



Swiss Biotech Report 2017

## Swiss biotech sector still on track for growth

**Basel, 4 May 2017** – The biotechnology sector in Switzerland is growing more strongly than it has done for years. In 2016 the 281 companies employing more than 15,000 staff posted a turnover of CHF 5,730 million. This is a strong increase of nearly 12%. The prospects are also looking good. Switzerland is a world leader in patents, and a robust and well-filled product pipeline offers the best conditions for a successful future.

**Download:** <https://www.swissbiotech.org/swiss-biotech/swiss-biotech-report>

The Swiss biotech sector can look back on a successful 2016. With a growth in sales of 11.7% compared with the previous year, the upward trend is again getting stronger (2016 sales: CHF 5,730 million; 2015 sales: CHF 5,130 million). The number of employees has increased as well, from 14,890 in 2015 to 15,362 in 2016. It is gratifying to see how the revenues achieved from the sale of products and services are now distributed among more companies than in the previous year. This shows that the biotech sector in Switzerland has become more strongly established. There is still some potential for improved profitability as many companies are still posting losses despite the growth in sales. Only a few established companies are achieving stable profits year by year.

### The outlook is promising

Future prospects are particularly encouraging as the Swiss biotech sector is among the very best in the world in terms of market penetration and the technological relevance of its patents. At the same time the number of patents is on the rise, firstly because more intensive research is being carried out in established fields, and secondly because various technologies are being combined to form new fields of research. But patents are always just the first step on the path to successful, marketable innovations. It is therefore important to note that the product pipelines of Swiss biotech firms are also well filled, promising stable further development in the sector.

### Increasing complexity as an opportunity for Switzerland

In the biotech sector there is a clear trend towards ever increasing complexity. This affects not only patents. The complexity is also evidenced in the growing amount of freely available scientific data. Properly analysing this data, assessing its reliability, and thus staying abreast of the latest state of research is becoming more and more demanding.

But this challenge is also a great opportunity. The growing complexity creates new possibilities and ultimately has a positive effect on the innovative capacities of the whole sector. Thanks to an excellent research environment within a small region, Switzerland offers ideal conditions for building highly skilled and interdisciplinary knowledge networks. The Swiss biotech sector is therefore ideally placed to convert this complexity into economic growth. International networks are also of great importance here, not least because of programmes such as Horizon 2020, which Switzerland is able to participate in as a fully affiliated country from 2017 onwards.



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The Swiss Biotech Report highlights the key innovation drivers and provides a summary of the topics and facts related to the development of the Swiss biotech industry.

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**Swiss Biotech Association (SBA)** was founded in March 1998 as the industry association for small and medium-sized enterprises that are active in all areas of biotechnology. Today the growing national industry association counts about 200 members and serves as a highly-respected networking platform for multinational companies active in the sector. Activities of member companies span different sectors of biotechnology including (bio-) pharmaceuticals, diagnostics, agriculture, food, environmental biotechnology, nanotech, nutrition, cosmetics, marine-oriented research and specialty chemicals. The SBA partners with the Swiss life science clusters and manages Swiss Biotech™ - the global brand for the industry.

Since 2013, the academic network “biotechnet Switzerland” and the industry network “Swiss Biotech Association” together manage the “National Thematic Network (NTN) Swiss Biotech™” sponsored by the Swiss Commission for Technology & Innovation (CTI). NTN Swiss Biotech™ is a well-functioning network in Switzerland bringing together research institutions and industrial partners in life sciences. The network and its members are committed to collaborating with the CTI and its unique support services.