between locations, it is no longer just hard factors such as accessibility, taxation, or available space that count. Equally crucial is how effectively a location functions as a whole – for both businesses and skilled workers. As a result, factors such as quality of life, affordable housing, education, and safety are gaining in importance. The focus is shifting from mere availability to the quality of what is on offer: locations with a distinct identity are in demand, particularly those that showcase their strengths and consistently build on them.

Market trends as drivers of location quality

Current developments in the property and labour markets highlight which factors are becoming increasingly important:

- Existing buildings and sites are being transformed and adapted to new requirements.
- Sustainability encompasses not only energy but also health and quality of life.
- Spaces are being used in more flexible and multi-functional ways, combining work, interaction, and services.
- Digital solutions and artificial intelligence enable data-driven applications and improve the planning, management, use, and comfort of buildings.
- Service provision and user-centricity are becoming increasingly important to the attractiveness of workplaces.

These trends make it clear that a coherent, comprehensive offering is needed rather than a single measure.





Three questions for Daniel Stocker, JLL

A market-based perspective shows how these developments can be contextualised and where specific opportunities lie.

Daniel Stocker, what factors are decisive today when choosing a location?

The importance of individual factors varies depending on the company and sector, and they are weighted differently. Good accessibility is usually key; it benefits employees just as much as it does customers and suppliers. Depending on the business focus, an existing industry cluster is seen as a plus – you don't run away from the competition but seek it out.



"

IN THE CANTON OF ZUG, NO OTHER MUNICIPALITY COMBINES LIVING AND WORKING AS EFFICIENTLY AS CHAM.

Zuger Zeitung
Sotomo Study, Nov. 2025

To be considered as a business location and remain attractive over the long term, a region must have a stable political and legal framework. Once these criteria are met, suitable premises must also be available. Companies are looking for flexible, modern spaces in sustainable buildings with room for expansion.





About:
Daniel Stocker heads up Research at JLL Switzerland and has extensive experience in the property sector, including roles at Colliers International, Corestate Capital, and Luzerner Kantonalbank. He holds a degree in geography from the University of Zurich, where he also obtained an executive MBA. In addition, he is active as a speaker and guest lecturer. Having grown up in Hünenberg, he now lives in Zug.

How do you assess the Zugwest region in the current market environment?

The region is very well connected in terms of transport and is ideally situated on the Lucerne–Zurich–Airport axis. Its extensive catchment area and links to other economic centres ensure access to labour, suppliers, and markets. What's more, the canton is regarded as business-friendly, and the local administration enjoys a good reputation among companies. This combination is not a given in the market and is therefore well received – by both established and new companies.

What makes a location resilient in the long term?

The interplay of several factors – and, above all, the ability to adapt to new needs and trends. Those who recognise their individual strengths and harness the potential of a strong network should consistently position and develop the location accordingly.

OVERVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN THE ZUGWEST REGION

A Cham-Hünenberg bypass (UCH), 2027/2028

The Cham-Hünenberg bypass (UCH) is an indispensable part of cantonal transport planning. It relieves the burden of through traffic, upgrades living and economic areas, and improves mobility for all road users. The route runs parallel to the A4 motorway, resulting in minimal land use. The groundbreaking ceremony took place on 1 July 2022. The bypass is scheduled to open in summer 2027.

B SBB railway project: Zimmerberg Base Tunnel II, expansion stage 2035

The Zimmerberg Base Tunnel II (ZBT2) brings the economic areas of Zurich and Zug/Lucerne/Central Switzerland closer together. It enables better, faster, and more frequent connections between Lucerne, Rotkreuz, Zug, and Zurich.

C Rotkreuz station mobility hub, 2031

The planned expansion of the Zimmerberg Base Tunnel II will expand and improve public transport services in Rotkreuz and across the entire region. SBB therefore intends to renovate and modernise the future Rotkreuz station. Changing between different modes of transport will become barrier-free, more comfortable, and safer for all passengers. In place of the old station building, SBB is planning a high-rise and two additional buildings that will provide residential accommodation, commercial space, and a range of services, with a gross floor area (GFA) of up to 23,200 m². Public-facing facilities are planned for the ground floor. The winning entry from the design competition is currently being further refined, after which the construction project will be developed.

D Rotkreuz centre design, new Dorfmatt centre and sports park area, 2032

The SBB's plans to renovate the railway station give the municipality of Risch a unique opportunity to revitalise the centre of Rotkreuz, create a place that fosters a sense of identity, and make the most of synergies between the development partners. The municipality is constructing a new building on the site of the Dorfmatt centre, featuring a multipurpose hall, retail and service spaces, office space for the administration, and around 60 flats. Dorfmattplatz is to be upgraded into an attractive space for residents. A new, high-capacity bus station that meets the requirements of the Disability Equality Act will also be built. The winning entry in the design competition was presented to the public in June 2025. The sports park building is also being redesigned, with the winning design presented in December 2025.

E New Cantonal School Rotkreuz, 2031

The Zug Cantonal Government has decided that the new cantonal school will be built in Rotkreuz. Until the new building is completed, the cantonal school has been temporarily housed at the Suurstoffi site, having moved there at the start of the 2025/26 school year. The new building will provide space for up to 880 pupils and include a quadruple sports hall, fitness and gymnastics rooms, and a music school. The planning will be closely coordinated with the new design for the centre of Rotkreuz.

F Development Städtler Allmend area, Cham

The Städtler Allmend area is a commercial zone in a prominent location between the Alpenblick intersection and the Zugerland shopping centre. The Hinterberg Süd area to the south will become a new, vibrant, and well-connected area for work and shopping. The winning project from the competition envisages a well-thought-out urban development solution with attractive buildings and well-designed outdoor spaces. The municipality of Cham is working alongside Steinhausen, the Canton of Zug, and investors in the 'Netzwerk Städtler Allmend' working group to further develop and position the area.



G Cham station mobility hub

At Cham railway station, plans are in place to make the bus station accessible to disabled passengers and extend the platform areas, enabling a Regioexpress stop. The public facilities will also need to be upgraded. Overall, the transport hub is to be developed into an attractive arrival and interchange point. In January 2026, SBB and the municipality of Cham concluded a planning agreement setting out the objectives for further development.

H Highway connection Rotkreuz-Süd

With a half connection to the A4 at Buonaserstrasse over a longer time frame and a bypass at the Forren traffic circle, pressure on the existing Rotkreuz connection as well as Chamerstrasse and Holzhäusernstrasse will be relieved.

I Development working area Bösch, Hünenberg

As part of the Hünenberg location promotion initiative, the Bösch business district will become more attractive to workers and businesses over the next 10–15 years, with infrastructure redesigns and improvements designed to create a better quality of life in Bösch. The first stage of redesigning the ring road and central axis is currently being planned, with completion scheduled for the end of 2026. The focus is on improving the access road from Holzhäusernstrasse and enhancing road visibility by reducing the number of bus stops to two and relocating them to the area's central axis. New pavements will also improve safety.

J Moosmatt working area, Hünenberg

The Moosmatt working area at the northeastern entrance to the village will be developed and upgraded. As part of the local planning revision, the increase in utilisation should create potential for redensification.

K Overall development Papieri Cham

The Papieri district was officially inaugurated in 2022, and the first flats and commercial spaces were occupied. Additional flats and commercial spaces are being built. Around 3,000 people will one day live and work on the 10-hectare site – not only in completely new buildings, but also in the historic buildings of the former paper mill. The mix of flats, lofts, workplaces, open spaces, green areas, and public-oriented uses will make the quarter an excellent place to live. The entire site is supplied with renewable energy and is CO_2-neutral.

L Site development Pavatex Süd Cham

In a joint planning process, the municipality of Cham and the landowner Cham Group want to develop the currently undeveloped 18,900 m2 Pavatex Süd site in the north of Cham from an industrial area into a mixed neighbourhood with residential and subordinate commercial use. A new school building is also planned to provide urgently needed school space in Cham.

SPACES IN TRANSITION

Three areas, three different approaches, and one common question: how are places created today that combine work, life, and development? Amidst transformation, densification, and targeted development, new potential for synergy is emerging for businesses and local communities.

From production site to living space: Papieri Cham



Few examples symbolise structural change as well as Papieri Cham. Paper was produced here for over 360 years, until operations ceased in 2015. Today, a new neighbourhood is taking shape on the former factory site. Historic industrial buildings are being preserved, repurposed, and combined with modern architecture. Added to this is a clear focus on sustainability: the site is designed around a carbon-neutral energy concept.

For businesses, this means that the choice of location becomes part of their own positioning – both as an employer brand for staff and as a corporate brand for customers.

- **Identity rather than interchangeability:** the historic setting creates an atmosphere that traditional office spaces rarely offer.
- **A wide mix of uses:** the range, from studios to open-plan offices, accommodates a wide variety of business models.
- **An ecosystem rather than an isolated site:** living, working, leisure, and dining merge to form an environment that attracts and retains talent.

Densification as an opportunity: Chäsimatt in Risch



Chäsimatt is not a traditional industrial site, but an example of targeted infill development with urban aspirations. On a previously underused site near the Rotkreuz railway station, a new neighbourhood has emerged that combines housing, work, dining, services, and hospitality. Chäsimatt thus exemplifies the transformation and development taking place

in Risch. For businesses, this means that proximity, networking, and visibility are becoming increasingly important. The combination of around 126 flats with commercial premises and public-facing uses creates a vibrant environment that goes beyond traditional workplaces.

- **Quality of location:** proximity to the railway stationis deliberately utilised and is a key locational advantage, particularly when competing for skilled workers.
- **Small-scale structures:** several buildings with distinct identities create a diverse environment that is particularly attractive to SMEs and service providers.
- **Meeting spaces:** car-free squares and communal areas encourage interaction, networking, and spontaneous encounters (including between businesses).

Targeted development: Maihölzli in Hünenberg



In Maihölzli, the second phase is creating a new site for administration, housing, and services. Plans include a community centre and a mixed-use residential and commercial building offering affordable housing. The ground floor of the latter will house a public-facing facility: the police station. Office space will be let on the third floor of the new community centre.

The project represents a functional development of existing structures (Phase 1 of Maihölzli), with a clear focus on local needs. For businesses and public institutions, this means well-connected locations that sensibly combine amenities, services, and housing.

- **Needs-based development:** housing and public infrastructure are specifically combined at the heart of the village.
- **Central functions:** administration, security, and services are brought together in one place.
- **Everyday amenities:** ground-floor areas with public-facing facilities enhance the local living environment.

Three models – a common thread

However different the three areas may be, they point in the same direction: spaces are no longer developed in isolation, but are conceived as interconnected systems:

- **Transformation rather than expansion:** new spaces are increasingly created through repurposing or densification, rather than on greenfield sites.
- **Mixed-use rather than a monostructure:** work is embedded in an environment comprising housing, services, and public infrastructure.
- **Quality rather than mere function:** there is a demand for places with a distinct identity, good accessibility, and a high quality of life.

For businesses, this means a shift in perspective. The location is no longer merely infrastructure, but part of the company's own positioning – visible in everyday life, tangible for staff, and effective in the competitive landscape.

ROBOTICS IN EVERYDAY LIFE – FROM A VISION OF THE FUTURE TO REALITY

Robotics has moved beyond research laboratories and is becoming part of everyday life. For businesses, it is increasingly becoming a practical tool for real-world applications.



At the ZUGWEST spring event on 30 April 2026, Prof Dr Robert Riener from ETH Zurich and Dr Vincent Revol from CSEM gave presentations on robotics, offering insights from both research and practice. Their talks demonstrated just how widely the technology is already being used today – and the potential it offers to companies across a wide range of sectors.

Widespread application rather than a niche topic

Whether in industry, logistics, the service sector, or medicine, robotic systems take on repetitive or precision-critical tasks, reduce the workload for staff, and optimise processes. At the same time, demands for flexibility and speed are increasing. In this environment, automation offers clear advantages.

'We are only at the beginning of a development that will fundamentally transform many areas of the economy', said Robert Riener. He emphasised that it is crucial for technology not to be viewed in isolation, but to function in harmony with people and society. 'Robotics delivers its greatest benefits where it solves specific problems – be it in medicine, in care or in the everyday lives of people with disabilities.'

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> ROBOTICS DELIVERS ITS GREATEST BENEFITS WHERE IT SOLVES SPECIFIC PROBLEMS.
>
> Prof Dr Robert Riener
> Professor of Sensory-Motor Systems at ETH Zurich and of Rehabilitation Robotics at the University of Zurich

Growing closer to people

This development is particularly evident in the medical sector. There, robotic applications support rehabilitation – for example, after strokes or in cases of paralysis – and enable precise, repeatable movement sequences. In care settings, assistive systems relieve staff of physically demanding tasks.

'Robotics is successful when it does not replace people, but rather enhances their capabilities', emphasised Riener. He stressed that it is crucial for technology to be tailored to individual needs and used sensibly. He also sees great potential in everyday life: 'Mobility, independence and quality of life can be significantly improved through intelligent systems.'



Prof Dr Robert Riener
at the ZUGWEST Spring Event 2026

Opportunities for SMEs

Access to the technology is also changing: robotics is no longer the exclusive preserve of large industrial firms. Modular, scalable solutions now enable even smaller companies to automate and expand specific processes in a targeted manner.

For SMEs, the potential lies primarily in specific applications – such as production, quality assurance, or logistics. 'Many companies are surprised at how quickly robotics can be integrated these days', explained Vincent Revol. Modern systems are significantly more flexible than they were just a few years ago. 'It's not the major technological leap that matters, but the first concrete step – it often starts with a clearly defined process.' At the same time, he emphasised the importance of support: 'We support companies from the initial idea right through to implementation. The key is to ensure that innovation doesn't seem complicated but is practical to implement'.

> WHAT MATTERS IS NOT THE MAJOR TECHNOLOGICAL LEAP, BUT THE FIRST CONCRETE STEP.
>
> Dr Vincent Revol
> VP Industry 4.0 & Life Sciences
> CSEM Centre Suisse d'Electronique et de Microtechnique

Between progress and responsibility

As robotics becomes increasingly widespread, the question of how to deal with the technology also arises. Alongside efficiency gains and new possibilities, the focus is on acceptance, responsibility, and the sensible integration of robotics into existing working environments.

One thing is clear: robotics is not a short-term trend. It is changing processes, role models, and expectations while at the same time opening up new opportunities for businesses and society.



2018

NESTLÉ IN CHAM – A PIECE OF ECONOMIC HISTORY

1866



1899



1910

The Nestlé House in Cham symbolises the early days of a global corporation and the region's industrial development. Luca Borlini, Head of the Share Office at Nestlé, explains why Cham remains of particular significance to Nestlé to this day.

The striking brick building on Zugerstrasse in Cham is one of the region's most important landmarks of industrial history. It serves as a reminder of the region's industrial boom, when Cham developed into a centre for European milk processing. The history of Nestlé began in Cham with the founding of the Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Company in 1866. The subsequent merger with Henri Nestlé's company gave rise to one of the world's largest food conglomerates. The administrative building, constructed in 1876, still houses Nestlé's share register.

Luca Borlini, the Nestlé House is one of Nestlé's historic birthplaces. How is this heritage preserved and passed on within the company today?
Nestlé actively preserves the heritage of Cham and highlights it as an important part of the company's history. Alongside Vevey, Cham is one of the company's two historic birthplaces and represents the roots of the Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Company, which merged with Nestlé in 1905. Exhibitions, anniversaries, publications, and the upkeep of the listed Nestlé House keep this history alive.

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> AT NESTLÉ, THE FOUNDERS' PIONEERING SPIRIT LIVES ON.

In your view, what traces of this pioneering era are still visible today in the region and in Nestlé's corporate culture?
The establishment of the Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Company was a major milestone for Cham's economic development. The company turned the region into a major centre for milk processing and was, at times, one of Switzerland's largest purchasers of milk. It created jobs, supported local agriculture, and established long-term partnerships with dairy farmers. Trade and infrastructure also benefited from this. The historic administrative building and former factory sites still serve as a reminder of this pioneering industrial era.



1869



About:
Luca Borlini
Head of the Stock Office at Nestlé in Cham

This entrepreneurial spirit is still palpable today: Cham is regarded as an attractive business location with international appeal.
At Nestlé, too, the founders' pioneering spirit lives on. Values such as innovation, a focus on quality, an international outlook, and responsible sourcing are still evident in the company's culture today. The conviction that economic success should go hand in hand with social benefit continues to shape Nestlé to this day and is reflected, among other things, in its commitment to sustainability and creating shared value.

Nestlé's share register is still maintained today in the historic Nestlé House in Cham. What significance does this deliberate connection to the company's place of origin hold for the organisation?
The share register in the Nestlé House is more than a symbolic gesture. It underlines the company's connection to one of its places of origin and creates a visible bridge between the past and the present. As a link to the company's shareholders, it stands for continuity, trust, and long-term thinking. For Nestlé, Cham is not merely a place of historical significance, but an active site that continues to play an important role for the Group and its shareholders worldwide.

WANTED: PROPERTY OPPORTUNITIES IN THE REGION

In the Zugwest economic region, there are only a few properties currently listed on the major property portals. Hidden opportunities include plots of land or buildings that will come onto the market at a later date, as well as unused development potential, rezoning opportunities, and development prospects.

To support interested companies in their search for property listings and to help property owners find tenants, buyers, or co-investors, the ZUGWEST Economic Region Association has created an information pool for these property opportunities.

Are you interested in promoting your own property opportunities or looking for properties and plots of land to support your business growth? The ZUGWEST office will be happy to help: welcome@zugwest.com.

DON'T MISS OUT – OUR EVENTS IN 2026 AND 2027

Some of this year's events have already taken place – more will follow in the coming months, and there are plenty of exciting and inspiring events lined up for 2027 as well. You can already save the dates on the ZUGWEST website. Further information and registration details will follow, as always, shortly before each event.

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ASSOCIATION OF THE ECONOMIC REGION OF ZUGWEST

THE LEADING REGIONAL NETWORKING PLATFORM

In the Association of the Economic Region of ZUGWEST, the municipalities of Cham, Hünenberg, and Risch are working together to cultivate a strong economy. As the largest regional business organisation in the canton of Zug, ZUGWEST makes use of co-operation with other regional and cantonal institutions. In the association, business, politics, and administration are committed to the ongoing improvement of the framework conditions for everyone in the region.



Geschäftsstelle
Verein Wirtschaftsregion
ZUGWEST

Members: **758** individuals, **487** companies (as of June 2026)
Board of Directors: **Georges Helfenstein** (President of the Association, Mayor of Cham), **Renate Huwyler** (Vice-President and Head of the Regional Commission, Mayor of Hünenberg), **Peter Hausherr** (Finance, Mayor of Risch), **Pascal Meyer** (Representative of the Economic Commission, Head of Site Strategy & Projects, Roche)

Our strategic goals

- Appearance as a strong economic and labour region
- Networking and activation of municipalities and companies

This is what the association has achieved to date:

- High acceptance in municipal politics and business
- Good positioning with an optimal mix of sectors
- Second-largest network platform in the canton of Zug (fastest-growing economic organisation in Switzerland)
- Institutionalisation of regional co-operation between the municipalities
- Intensified dialogue between municipalities and the business community