



Working Paper

Swiss foreign policy an overview

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Swiss Foreign Policy: An Overview

Beiträge

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Table of contents

<i>1</i>	<i>Basic Features</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>Security Policy</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>Integration Policy</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>4</i>	<i>Foreign Economic Policy</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>5</i>	<i>Development Assistance</i>	<i>24</i>

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1 Basic Features

It is difficult to consider foreign policy a separate issue area. Given increasing international interdependence in general, and deepening European integration in particular, every policy today includes an international dimension. Nevertheless, in this chapter, we have chosen to divide Swiss foreign policy into four classical categories: security, European integration, foreign trade, and development policy. These categories do justice to traditional Swiss foreign policy-making, which, dominated by a small elite, has had an extremely narrow focus. Today's challenges stem precisely from the fact that the restrictive foreign policy concept of the last 30 years has become inadequate and that traditional policy-making mechanisms are in need of adaptation. In neighbouring countries this transformation has been underway for decades; in Switzerland, it has merely begun.

Change is slow because the neutrality has in the minds of many Swiss stood for foreign policy abstention. Matters of national defence, for instance, were not considered to be part of foreign policy but to constitute an exclusive element of domestic politics. It was seen as an instrument through which the "the world" could be kept at a distance. Emotionally, most Swiss still adhere to this traditional conception, the aim of which, according to Article 2 of the old constitution, was to "preserve the independence of the Fatherland".

Yet neutrality as conceived of in the constitution is only a means to preserve independence and not, as many believe, an end in itself. However, neutrality has been considered the most important instrument of Swiss foreign policy. Should there be a conflict, for instance, between the provision of good offices, and neutrality, the latter was given priority. Even economic policy was only a means to an end and subordinate to neutrality. The experience of the two World Wars largely confirmed the viability of this approach (see Figure 1).¹

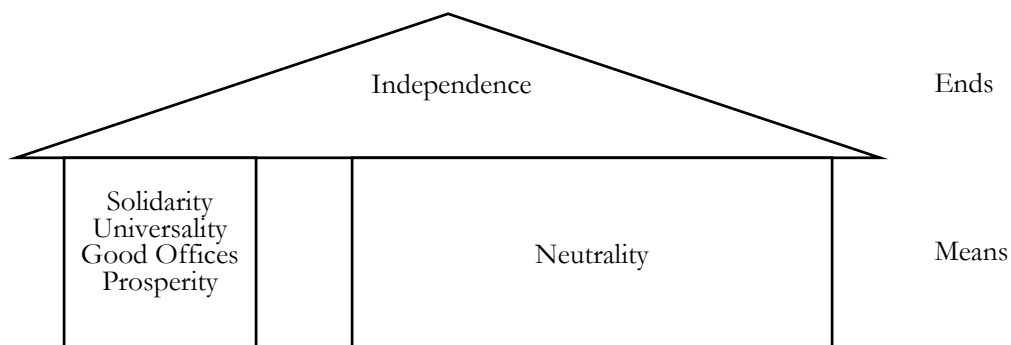
* This contribution is based on the original version of the article, which was published in German with the assistance of Sandra Hedinger, Roger Pfister and Benjamin Blumenthal. It appeared in Klöti, Ulrich et al. (Hrsg.) (1999). *Handbuch der Schweizer Politik*. Zürich: Verlag Neue Zürcher Zeitung.

¹ For an overview of Swiss foreign policy since the Second World War, see Gabriel/Fischer (2003); Goetschel/Bernath/Schwarz (2002); Fanzun/Lehmann (2000); Linke (1995). For an overview of the various aspects of Swiss foreign policy, consult the contributions in the Handbook of Swiss Foreign Policy, published in 1975 and in 1992: Riklin/Haug/Binswanger (1975); Riklin/Haug/Probst (1992). For additional references on neutrality, see Gabriel (1990a and 1997a); Brunner (1989); Bächler (1994); Bonjour (1978).

During the 18th and 19th centuries, European states often pursued a single foreign policy goal: through alliances and balance-of-power politics, they sought to prevent the emergence of a hegemon threatening their sovereignty and independence. Switzerland was in the pursuit of this same goal; with regard to the means, however, it was a special case since neutrality precluded the conclusion of preventive alliances (Brunner 1989: 5-57).

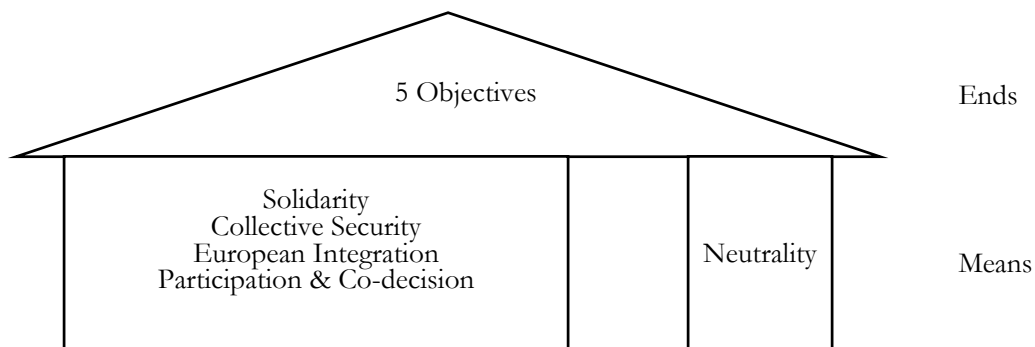
With increasing international interdependence, and especially with deepening European integration, this monist conception of foreign policy has become untenable. The pursuit of both prosperity and security has increasingly come into conflict with the classical approach to sovereignty. The Swiss, for instance, have been unwilling to accept a reduction in GDP or to acquire nuclear weapons to promote independence and neutrality. Eventually, the monist conception has given way to a pluralist conception of foreign policy.

Figure 1: Traditional conception of means and ends in Swiss foreign policy



The new approach was laid down in the 1993 Foreign Policy Report and approved by the 2000 Foreign Policy Report (Bundesrat 1993; Federal Council 2000). The reports constitute the official responses to recent challenges and developments. In conceptual terms, the 1993 report represents a radical break with the past. It is the first comprehensive report to which several federal ministries and departments have contributed, and it puts Swiss foreign policy on a new foundation, establishing a new constellation of means and ends.

Figure 2: New conception of means and ends in Swiss foreign policy



The single aim of sovereign independence has been replaced by five objectives: (1) maintaining and promoting peace and security; (2) enhancing human rights, democracy and the rule of law; (3) advancing prosperity; (4) reducing social inequalities; and (5) protecting the natural environment. Pursuing multiple goals is realistic, but, in the absence of an overarching standard, there could be conflicts between some of them. To settle such conflicts, the report calls for a weighting of the conflicting interests, referred to as “interest promotion” (*Interessenwahrung*). In effect, the one-dimensional policy of sovereign independence has been replaced by a five-dimensional policy of interest promotion (Bundesrat 1993: 158; Federal Council 2000: 2; see Figure 2). The new Swiss constitution of 1999 also adopted the multidimensional approach of the 1993 White Paper.²

As a consequence of this reorientation, neutrality has been given a different status. It is no longer seen as the core foreign policy instrument. Instead, active participation in international organisations now enjoys priority. It reduces the significance of neutrality and, in many areas, even makes it irrelevant. Unfortunately, the 1993 Report does not use the term “irrelevance” but instead refers to “compatibility”. This conveys the impression that neutrality has become a broader and more useful instrument than before (Gabriel 1997a: 151-156). A series of new policy goals is considered to be “compatible” with neutrality:

- Membership in the United Nations (UN);
- Membership in the European Union (EU);

² Article 54 paragraph 2 of the 1999 constitution reads as follows: “The Confederation strives to preserve Swiss independence and welfare; it helps to alleviate suffering and poverty in the world, to promote respect for human rights, democracy, the peaceful coexistence of nations, and the preservation of natural resources.”

- Participation in the elaboration of a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CCFSP);
- Participation in NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP);
- Participation in UN economic sanctions;
- Participation in EU economic sanctions;
- Participation in UN and OSCE peace keeping missions;
- The granting of military transit rights to the UN and NATO;
- Participation in various export control and non-proliferation regimes.

The list shows how profoundly Swiss foreign policy has changed. Only a few years ago, most of these actions were considered incompatible with neutrality. Neutrality is now reduced to a mere "reserve option" in case the United Nations, the European Union or NATO could no longer be relied upon. In other words, neutrality has been limited to an ad hoc instrument in emergency situations (*"Neutralität für den Notfall"*) (Gabriel 1997a: 129-158).

The Federal Council has begun to implement this new conception: Since the 1990s Switzerland has participated in all UN and since 1998 in most EU sanctions, it allowed the transit of NATO military equipment, and since 1997 it takes part in NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP). In a direct democracy, where important foreign policy questions are decided by popular votes, public opinion is crucial. In recent years the new foreign policy conception proved successful at the ballot box. Examples are the adherence to the UN (popular vote of March 3, 2002), the bilateral treaties with the European Union (voted on May 21st 2000) and the vote on the armament of Swiss peacekeeping troops (popular vote of June 10, 2001).

2 Security Policy

Since the 1970s, Swiss security policy has been confronted with a series of internal and external challenges. Most internal problems stem from popular votes and direct democracy, two typical characteristics of the Swiss political system. At the external level, by contrast, Switzerland has faced problems similar to those of other countries. The 1970s was a period of superpower détente, leading to the creation of the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). This phase came to an end with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. The early part of the 1980s, when Reagan served his first term in office, witnessed a revival of the Cold War.

A third phase began with Gorbachev's accession to power, which was followed by a gradual petering out of the Cold War. The setting up of effective arms control mechanisms and the eventual collapse of the Soviet Empire were the crucial events during this period. The dismantling of the Warsaw Pact was followed by the dissolution of the Soviet Union itself, and in Europe, the reunification of Germany became possible. The fourth and latest phase began with the reorganisation of European security, a process that continues until today. This transformation of European security raises basic questions and represents the greatest challenge since 1970.

Contrary to some experts' prognoses, the end of the Cold War was not followed by a re-nationalisation of security policies. On the contrary, NATO has adapted to the changing international environment and is now steadily expanding eastward. Several countries of the former Soviet sphere of influence have become NATO allies. As a result, part of Eastern Europe is incorporated into a transnational security community. The change questions Switzerland's policy of armed neutrality. It makes no sense within such a community. For Switzerland, these developments create numerous challenges. Table 1 distinguishes four categories of important events: two core areas (defence/army and peacekeeping operations) and two areas of lesser importance (arms control and sanctions).

Switzerland's responses are listed in Table 2. The documents stand out as particularly important: the security reports of 1973, 1990 and 2000, which permit an identification of major trends (Bundesrat 1973; Federal Council 1990; Federal Council 1999). The Brunner Report of 1998 is also of importance, although it is not a governmental document (Brunner Commission, 1998). The ongoing armed forces reform (*Armeeleitbild XXI*) also needs to be mentioned. It is part of the Federal Council's message of October 24, 2001 (Bundesrat 2001a and 2001b).³

³ For an overview of the evolution of Swiss security policy since 1945, consult Spillmann/Wenger/Breitenmoser/Gerber (2001); Wenger (2003); Däniker/Spillmann (1992).

Table 1: Challenges to Swiss security policy

<i>Defence, Army</i>		<i>Peacekeeping missions⁴</i>	
26.11.1989	Popular initiative on the abolition of the army (rejected)	Since 1953	Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission in Korea (NNSC)
17.11.1990	Parliamentary fact-finding committee on Ministry of Defence	1989-1990	UN mission in Namibia (UNTAG)
8.11.1991	NATO restructuring (Rome)	Since 1991	UN mission in West Sahara (MINURSO)
14.1.1994	Partnership for Peace (Brussels)	1992-1995	UN mission in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR)
16.12.1997	NATO Eastern enlargement (Brussels Summit)	Since 1993	UN Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG)
Since 1999	Strengthening EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)	Nov. 1995	Dayton Agreement
		Since Dec. 1995	OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina
		1995-1996	NATO Implementation Force (IFOR)
		Since Dec. 1996	NATO Stabilisation Force (SFOR)
2.12.2001	Second popular initiative on the abolition of the army (rejected)	Since June 1999	UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK)
			NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR)
22./23.11.2002	NATO Eastern enlargement (Prague Summit)	Since Dec. 2001	International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (ISAF)
<i>Arms Control</i>		<i>UN Sanctions⁵</i>	
1.7.1968	Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT)	1968-1979	Sanctions against Southern Rhodesia
10.4.1972	Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC)	1977-1994	Sanction against South Africa (arms embargo)
24. 9.1972	Popular initiative on arms exports (rejected)	Since 1990	Sanctions against Iraq
1980-1986	Stiffening of CoCom sanctions	1991-1995	Sanctions against ex-Yugoslavia
		1998-2001	
1984-1986	CDE negotiations in Stockholm	1992-1998	Sanctions against Libya
1989-1994	CSBM negotiations in Vienna	1993-2002	Sanctions against Angola (UNITA)
21.11.1990	Paris Charter for a New Europe	Since 1997	Sanctions against Sierra Leone
13.1.1993	Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)	1999-2002	Sanctions against Afghanistan
31.3.1994	Dissolution of CoCom		
19.12.1995	Establishment of the Wassenaar Arrangement		
24.9.1996	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)		
Since 1996	Small arms and light weapons initiatives		
8.6.1997	Popular initiative on arms exports (rejected)		
3.12.1997	Mine Ban Treaty (Ottawa Treaty)		

During the 1960s, “comprehensive defence” (*Gesamtverteidigung*) was adopted as a strategy, and the 1973 Report used the term “security policy” for the first time (Spillmann 1995: 79). Both notions symbolize an expansion military thinking. What formerly had been referred to as “national defence” (*Landesverteidigung*) was now more broadly conceived. However, the two concepts were also typical of the Cold War tendency to adopt an almost unlimited definition

⁴ For detailed information on UN Peacekeeping missions, see the UN Web Page at <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/home.shtml>. For OSCE and NATO lead operations, see the information provided at http://www.osce.org/field_activities and at <http://www.nato.int>. For an overview of the Swiss participation to these missions, consult the Web Page of the DDPS at <http://www.vbs-ddps.ch/internet/groupgst/en/home/peace.html>.

⁵ For a list of all UN sanctions, consult: <http://www.un.org/News/ocssg/sanction.htm>. For details of Swiss participation to these sanctions, see the Web Page of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs at: <http://www.seco-admin.ch>.

of security with the result that democratic and civilian controls of the armed forces were undermined. Switzerland also witnessed such excesses, some of which were made public after the end of the Cold War by a parliamentary fact-finding committee.

Table 2: Official responses in the field of security policy

<i>Date</i>	<i>Title</i>
17.11.1971	Report of the Federal Council on Switzerland's relationship to the UN (2 nd Report) (BBI 1972 I 1)
30.6.1972	Federal Law on War Material (SR 514.51)
27. 6.1973	Report of the Federal Council to the Federal Assembly on Swiss security policy (Concept of comprehensive defence) (BBI 1973 II 112)
30.10.1974	Message of the Federal Council on the NPT (BBI 1974 II 1009)
4.5.1976	Ratification of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) (SR 0.515.07)
9.3.1977	Ratification of the NPT (signed by Switzerland on 27.11.1969), (SR 0.515.03)
29.6.1977	Report of the Federal Council on Switzerland's relationship to the UN (3 rd report), (BBI 1977 II 813)
3.12.1979	Interim report of the Federal Council on security policy (BBI 1980 I 355)
21.12.1981	Report of the Federal Council on the accession of Switzerland to the UN, (BBI 1982 I 497)
25.5.1988	Report of the Federal Council on the popular initiative to abolish the army (BBI 1988 II 967)
29.6.1988	Report of the Federal Council on the peace and security policy of Switzerland (BBI 1989 I 668)
25.2.1989	Decision to support UNTAG
8.8.1990	Decision on sanctions against Iraq (SR 946.206)
1.10.1990	Swiss security policy in transformation. 1990 Report of the Federal Council to the Federal Assembly on Swiss security policy (BBI 1990 III 847)
17.11.1990	Report of the Parliamentary Fact-Finding Committee on behalf of the Ministry of Defence, (<i>Vorkommnisse im EMD</i>) (BBI 1999 III 1293)
21.5.1991	Decision to support MINURSO
27.1.1992	Report of the Federal Council on the conception of the armed forces in the 1990s (<i>Armeeleitbild 1995</i>) (BBI 1992 I 850)
3.6.1992	Sanctions against ex-Yugoslavia (SR 946.209)
24.8.1992	Message of the Federal Council on the federal law on the participation of Swiss troops in peacekeeping operations (blue helmets) (BBI 1992 V 1141)
22.2.1995	Message of the Federal Council on the federal law on the control of dual-use goods (<i>Güterkontrollgesetz</i>) (BBI 1995 II 1301)
10.3.1995	Ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) (SR 0.515.08)
31.1.1996	Decision to participate with a Yellow Berets contingent to the OSCE mission to Bosnia Herzegovina
11.12.1996	Signing of PfP agreement in Brussels
13.12.1996	Federal law on the control of goods usable for civilian and military purposes and specific military goods (SR 946.202) Revision of the Federal Law on War Material
18.6.1997	Signing of PfP Individual Partnership Programs (IPP) in Brussels
26.2.1998	Report of the Study Commission on Strategic Issues (Brunner Commission)
24.3.1998	Ratification of the Mine Ban Treaty
1.7.1998	Report of the Federal Council on Relations between Switzerland and the United Nations (BBI 1998 V 5242)
7.6.1999	Report of the Federal Council to the Federal Assembly on the Security Policy of Switzerland (BBI 1999 VII 7657)
23.6.1999	Decision to take part in KFOR (SWISSCOY)
27.10.1999	Message of the Federal Council on the modification of the armed forces statute (BBI 2000 I 477)
24.10.2001	Message of the Federal Council on the army reform XXI and the modification of the armed forces statute (BBI 2002 I 858) Report of the Federal Council on the army conception XXI (<i>Armeeleitbild XXI</i>) (BBI 2002 I 967)
22.3.2002	Federal law on the participation in international sanctions (SR 946.231)

The 1973 Report was dominated by Cold War thinking, largely borrowed from the United States. While the Americans spoke of “deterrence”, the Swiss preferred “dissuasion”, mean-

ing deterrence by the imposition of a “high price of entry.”⁶ U.S. strategists prepared for “escalation”; the Swiss 1973 Report distinguished six strategic “strategic cases” ranging from minor tensions to a full-fledged occupation of the country (Bundesrat 1973: 124). The strategy also had a nuclear component, even though Switzerland did not possess its own nuclear weapons. The country was prepared to endure nuclear strikes while remaining neutral or, more precisely, without entering into an alliance with NATO. Civil protection was an integral part of this strategy and intended to make dissuasion more credible (Mumenthaler 1992: 631-633).

Confronted with the collapse of the Eastern bloc at the end of the 1980s, a popular vote on the abolition of the army in 1989, and an acrimonious debate over the procurement of F/A 18 fighter aircraft, the Swiss parliament called for a basic reassessment of security policy. Unfortunately, the rapidly drafted 1990 Report represented only a marginal departure from the old ways (Federal Council 1990). It maintained the idea of a mass militia army and the strategy of dissuasion, although the army’s manpower was reduced from 650,000 to 400,000 men, and its internal structure somewhat reorganised.

The 1990 Report put more emphasis on the international dimension of security and introduced the notion of “existential security” (*Existenzsicherung*). The inclusion of this concept widened the notion of security and was meant to cover ecological catastrophes such as those of Chernobyl (nuclear), Seveso and Schweizerhalle (chemical).⁷

The Brunner Report, issued in February 1998, calls for several policy changes. It is a political document, drafted with the assistance of some specialists but without concrete policy implications. Nevertheless, it is of importance for future security policy. The principal recommendations include an increase in international co-operation as well as a reduction and a professionalisation of the armed forces (Brunner Commission 1998). Even though the report does not explicitly address the question EU compatibility and NATO membership, these objectives are implied. This questions the traditional Swiss policy of armed neutrality. The Brunner Report served as the basis for the Federal Council’s Security Report 2000 (Federal Council 1999). This paper acknowledged the limits of autonomous security and proposes a strategy of

⁶ For an extensive discussion of dissuasion read Däniker (1987). For an overview of the evolution of Swiss security policy in the 1960s and early 1970s, see Breitenmoser (2002); Senn (1983).

⁷ For an evaluation of the 1990 security report, see Gabriel (1997a: 114-127); Hürlimann/Spillmann (1991).

international co-operation. However, there is no mention of abandoning the militia system and of joining NATO.⁸ The Report 2000 marked the beginning of what will prove to be a long process or reorganisation, professionalisation and manpower reduction. The outcome is yet uncertain.⁹

The Federal Department of Defence (as of 1998: Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sports, DDPS) is the most important actor in the area of security policy. While issues of lesser importance, such as arms control and civil protection, are under civilian control, the armed forces remain largely in the hands of the military. The upper echelons, such as the General Staff, are filled mainly with professionals. Given the militia system, these professionals are closely tied to militia officers and to the larger political and social system. The numerous officers' clubs are a manifestation of this fact. These clubs are mobilised during popular referenda on issues concerning the army. For historical reasons, and as a consequence of federalism, cantonal influence is particularly strong in this area. To this day, there are cantonal militia units, and in many fields there is a complex division of labour between the cantons and the federal government.

On 1 April 1970, the Central Office for Comprehensive Defence (*Zentralstelle für Gesamtverteidigung*) was created. It was to function as an independent advisory body to the Federal Council. This objective was never achieved, and in 1998 the agency was dissolved. In 1999 and 2000 two new advisory bodies were set up, a steering committee for security matters (*Lenkungsgruppe Sicherheit*) and an intelligence coordination group (*Nachrichtenkoordinator*). However, Switzerland remains without an institution comparable to the U.S. National Security Council. Given the great asymmetries in information gathering, the parliament and its committees are not truly independent of the administration either.

As is shown in Table 3, defence expenditure has steadily declined. As a percentage of GDP, it has dropped from 2.14 percent in 1970 to 1.24 percent in 2000; as a percentage of the budget, from almost 26 percent (1970) to 10.4 percent (1997). Obviously, these figures only represent

⁸ For an evaluation of the Brunner Report, consult Gabriel (1998); Spillmann et al. (1999). For an analysis of the 1999 White Paper, see Fanzun/Wenger (2000); Mantovani (2000).

⁹ The military implications of increased international co-operation in security matters are dealt with by Eberhart/Stahel (2000). For up-to-date information on the Army Reform XXI, consult the Web Page of the DDPS at <http://www.vbs-ddps.ch>.

the budgetary costs of the army. They neglect the costs to the economy as a whole, which tend to be high in a militia system (Hug 2000).

Table 3: Swiss defence expenditures (1970-2000)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total (in million Swiss francs)</i>	<i>Percent of GDP</i>	<i>Percent of federal budget</i>
1970	2014	2.14	25.94
1975	2813	1.95	20.79
1980	3533	1.99	20.32
1985	5043	2.09	22.04
1990	6052	1.85	19.14
1995	5856	1.60	14.45
1996	5580	1.50	12.70
1997	5395	1.45	12.20
1998	5352	1.41	11.40
1999	4988	1.28	10.78
2000	5005	1.24	10.38

Source: Statistisches Jahrbuch der Schweiz

An overall analysis of security cost and benefits depends on the criteria applied. In terms of sheer defence it is true that Switzerland survived the Cold War unharmed. It is an open question, however, how much this is to be attributed to the policy of dissuasion. From a Soviet perspective Swiss defence efforts were clearly part of NATO's overall strategy. Also, Cold War deterrence was not a uniquely Swiss phenomenon, and it is even less so in the post-Cold War era. Today more than ever, Switzerland is de facto integrated into the Euro-Atlantic security community (Gabriel 1997a: 120). It is not only that NATO (and the EU) have made wars at Switzerland's borders unlikely, they also provide Switzerland with protection by tackling security problems at the outer borders of the Euro-Atlantic area. Given the benefits Switzerland derives from these institutions, it should clearly make a larger contribution.

Until the 1990s, Swiss security policy was practically devoid of an international dimension, especially as far as the provision of troops is concerned (Diethelm 1997). The 1990 Report changed nothing in this regard. Even though the report discusses two possible scenarios – the re-emergence of wars at Switzerland's borders, and increasing internationalisation – Swiss policy continued to be focussed almost exclusively on the first scenario. Contributions to UN peacekeeping operations were very limited, and the Swiss yellow berets stationed in Bosnia under the auspices of the OSCE were not very numerous either. In the second half of the 1990s the international dimension of Swiss security policy gained some ground. In 1996, Switzerland decided to participate in NATO's Partnership for Peace and tries since then to

improve the interoperability of its army. In addition, the Swiss participate in the NATO-lead Kosovo Force (KFOR) with a detachment, called SWISSCOY, of around 200 volunteers. SWISSCOY provides logistical support for the Austrian battalion (AUCON).¹⁰

During the Cold War, Switzerland was very hesitant to impose economic sanctions, as evidenced by its half-hearted participation in the Rhodesian (Letsch 1983) and the South African cases. Since the Gulf War and the 1993 Report, this reluctance has been overcome and Switzerland supported all UN sanctions and, since 1998, most of EU sanctions (Gabriel 1990b and 1992; Wyss 1999).

The federal law regulating the participation in international sanctions that became effective on 1 January 2003 indicates how much the Swiss attitude toward international sanctions has changed. In the field of arms control as well, Switzerland had a difficult start (Gasteyger/Haug 1986: 215-238). It participated only reluctantly in the CDE talks in Stockholm and the CSBM negotiations in Vienna (von Grüningen/Schärli 1992: 569-588).¹¹ In this area, too, Swiss policy has changed considerably since the end of the Cold War, mainly because of international pressure (Hug 1995: 213-218). Switzerland participated actively in the negotiations on the Chemical Weapons Convention, as well as in the Ottawa process, and it has brought its legislation on export controls on dual-use technologies into line with international standards. In recent years the country has also supported various initiatives in the field of small arms and light weapons control (Heinzer 2003; Brem/Ruhterford 2001; Gerber 1999).

The general conclusion seems straightforward. In the last few years, Swiss security policy has undergone a considerable transformation. However, compared to EU states, the change is extremely slow.

¹⁰ For an overview of Swiss participation to PfP, see Perrig (2000). On SWISSCOY, see Wenger/Breitenmoser/Mäder (2000); Fanzun/Wenger (2000). On Swiss foreign policy during the Kosovo-crisis, see the contributions in Gabriel (2000a).

¹¹ CDE: Conference on Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe. CSBMs: Confidence and Security Building Measures.

3 Integration Policy

European integration represents one of the most important challenges to Swiss foreign policy, since the country's future depends heavily on developments within the EU. Europe is moving towards ever deeper integration, a process that is not only irreversible but also likely to accelerate in the years to come. In Switzerland, many failed to foresee this development. The EU was perceived as a mere product of East-West antagonism, and many Swiss anticipated its disintegration after the end of the Cold War (Riklin 1992: 206-207). While this expectation might have had some historical justification, given that inter-state alliances have tended to dissolve after the resolution of the underlying conflict, the Swiss failed to take into account the particular nature of the European integration. In particular, the Swiss did not realize that the EU had developed through innumerable pragmatic (or functional) steps into a durable supranational entity (Gabriel 1997b).

Table 4: Stages in the process of European integration

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1952	European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)	1984	Lomé II Treaty
1958	EEC and EURATOM	1985	Schengen Treaty
1960	Common agricultural policy	1986	Single European Act (SEA)
1964	Treaty of Yaoundé	1986	Accession of Spain and Portugal
1967	Fusion ECSC, EEC, Euratom (EC)	1991	Maastricht Treaty (three pillars)
1968	Completion of custom union	1992	European Economic Area (EEA)
		1993	Completion of single market
			Eastern treaties
1970	European Political Cooperation (EPC)	1994	EC becomes EU
1973	Accession of Great Britain and Denmark	1995	Accession of Austria, Sweden and Finland
1975	Lomé I Treaty	1997	Treaty of Amsterdam
1979	European Monetary System (EMS)	2001	Treaty of Nice
	Direct elections to European Parliament	2002	Common European Currency (Euro)
			Copenhagen Agreement on enlargement of the EU
1981	Accession of Greece		

The official Swiss responses to the process of European integration since the 1970s can be divided into four stages: the Free Trade Agreement, the project to join the European Economic Area Treaty (EEA Treaty), the adoption of EU membership as a strategic goal, and, finally, the return to bilateralism. The Free Trade Agreement entered into force in 1973, at the same time as Great Britain and Denmark left the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) to join the EU (see Table 5).

For the following 16 years, Swiss integration policy was put on hold. It was not until three years after Jacques Delors launched his initiative to create a single European market that the Swiss government again took action. Within a period of little more than four months, six reports and bills on European integration were issued. This activism culminated on 25 May 1992, with the submission of Switzerland's application for EEA membership and the declaration by the Swiss government that full EU membership was a "strategic goal" of the country (Langejürgen 1993: 149-204). A major setback followed half a year later, however, when the people and the cantons rejected the EEA treaty in a popular vote with an exceptionally high participation rate of 79 percent.¹²

Subsequently, the government embarked on a bilateral-sectoral approach to the EU. In December 1998, Switzerland and the EU agreed on seven sector-specific bilateral agreements. These cover civil aviation, overland transport, the free movement of persons, research, public procurement, agriculture and the elimination of technical barriers to trade. The agreements were signed in Luxemburg on 21 June 1999. After a national vote, held on 21 May 2000, the agreements became effective on 1 July 2002.¹³ In June 2001, Switzerland and the European Union reached an agreement of principle to open new bilateral negotiations. Some of the topics of this second round are "leftovers" from the first, yet other topics were added to the agenda either by Switzerland or the EU.¹⁴

An analysis of Swiss integration policy reveals that, well into the 1980s, the Federal Council remained a prisoner of its traditional foreign policy conception. EU membership was not only considered incompatible with neutrality and sovereignty, but also with the so-called "strategy of three pillars", developed by the Federal Office for Foreign Economic Affairs (*Bundesamt für Aussenwirtschaft, BAWI*; since 1999 State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, *seco*). This

¹² See Goetschel (1994) for an analysis of the EEA vote. For an overview of the relationship between Switzerland and the EU, consult Dupont/Sciarini (2001); Gabriel (2000b); Zbinden (1998); Goetschel/Bernath/Schwarz (2002: 106-127); Langejürgen (1993); von Tschärner (1992); Du Bois (1989). For an in-depth analysis of Swiss politics towards the European Integration until the 1960s, see Maurhofer (2001). For a comparison of the Norwegian, Swedish and Swiss policies towards the European Integration, consult Gstöhl (2002).

¹³ An extensive discussion of the bilateral negotiations is to be found in Germann (1995). For an in-depth analysis of the seven sectoral agreements, see Thürer/Weber/Zäch (2002); Cottier/Oesch (2002).

¹⁴ The bilateral II negotiations cover the following areas: services, pensions, processed agricultural products, environment, statistics, media and education, professional training, youth, taxation of savings, fight against fraud Police, justice, asylum and migration. For up-to-date information on the bilateral agreements and negotiations between Switzerland and the EU, see the Web Page of the Integration Office at <http://www.europa.admin.ch>.

strategy comprised the following three elements: collaboration within EFTA, a free trade agreement with the EU, and multilateral negotiations within the framework of the GATT. This traditional foreign policy approach was revised only an entire year after the abortive vote on the EEA, a re-orientation that clearly came too late. The traditional image of absolute neutrality and sovereignty had been officially propagated for too long, and this despite the fact that not even during the Cold War, this conception applied without restrictions (Gabriel 1990a: 43-93).

Table 5: Reports, messages and laws on European integration policy

<i>Date</i>	<i>Title</i>
11.8.1971	Report of the Federal Council on the development of the process of European integration and the position of Switzerland (BBI 1971 II 647)
16.8.1972	Message of the Federal Council on the ratification of the agreements between Switzerland and the European Communities (BBI 1972 II 653)
3.10.1972	Decision on the agreements between Switzerland and European Community and the member states of the European Coal and Steel Community (BBI 1972 II 1034)
24.8.1988	Report of the Federal Council on the position of Switzerland in the process of European integration (BBI 1988 III 249)
26.11.1990	Report of the Federal Council on the role of Switzerland in the process of European integration
18.5.1992	Report of the Federal Council on Switzerland's accession to the EU (BBI 1992 III 1185)
	Report of the Federal Council on the ratification of the European Economic Area Treaty (BBI 1992 IV I)
24.2.1993	Message of the Federal Council on the follow-up programme after the rejection of the EEA (BBI 1993 I 805)
29.3.1995	Interim report on Switzerland's integration policy (BBI 1995 III 191)
27.1.1999	Message on the popular initiative "Yes to Europe" (BBI 1999 IV 3830)
3.2.1999	Switzerland – European Union: Integration Report 1999 (BBI 1999 IV 3935)
23.6.1999	Message on the approbation of the sectoral agreements between Switzerland and the European Union (BBI 1999 6128)

The existence of both supporters and opponents of European integration explains this passivity on the part of the political elite. Among the governing parties, only the Social Democrats (SPS) are clearly in favour of EU membership. Among the non-governing parties the Green Party (*Grüne*) and the Liberal Party (*Liberale Partei der Schweiz*) support EU membership (Table 6). In the early 1990s the Radicals (FDP) and the Christian Democrats (CVP) followed a cautious pro-integration course (Langejürgen 1993: 105-114, 124-130). However, in the last few years these two governing parties became more sceptical vis-à-vis the EU. Today FDP and CVP are too divided to follow a clear policy course in this respect and therefore avoid precise statements. The same holds true for the trade associations and leading figures in business. Their scepticism grew considerably during the last few years.

Three independent interest groups were active supporters of EU membership in the 1990s: the Swiss European Movement (*Europäische Bewegung Schweiz, EBS*), the movement "Born on

7 December 1992”, and the group “Born in 1848”. The EBS is the successor organisation of the Europe Union of Switzerland (*Europa-Union Schweiz*) and as such has always been pro-Europe. The group “Born on 7 December 1992” was composed almost exclusively of young citizens and was created, as indicated by its name, in reaction to the popular rejection of the EEA treaty. The movement “Born in 1848” was set up by business, academic and cultural circles. Their 1997 manifesto is entitled “Saying yes to Switzerland is saying yes to the EU”. All these organisations merged in 1998 and now form a single outfit called New Swiss European Movement (*Neue Europäische Bewegung Schweiz, NEBS*). It also deserves mention that the press generally favours European integration.

Table 6: Pro-integration camp

<i>Parties</i>	<i>Movements</i>
Social Democrats (SPS)	New Swiss European Movement (NEBS)
Green Party (<i>Grüne</i>)	Born on 7 December 1992
Liberal Party (<i>Liberales Partei der Schweiz</i>)	Born in 1848
	Working Group for an Open Switzerland (AGOS)

Only a minority of political parties and interest groups belongs to the anti-European camp (see Table 7), the leading role being played by the smallest and most nationalistic of the governing parties, the Swiss Peoples’ Party (SVP). The SVP is closely linked to the so-called Action for an Independent and Neutral Switzerland (*Aktion für eine unabhängige und neutrale Schweiz, AUNS*), which steers a violently anti-European course and in 2002 counted more than 41’000 members. The two are followed by some smaller parties, such as the Swiss Democrats (*Schweizer Demokraten, SD*), the Freedom Party (*Freiheits-Partei*) and the *Lega dei Ticinesi*. Thanks to wealthy members, these groupings often play a dominant role in voting campaigns and it seems that their anti-integration course gained support during the last years. In fact, among the public the willingness to join the EU declined from 57 percent in 1999 to just 40 percent in 2002 (Haltiner et al. 2002: 89-102).

Table 7: Anti-integration camp

<i>Parties</i>	<i>Movements</i>
Swiss Peoples' Party (SVP)	Action for an Independent and Neutral Switzerland
Swiss Democrats (SD)	(AUNS)
Freedom Party (FPS)	
Lega dei Ticinesi	

The Integration Office (*Integrationsbüro*) is the official federal agency in charge of matters pertaining to European integration. It was set up in 1961 as a joint body of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), and is responsible for a broad range of tasks. Its main duties are to monitor the integration process and to analyse its potential impact on Switzerland. The Integration Office prepares decisions on behalf of the Federal Council and advises the administration on legal and political issues. In collaboration with other agencies it prepares and negotiates treaties with the EU. It is also responsible for the implementation and the continued development of these treaties as well as for instructions to the Swiss delegation in Brussels. It is also a source of information on integration in general and on legal developments in particular. Public services make up a large part of the Office's activities.

Experts were and still are divided over the question of how the rejection of the EEA treaty in 1992 affected the Swiss economy and what would be the economic consequences of EU membership. Irrespective of the different opinions, it is a fact that Switzerland lost ground compared to most EU countries.¹⁵ The political balance sheet is negative.¹⁶ 6 December 1992 was a severe setback for the government, and the political consequences of isolation are increasingly making themselves felt. It is becoming evident that the country's sovereignty is more apparent than real, and that what the Swiss believe to be a policy of "autonomous adoption" (*autonomer Nachvollzug*) of EU policies in fact amounts to "adoption without autonomy". Ironically it is the very circles that vociferously criticize the loss of decision-making power at the national level that prevent the country from gaining co-decision power at the European level.

¹⁵ On the economic consequences of European integration (membership in EEA or EU) for Switzerland, see Brunetti/Jaggi/Weder (1999: 30-140); Bärlocher/Schips/Stalder (1999); Hauser (1991). For an analysis of the overall economic situation ten years after the EEA rejection, consult Wagschal/Ganser/Rentsch (2002).

¹⁶ For an in-depth analysis of the various difficulties and consequences of a possible accession to the EU, see the contributions in Cottier/Kopše (1998).

After the rejection of the EEA Treaty, the government, as mentioned above, embarked on a sectoral and bilateral course. It took the two sides several years to arrive at a compromise and to sign the seven sector-specific agreements in 1999. The so-called “Bilateral II Negotiations” that started in June 2001 prove to be even harder. Switzerland is interested to cooperate in the field of internal security and asylum policy (Schengen Agreement and Dublin Convention), but unwilling to make concession in regard to the banking secret. In contrast, the EU is eager to loosening the Swiss banking secret and, until now, made no advances to include Switzerland in the Schengen Agreement or the Dublin Convention. For the Swiss, these are tough negotiations, since they regularly find themselves in the weaker position. By contrast, if Switzerland were to negotiate on full membership, it would clearly have more bargaining power, as it would be a net contributor to the EU’s budget. So far, however, the Swiss have not seized this opportunity. In addition, it is an open question whether future membership negotiations will be conducted under more favourable conditions.

Finally, it remains unclear how and when the issue of EU membership will once more come before the Swiss public. The initiative could come from the government or from the public. An attempt of sorts was made in January 1994, when the Swiss Democrats and the *Lega dei Ticinesi* submitted an initiative seeking to subject the decision to start membership negotiations to a popular vote. The government recommended to reject the initiative and did not present a counterproposal. On 8 June 1997, the bill was turned down by a majority of 74.1 per cent.

The pro-European camp has been active as well. Already on 3 September 1993, the committee “Born on 7 December 1992” submitted a popular initiative calling for a second EEA vote. This initiative, however, was withdrawn on 10 June 1997. On 21 February 1995, the same committee launched a second initiative entitled “Yes to Europe”, which was submitted on 30 July 1996. This initiative asked the Federal Council to immediately start EU membership talks. Given the widespread EU-scepticism, the initiative had no chance of being adopted. On 4 March 2001, the proposal was dismissed by nearly 77 percent of the voters.

4 Foreign Economic Policy

Foreign economic policy, in contrast to integration policy, deals with global trade and monetary issues. It is therefore concerned with the global flow of goods, services, capital, and persons. In the period after the Second World War efforts to regulate these issues were associated with such terms as “international trade order” and “international monetary order”. The most important institutions associated with these orders are the World Trade Organisation (WTO, formerly the GATT) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

For Switzerland, the evolution of these arrangements has given rise to numerous concrete challenges. Among the most important are: the shift from fixed to floating exchange rates after 1971; the oil crisis of 1973/74 leading to a recession and decline in global trade; the GATT Tokyo Round, concluded in 1979; rapid economic expansion in the Asia-Pacific region; the Uruguay Round, which lasted for almost ten years (1986-1995) and led to the establishment of the WTO; the debt crisis affecting many developing countries; the collapse of the Soviet Union (1989-1992), followed by economic reforms in Eastern Europe; and, most recently, accelerating structural changes fuelled by globalisation processes (Kappel/Landmann 1997: 15-17).

With its small and open economy, which is strongly integrated into international markets (Borner/Weder 1992: 905-918), Switzerland has been directly affected by all these developments. The Swiss government has sought to influence events but in a liberal economy it is mainly the market mechanism and not the state, which reacts to shocks. However, markets are in need of a regulatory framework and it is the main duty of government to provide such a framework. Swiss foreign economic policy, therefore, is an attempt to continuously adapt domestic institutions to external challenges.¹⁷ However, supporters of a free-market economy often disagree over the concrete shape of this framework. It is therefore not surprising that Switzerland’s official responses do not reflect liberal orthodoxy. Interventions are largely the result of pragmatic domestic policy-making.

¹⁷ See Hug (1999) for a historical analysis of Swiss foreign economic policy in the context of foreign policy. A survey from an economical point of view gives Senti (2003). For an analysis of the topic from a legal standpoint, see Rhinow/Schmid/Biaggini (1998: 609-644).

The top aim of foreign economic policy is to ensure the economic interests vis-à-vis foreign countries. This implies two things: guaranteeing favourable access to world markets for Swiss companies and the promotion of competitiveness. The means are both bi- and multilateral in nature. Membership in EFTA, OECD, WTO, IWF and the World Bank are multilateral instruments. The bilateral instruments embrace the EU agreements, various other treaties as well as autonomous arrangements such as export promotion and export controls (Rhinow/Schmid/Biaggini 1998: 609-644).

The country's policies have also contributed to the maintenance of a liberal international economic order. An analysis of Swiss policy since the 1970s shows that the Swiss economy has been gradually opened up. Such a development was necessary because two World Wars led to a high degree of cartelisation and, in some sectors, to outright protectionism. Liberalisation initiatives often originated abroad but eventually domestic protectionist forces were overcome by the powerful triad of export-oriented entrepreneurs, trade diplomats and international civil servants. Nowadays, even agriculture is liberalised. In this area protectionism has traditionally been strong to secure self-sufficiency and farmers' income (Blankart 1992: 797; Sciarini 1995: 247-248).

Table 8: Reports, messages and laws on foreign economic policy

<i>Date</i>	<i>Title</i>
5.2.1960	Message of the Federal Council on the adhesion to the European Free Trade Association (BBl 1960 I 841)
26.9.1958	Federal Law on the Export Risk Guarantee (SR 946.11)
20.3.1970	Federal Law on the Investment Risk Guarantee (SR 977.0)
24.9.1979	Message of the Federal Council on the results of the GATT multilateral trade negotiations (Tokyo Round) (BBl 1979 III 1)
29.6.1983	Message of the Federal Council on Switzerland's accession to the general credit agreements (BBl 1983 II 1367)
22.11.1989	Message of the Federal Council on enhanced co-operation with Eastern European countries and emergency aid measures (BBl 1990 I 145)
15.5.1991	Message of the Federal Council on Switzerland's accession to the Bretton Woods institutions (BBl 1991 II 1153)
19.9.1994	Message on the ratification of the GATT/WTO treaty (Uruguay Round) (GATT message I) (BBl 1994 IV 1) Message on the necessary legal reforms for the ratification of the GATT/WTO treaty (Uruguay Round) (GATT message II) (BBl 1994 IV 950)
23.2.2000	Message of the Federal Council on a federal law for the promotion of exports (BBl 2000 2101)
6.10.2000	Federal law for the promotion of exports (SR 946.14)
Yearly	Report of the Federal Council on Foreign Trade Policy

Next to a handful of state agencies trade associations are the most important actors in foreign economic policy (Table 9). Just as in other democracies, their influence on policy-making has long been institutionalised, which is described elsewhere in this volume. In a pluralist system these organisations fulfil the important function of interest representation. Trade associations,

and umbrella organisations in particular, aggregate the interests of their members and represent them in parliament and in the administration. It has become common practice to contact associations during the legislative process and the pre-parliamentary consultation procedure (*Vernehmlassungsverfahren*). The larger associations have their own parliamentary representatives, organised in parliamentary clubs (Gabriel 1997d: 50-57).

The State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (seco) is the most important actor in foreign economic policy. It emerged 1999 of the BAWI and the BIGA (*Bundesamt für Industrie, Gewerbe und Arbeit*). With its 600 employees (in 2002), it is a rather large agency. While the seco's main field of activity is commercial policy, it also deals with general economic and monetary policy and with the issue of public debt. However, it is the Federal Finance Department and the Swiss National Bank (SNB) that bear the main responsibility in the latter fields.

Table 9: Main actors relevant to Switzerland's foreign economic policy

<i>State actors</i>	<i>Trade associations</i>
Federal Office of Foreign Economic Affairs (BAWI); since 1999 State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (seco)	Economiesuisse (formerly Vorort)
Swiss National Bank (SNB)	Swiss Employers' Association
Embassies and consulates abroad	Swiss Trade Association
Central Office for Trade Promotion (OSEC, para-governmental)	Swiss Bankers' Association
Chambers of Commerce (under private law)	Swiss Farmers' Association
Swiss Organisation for the Facilitation of Investments (SOFI)	Swiss Federation of Trade Unions
	Christian National Federation of Trade Unions

The Central Office for Trade Promotion (*Schweizerische Zentrale für Handelsförderung, OSEC*) is an association under private law receives yearly subsidies worth 10 million Swiss francs. In reality, therefore, it is a para-governmental organisation. The OSEC offers a broad range of services, such as advice to exporters, business contacts, information on business opportunities, business fairs, and certification of firms, products and trademarks. The OSEC is in close contact with the Swiss embassies and consulates. Apart from the OSEC, the chambers of commerce are also often engaged in export promotion (Jeker 1992: 891-904).

The Swiss National Bank is responsible for conducting monetary policy (Lusser 1992). Despite its formal independence, it cooperates closely with the Federal Council. Article 99 al. 2 and 3 of the constitution delineates the bank's functions as follows: "As an independent cen-

tral bank, the Swiss National Bank shall follow a monetary policy which serves the general interest of the country [...]” and “The Swiss National Bank shall create sufficient monetary reserves from its profits [...].” With the introduction of flexible exchange rates the principal objective has been to combat inflation.

Switzerland’s accession to the Bretton Woods institutions has been one of the more important events. It was no simple matter because adhesion had to be sanctioned by a popular vote. In 1991, both the Federal Council and parliament declared their support for adhesion but the their decision was challenged by a referendum. On 17 May 1992, a vote took place. The bill was accepted by a majority of 55.8 percent with a participation rate of 39 percent. The result is somewhat surprising because half a year later the same voters turned down Switzerland’s EEA treaty.¹⁸ In contrast to the Tokyo round results the GATT treaty was subject to an optional referendum. Attempts were made to launch a referendum, but these failed at an early stage.

Switzerland is highly dependent on the international economy, and the trend is continuing. Exports have risen from 25 percent of GDP in 1963 to almost 40 percent in 1998. Imports have also increased, from 33 percent to around 40 percent in the same period (see Table 10). Whereas foreign trade is of minor importance for the agricultural sector, some industrial branches are heavily dependent on exports (Kappel/Landmann 1997: 60-62). Geographically imports and exports are distributed unevenly. The EU is by far the most important market. Since the 1960s between 70 and 80 percent of the Swiss exports go to European countries (Borner/Dietler/Mumenthaler 1999: 5). In economic terms, Switzerland is more integrated than many EU member countries.

Table 10: Swiss foreign trade quotas (in percent of GDP)

<i>Year</i>	<i>1840</i>	<i>1887</i>	<i>1913</i>	<i>1925/1927</i>	<i>1937/1938</i>	<i>1950</i>	<i>1963</i>	<i>1988</i>	<i>1998</i>
Import quota	18.5	44.6	46.1	28.3	19.2	24.9	33.0	29.3	36.2
Export Quota	16.0	35.8	33.0	21.9	14.8	21.1	25.0	26.4	39.7
Integration Index*	34.5	80.4	79.1	50.2	34.0	46.0	58.0	55.7	75.9

* Sum of import and export quota

Source: Goetschel/Bernath/Schwarz (2002: 166)

¹⁸ For an analysis of the Swiss adherence to the Bretton Woods institutions, consult Lautenberg (1992); Schmidtchen (2000); Dupont/Swoboda (2000).

5 Development Assistance

The United Nations referred to the 1970s as the “second development decade”. Like the first decade—the 1960s—it was marked by the Cold War antagonism. The two blocs courted the countries of the Third World propagating either communist or capitalist development strategies. Among academics the same split prevailed. While some experts called for a strategy of integration into the international political economy (Rostow 1960), others advocated self-sufficiency and isolation (Galtung 1972). It is not surprising that Swiss development policy was located somewhere on the continuum between considerations of trade on the one side and by know-how transfer and international solidarity on the other.

The general euphoria of the first development decade was dampened during the second. The Yom Kippur War of 1973 and the ensuing oil crisis lead to a recession in the industrialised countries and to a contraction of global trade. Moreover, during the 1980s, it became apparent that not all Third World countries were developing at the same pace. Development was particularly uneven among Asian and African countries. In addition, many countries experienced severe financial difficulties, eventually prompting a debt crisis. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) became increasingly active tying its credits to ever harsher conditionalities (structural adjustment programmes, SAPs).

With the end of the Cold War it became a habit to link development assistance to political conditions such as the respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law (good governance). Given the great differences in growth rates, the idea of a “Third World” had begun to lose its meaning even before the end of the Cold War. In recent years new concepts have emerged. We now speak of threshold states, transition countries (Eastern Europe), low-income countries, and failed or marginalized states (Zartman 1995; Gabriel 1997c). The main challenge is to come to terms with this increasing complexity.

The assistance policies of all OECD countries, including that of Switzerland, have been confronted with the dual task of creating an optimal institutional framework within the developing countries while transferring resources. The former demands the elimination of many internal and external barriers to trade as well as institutional reform. Resource transfers implies development assistance in the narrow sense of the term.

For a long time development assistance played no role in Swiss foreign policy. It was not until the 1960s that it gained a firm place on the political agenda. Since then the development budget grew constantly and is now an essential part of Switzerland's "solidarity policy".¹⁹ In view of the growing importance, development assistance was put on a legal footing in 1976. The most important documents in this field are the Federal Law on Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Aid of 19 March 1976, the report of the Federal Council's North-South Guidelines (Federal Council 1994) of 7 March 1994, and the so-called "Strategy 2010" paper (SDC 2000) (see Table 11).²⁰

These documents provide the legal and conceptual foundation. According to Article 5 of the 1976 law, the aim of Swiss assistance policy is to support countries in their efforts to "improve the living conditions of their populations", and to help them develop "according to their own means". Its long-term goal is to achieve "more equality among the peoples of the world". The "poorer developing countries, regions and population groups" are the main recipients of development assistance. Article 6 enumerates the main instruments of Swiss development policy: technical co-operation, the provision of funds, economic and trade policies, and humanitarian aid.²¹

Table 11: Basic messages, reports and laws related to foreign aid

<i>Date</i>	<i>Title</i>
11.8.1971	Report of the Federal Council to the Parliament on the creation of a corps of volunteers for emergency aid abroad (BBL 1971 II 493)
19.3.1973	Message of the Federal Council on the federal law on international development co-operation and humanitarian aid (BBL 1973 I 869)
19.3.1976	Federal law on international development co-operation and humanitarian aid (SR 974.0)
2.3.1987	Report of the Federal Council on development policy (1976–1985 (BBL 1987 II 149)
22.11.1989	Message on enhanced co-operation with Central and Eastern European countries, as well as emergency aid measures (BBL 1990 I 145)
7.3.1994	Report of the Federal Council on Switzerland's North-South relations in the 1990s (North-South Guidelines) (BBL 1994 II 1214)
24.3.1995	Federal decree on co-operation with Eastern European countries (SR 974.1)
24.2.1997	Guidelines of the SDC on the promotion of human rights in development co-operation
6.5.1998	Report on Switzerland's international co-operation with countries from the south and the east 1986-1995
2000	Strategy 2010 of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
Quadrennial	Reports/Messages on the continuation of development co-operation and co-operation with Eastern European countries

¹⁹ On the evolution of Swiss development policy from the end of the Second World War to the 1970s, see Kistler (1980); Matzinger (1991); Holenstein (1998); Hug/Messmer (1993).

²⁰ On Swiss development assistance since the 1990s, see Gerster (1995); Forster (1999).

²¹ On the legal basis of Swiss development assistance, see Diethelm/Schläppi (1999); Hofstetter (1990: 166-200).

The end of the Cold War did not merely produce a reorientation of development assistance. It also led to more transformation assistance for the former communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Switzerland reacted promptly to this challenge and, as one of the first western states, initiated an aid program for the former Warsaw Pact countries (Bruno 2000: 90-99). Over the years, the focus of the programs moved to the Balkans and to some countries of the former Soviet Union. Generally speaking, the co-operation with the countries of Eastern Europe follows the same principle as the classical development assistance. However, there is a special emphasis on political conditionality (Reding 1999; Fanzun/Lehmann 2000: 287-296; Schläppi/Kälin 2001: 87-92).

There has never been an overarching development philosophy, neither among donor nor among recipient countries. Some have adopted a state-socialist strategy, while others have followed the capitalist path. In Switzerland, too, supporters of unconditional resource transfers have coexisted with promoters of development policies guided mainly by economic and commercial interests (Hug/Messmer 1993).

It is difficult to make generalisations about Swiss development policy because many decisions were taken in response to diverse internal and external challenges. Internally, development policy has been determined by the consensus prevailing among all governing parties, from left to right. Toward the outside Switzerland acted pragmatically: it supported Nyerere's socialist Ujamaa experiment as well as the more capitalist "libéralisme planifié" of Ahidjo's Cameroon. In contrast to the superpowers or the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland never adhered to either one or the other model of development. In general Switzerland favoured bilateral aid, rural projects and technical assistance as opposed to multilateral aid, urban projects, and financial or trade measures. Moreover, it has favoured unconditional over tied aid, and it has preferred to concentrate efforts on some countries instead of spreading activities more broadly (Gerster 1995: 83-111; Giovannini 1992: 699-700).

Swiss development policy has experienced one major setback. In 1975, the Federal Council decided to grant a loan of 200 million Swiss francs to the International Development Association (IDA), a sister organisation of the World Bank. After parliament backed the decision, a referendum was launched. On 13 June 1976, the loan was rejected by a public majority of 56.4 percent, with a turnout of 35 percent. However, in the long run the vote hardly had negative effects. In 1992, the Swiss people voted in favour of accession to the Bretton Woods in-

stitutions. This facilitated international coordination of development policies, although Switzerland had already been active within the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) for several years.

The conceptual guidelines of the 1990s did not call for a fundamental reorientation of Swiss development policy. However, some new elements and principles have been introduced since the end of the Cold War. In line with the conclusions of the Rio Conference of 1992 Switzerland propagates sustainable development and puts more emphasis on environmental protection. In accordance with international practice the government declared that the guiding principles of development co-operation should be the promotion of good governance, human rights, the rule of law and democracy. These efforts are paralleled by the possibility of sanctions, including the termination of co-operation cases of gross human rights violations (Bundesrat 1993; 179-183; SDC 1997). As mentioned, co-operation with Eastern Europe is even more directly contingent upon such requirements. However, the government applies conditionality only in rare cases. Constructive measures dominate (Forster 1995: 213-224; Fanzun 2003).

The actors in this field include non-governmental organisations (NGOs), international institutions, private firms and trade associations. The two federal agencies involved are the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), which is affiliated with the foreign ministry and the seco, which is part of the Ministry of Economics. In 2002, the SDC had 500 employees working at its headquarters and abroad. It is responsible mainly for technical and financial assistance as well as for humanitarian aid. It administers almost 75 percent of Official Development Aid (ODA). The SDC is also responsible for the elaboration of political instruments and strategic concepts. The seco's assistance is mainly in the area of trade policy. It allocates roughly 17 percent of overall funds (IUED 2002: 282).

Most individual projects are implemented by private aid agencies. Beginning with the freeze of public sector employment in 1973, the government, following the principle of subsidiarity, has been more than willing to entrust private institutions with the practical realisation of projects, de facto turning them into para-governmental implementation agencies (Gerster 1995: 142-160; Gerster 1992: 705-715). Private aid agencies have many years of experience in the field of development policy. Almost half of their budget comes from public funds. In

2000, Swiss private aid agencies spent 458.5 million Swiss francs for development projects. The public sector contributed 175.4 million Swiss francs to this amount (IUED 2002: 291).

Together with the 15 NGOs listed in Table 12, the SDC and the seco regularly organise conferences on topics related to bilateral and multilateral development assistance. Aid agencies are also active within Switzerland, mainly in the area of public relations and education. Moreover, some of their representatives are also active politicians lobbying in parliament. In this arena they seek support from representatives of the Swiss economy, who, for obvious reasons, tend to be more interested in the financial and trade aspects of development policy.

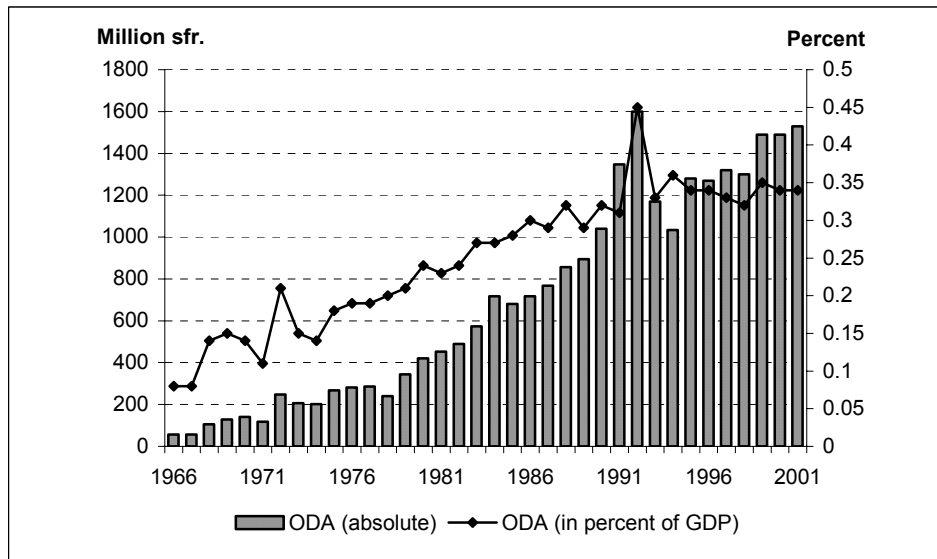
Table 12: Actors in the field of development assistance

<i>State actors</i>	<i>Private actors</i>	<i>International institutions</i>
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), until 1996 Directorate for Development Co-operation and Humanitarian Aid (DEH), until 1976 Directorate for Technical Cooperation (DftZ)	Helvetas Intercooperation Caritas Swisscontact Terre des Hommes	UN Programmes and Fonds (UNDP, UNICEF, WFP and others) World Bank Group Regional Banks (AfDB, ADB, IDB) OECD (DAC)
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (seco)	Swissaid Swiss Red Cross Bread for All (<i>Brot für alle</i>)	International NGO's and networks

The performance of Swiss development assistance can be evaluated from a qualitative as well as from a quantitative perspective. In purely quantitative terms, funds for development assistance have increased seven-fold between the 1970s and the 1990s (see Figure 3). In 2001 Switzerland spent 1.53 billion francs for development purposes (IUED 2002: 351). However, more important than the absolute figures is aid as a percentage of GDP, which is the internationally recognised standard. These figures show the same tendency: a more or less steady increase from 0.14 in 1970 to 0.34 percent of GDP in 2001. However, Switzerland still lags behind its own target to raise ODA to 0.4 percent, a goal set in 1991 (Bundesrat 1991: 1243), not to mention the 0.7 percent suggested by the UN.

The government never accepted this objective. Despite the growing budgets for development assistance, Switzerland for decades had a poor record compared to other developed countries. Measured in GDP percentages Switzerland, for a long time, ranked among the lowest OECD donors and only caught up during the last decade. The reason was not only an increase in Swiss ODA but also a decrease in international development assistance in the 1990s (OECD 1998).

Figure 3: Swiss Official Development Aid (ODA), 1966-2001 (absolute figures and as percent of GDP)



Sources: Annual reports of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC); Rutz-Imhoof/Tochtermann-Pedio (1989: 196)

It is more difficult to evaluate the success of Swiss development policy from a qualitative perspective, since this requires examining what was actually achieved with the available funds. Compared to other countries, the Swiss record looks better in qualitative than in quantitative terms. According to the regular OECD/DAC performance assessments the quality of Switzerland's development policy ranks clearly above average.²² Despite this positive evaluation, Switzerland – like other countries – experienced major setbacks. Rwanda was for many years one of the main beneficiaries of Swiss development assistance, but the country has badly failed. Results in politically more stable countries such as Cameroon are hardly more encouraging, however.

²² The last assessment by the OECD (DAC) took place in 2000. See Development Assistance Committee (DAC), Development Co-operation Review Switzerland, in *DAC Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 4, 2000. The Document can also be found in Full Text on the Web Page of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs at [http://www.seco-admin.ch/seco/seco2.nsf/Atts/ET_Home_DACBericht/\\$file/e_CAD.pdf](http://www.seco-admin.ch/seco/seco2.nsf/Atts/ET_Home_DACBericht/$file/e_CAD.pdf).

Comparative studies show that countries, which currently have the highest growth rates, are those that have received relatively little foreign aid. By contrast, the country, which has received the most aid per capita, Tanzania, can hardly be considered a success in economic terms (Kabou 1991). Recent studies about the factors contributing to economic growth have shown that the institutional framework is an important element, more so than know-how or capital transfers (Kappel/Landmann 1997: 395-411). Obviously, the creation of an appropriate institutional framework is an eminently political task, and Switzerland has in the past refused to impose political conditionalities of this sort. It may be necessary to rethink this principle.

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