

# ERNST GÖHNER FOUNDATION

2020 REPORT





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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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# PREFACE AND A FEW FACTS & FIGURES

Switzerland is a “paradise for foundations”, not only because of its liberal foundation laws and long foundation tradition, but also because there are 16 charitable foundations for every 10,000 inhabitants. Switzerland is also one of the world’s leaders when it comes to total capital held in foundations and the amount of funding distributed per inhabitant.

Over half of all charitable foundations in Switzerland have been founded in the last twenty years, with just under 70% having been established in the last thirty years. Currently there are over 13,000 charitable foundations in Switzerland, of which approximately half are grant-making foundations. Most of them are headquartered in the Canton of Zurich. The highest growth rates are to be found in the Canton of Geneva, and also in the Canton of Zug, however most of the new foundations being established there are associated with blockchain technology. The highest concentration is to be found in the Canton of Basel-City as measured by the number of inhabitants. Estimates of the total capital invested in charitable foundations in Switzerland are put at ca. CHF 100 billion, with annual funding disbursements estimated at CHF 2 to 2.5 billion.

The designated purpose of the foundations newly established in Switzerland has shown a remarkable development, with current societal issues like climate change being pronounced: 12% of the foundations established in 2019 are related to environmental issues. Another survey conducted in 2019 is also intriguing: according to it, 28% of all

foundation board members are women, significantly exceeding their share in board of directors committees of business enterprises.

Established in 1957, the Ernst Göhner Foundation is one of the “old” foundations. As one of ca. 1,000 corporate foundations in Switzerland, it has a stake in a variety of companies. In line with its stated philanthropic aims, the Foundation disbursed funding in 2020 in excess of CHF 37 million, supporting over 1,600 charitable projects and thus making for an aggregate total of almost CHF 617 million going to well over 32,000 projects since its founding. The Foundation also fulfills the remit of a family foundation, and currently has 29 family beneficiaries.

## ERNST GÖHNER FOUNDATION

**FOUNDER** Ernst Göhner (1900–1971)

**FOUNDED** 1957

**PURPOSE** Corporate, charitable and family foundation

### CORPORATE HOLDINGS

Sectors include: Logistics, Real Estate, Construction, Industrial Enterprises, Energy, Sensor Technology, Chemicals & Pharmaceuticals, Media Tracking, and Medical Engineering

### AREAS OF FUNDING & SUPPORT

Culture, Environment, Social, and Education & Science (“Social” including former employees of Göhner companies)

### REGISTERED OFFICE / ADDRESS

Artherstrasse 19, 6300 Zug

**WEBSITE** [www.ernst-goehner-stiftung.ch](http://www.ernst-goehner-stiftung.ch)

## FOUNDATION BODIES

### FOUNDATION BOARD

Dr. Beat Walti (chairman)  
Dr. Franziska Widmer Müller (vice-chairman)  
Giacomo Balzarini  
Dr. Christoph Franz  
Mark Furger  
Prof. Dr. Thomas Gutzwiller  
Isabel Kühnlein Specker (representative of the family beneficiaries)  
Dr. Roger Schmid  
Peter Ulber

### COMMITTEES

#### Finance and Internal Control Committee

Chair: Dr. Beat Walti

#### DSV/Panalpina Committee

Chair: Peter Ulber

#### Nomination and Remuneration Committee

Chair: Prof. Dr. Thomas Gutzwiller

#### Donation Awards

Chair: Dr. Franziska Widmer Müller

#### Family Beneficiaries

Chair: Isabel Kühnlein Specker

#### Audit Committee

Chair: Mark Furger

### OFFICE

Dr. Roger Schmid (managing director)  
Dr. Suzanne Schenk (deputy managing director)  
Daniel Hübscher (CFO)  
Maria Arnold (office)  
Michaela Gasser (Environment and Social projects)  
Sonja Hägeli (Theater, Dance, Literature, Heritage Conservation, and Cultural History)  
Dr. Suzanne Schenk (Social, Education & Science projects)  
Dr. Corinne Linda Sotzek (Visual Arts & Music)  
Doris Stalder (Music & Film)  
Lucia Tellenbach (office)  
Claudia Uster (accounting)  
Tanja Vogel (interdisciplinary cultural projects)

### AUDITORS

Ernst & Young Ltd.

### REGULATORY AUTHORITY

Regulatory Board for Occupational Pension Plans and Foundations of Central Switzerland (ZBSA)

## SWISSFOUNDATIONS

SwissFoundations, the Association of Grant-Making Foundations, is a network dedicated to the continued development of foundations in Switzerland. It was founded in 2001 at the initiative of eleven foundations, including the Ernst Göhner Foundation, and stands for transparency, professionalism, and the efficient use of foundation assets. The members and the associated partners of SwissFoundations invest over CHF 1 billion in charitable projects and initiatives every year. Since 2020, the Ernst Göhner Foundation is again represented on SwissFoundations’ board by Dr. Suzanne Schenk.

In 2005 SwissFoundations published its first good governance code for grant-making foundations in Europe; 2015 marks the third, completely revised edition: *Swiss Foundation Code 2015 — Principles and Recommendations for the Establishment and Management of Grant-Making Foundations*. In its Foundation Governance series, SwissFoundations has published a number of other publications on practical foundation work and, since 2009, has also published the annual Swiss Foundation Report in association with the Center for Foundation Law of the University of Zurich and the Center for Philanthropy Studies (CEPS) of the University of Basel.

SwissFoundations is also co-initiator of CEPS, whose aim is to strengthen and develop philanthropy in Switzerland by creating the scholastic basis to this end. Cofunded by the Ernst Göhner Foundation, this interdisciplinary center opened its doors in 2008, and today has the status of an independent university institute. Apart from engaging in practice-led research, it focusses on continuing professional education, one such example being the one-week immersion course for the management of grant-making foundations.

# OUR INVESTMENTS

## ERNST GÖHNER FOUNDATION

Pursuant to its charter, the Ernst Göhner Foundation is tasked with managing its assets in accordance with business principles and exercising entrepreneurial initiative. As such, it primarily invests in companies and real estate owing to their long-term horizon. The Foundation also has a portfolio of financial investments and provides venture capital for startups. Taking an active approach in managing the Foundation's assets is designed to generate income that provides for optimal stability so as to enable the continued fulfillment of the Foundation's designated remit. In its asset management and investment activities the Foundation also takes account of sustainability aspects.

With a stake of over 10%, publicly-listed DSV Panalpina A/S represents the Foundation's largest corporate holding. It is the result of a merger in 2019 of the Danish DSV A/S with Panalpina World Transport (Holding) Ltd. With its over 55,000-strong workforce, it is one of the world's largest logistics companies. Panalpina is the last stake of the Ernst Göhner Foundation to be acquired by founder Ernst Göhner for inclusion in the Foundation.

The Foundation has holdings in various other companies through its wholly-owned subsidiary EGS Beteiligungen Ltd. Real estate investments are made by Seewarte Holding Ltd., a company wholly-owned by the Foundation. The members of the board of directors of the subsidiaries are foundation board members for the most part, and are presided over by one such member. Both bodies are augmented by external independent board members possessing the requisite expertise and network of connections.

The financial investments of the Ernst Göhner Foundation consist of the following asset classes: money market funds, bonds, equities, gold, and commodities. The Foundation's financial investment strategy was established in concert with external specialists, its primary focus being the preservation of value. It takes into account the envisaged continued growth of the Foundation's two subsidiaries and the uncertainty concerning the prevailing economic climate and performance in financial markets.

The provision of venture capital for fledgling companies is done exclusively by way of investing in collective investment vehicles with a specific focus on Swiss startups. In so doing, the Foundation has closed a gap between supporting young entrepreneurs in its charitable work and the investments of EGS Beteiligungen Ltd. in established companies.



Air cargo and overland freight forwarding of DSV Panalpina A/S

## EGS BETEILIGUNGEN LTD. THE FOUNDATION'S COMPANIES

A significant part of the Foundation's assets is invested in stakes in listed and privately-held companies headquartered in Switzerland. These holdings are maintained with a view to long-term profitable growth coupled with enhancing the value of these companies, while preserving jobs and know-how in Switzerland to the extent this is possible.

The Foundation's objective is to further develop its portfolio companies through active support and advice, specifically by sitting on their boards of directors and contributing to the boards' work through the Foundation's representatives. The management of the existing portfolio and its continued expansion are the task of EGS Beteiligungen Ltd. ("EGS"). It implements together with its sister company Seewarte Holding Ltd. (in charge of real estate investments) the corporate components of the Foundation's remit and, in so doing, creates the basis for achieving the Foundation's other goals.

Founded in 2009, EGS is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Ernst Göhner Foundation. Through a capital increase — subscribed fully by the Foundation — EGS acquired the Foundation's corporate holdings as contributions in kind. All corporate holdings with the exception of DSV Panalpina A/S are held by EGS.

### ORGANIZATION

#### FOUNDED 2009

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Prof. Dr. Thomas Gutzwiller (chairman)  
Dr. Frank Gulich  
Dr. Roger Schmid  
Valentin Vogt  
Dr. Beat Walti

#### STAFF

Dominik Sauter (managing director)  
Dr. Franz Studer (investment director)  
Urs Eberhard (CFO)  
David Kurmann (investment manager)

#### REGISTERED OFFICE / ADDRESS

Dufourstrasse 31, 8008 Zurich, Switzerland

#### AUDITORS

Ernst & Young Ltd.

#### WEBSITE

[www.egs-beteiligungen.ch](http://www.egs-beteiligungen.ch)

EGS invests in established medium-sized companies in the industrial and service sector with a proven business model and track record, and strong management. The geographical focus is on Switzerland, yet investments in Germany and Austria exhibiting a suitable relation to Switzerland are also examined. Growth *and* buy-out projects are financed. Other investment criteria include the companies' favorable prospects for the future, strong market position and international markets. Significant stakes are currently held in the following companies: Bauwerk Boen AG, Huber+Suhner Ltd., Wasserwerke Zug AG, Sensirion Holding Ltd., Siegfried Holding Ltd., Seaking (International) Inc., ARGUS DATA INSIGHTS Holding AG, and SpineArt SA.



Lumbar anterior cage developed by SpineArt SA












Sterile glass ampule filling line of Siegfried Holding Ltd.

The first company acquired by EGS was Bauwerk Parkett AG, a parquet flooring manufacturer, in 2009. Originally founded by Ernst Göhner in 1944, it was sold to Elektrowatt AG in 1971. In 2013 Bauwerk Parkett merged with its Norwegian competitor Boen AS, giving rise to the combined Bauwerk Group, Europe's leading manufacturer of premium parquet flooring and second largest producer of wood flooring. The group has a combined full-time workforce in excess of 1,500, and has production facilities at its Swiss headquarters in St. Margrethen, and in Lithuania and Croatia. EGS Beteiligungen Ltd.'s stake amounts to 98%.

Other acquisitions since 2011 include a minor stake (currently over 9%) in Huber+Suhner Ltd., a publicly-listed company and one of the world's leading manufacturers of electronic and fiber optic components and system solutions. Two stakes were acquired in 2018: Sensirion Holding Ltd. and Siegfried Holding Ltd. The stake in Sensirion (slightly below 10%) was the result of the IPO of the company. Sensirion is one of the world's leading suppliers of microsensors & systems for the measurement of temperature, humidity, CO<sub>2</sub>, and particulate matter. With a stake of over 4%, EGS Beteiligungen Ltd. is an anchor investor in Siegfried Holding Ltd., the world's fifth largest contract pharmaceuticals manufacturer. To finance the acquisition of two production sites in Spain, EGS issued a convertible loan to it in 2020. In Germany, Siegfried fills the COVID-19 vaccine developed by Biontech and Pfizer.

The acquisition of two new stakes followed in 2019: ARGUS DATA INSIGHTS Holding AG (7.5%), a leading media tracker in Germany, Austria and Switzerland (DACH region), and Seaking (International) Inc. (25%), the world's leader in cruise catering systems. 2019 also saw the sell-off of the stakes in Biella-Neher Holding Ltd. (26%, acquired in 2010), and SwissTech Watch Components SA (45%, acquired in 2014) with its subsidiary Boucledor SA, a leading supplier of watch band clasps made of precious metal for Switzerland's premium watch manufacturers. 2020 saw a new addition to EGS's portfolio: Geneva-based SpineArt SA (21.3%), a medical engineering company specializing in the spine. Founded in 2005, this rapidly growing company is an innovative developer and manufacturer of vertebral implants, with a current workforce in excess of 200 employees.

As of the end of 2020, the Ernst Göhner Foundation and EGS held the following significant stakes:

DSV Panalpina A/S 	Leading global logistics corporation (publicly listed). Acquired: 1969 / 2019; stake: >10%.
Wasserwerke Zug AG 	Utility company (water, power and telecoms) servicing the Zug region and surrounding areas. Acquired: 1988, stake: 10%.
Bauwerk Boen AG 	Leading manufacturer of parquet flooring coverings at the international level. Europe's number 1 provider of premium parquet flooring. Acquired: 2009, stake: 98%.
Huber+Suhner Ltd. 	One of the world's leading manufacturers of electronic & fiber optic components and system solutions (publicly listed). Acquired: 2011, stake: <10%.
Sensirion Holding Ltd. 	One of the world's leading developers and manufacturers of microsensors & systems for the measurement of temperature, humidity, and CO <sub>2</sub> (publicly listed). Acquired: 2018, stake: <10%.
Siegfried Holding Ltd. 	Leading vendor of media intelligence solutions in the DACH countries. Acquired: 2019, stake: 7.5%.
ARGUS DATA INSIGHTS Holding AG 	Leading vendor of media intelligence solutions in the DACH countries. Acquired: 2019, stake: 7.5%.
Seaking (International) Inc. 	World's leader in cruise catering systems (galley installations, serving counters, bars, etc.) for cruise ships. Acquired: 2019, stake: 25%.
SpineArt SA 	Developer and manufacturer of spinal implants. Acquired: 2020, stake: 21.3%.

## SEEWARTE HOLDING LTD. THE FOUNDATION'S REAL ESTATE PROPERTIES

The second pillar of the Foundation's investments is formed by the real estate pooled in the Seewarte Group. The Group's diversified portfolio includes over 40 properties in Switzerland. The name Seewarte dates back to Seewarte AG, a real estate company acquired by Ernst Göhner for the Foundation in 1959 with its two properties Nüscherstrasse 24 and Dufourstrasse 29/31; the portfolio still contains these properties.

Engaging in long-term real estate investments and actively optimizing and further developing the properties so acquired is designed to generate constant, calculable income, and sustained capital growth. In order to achieve an optimal earnings-to-risk ratio, investment is done in a diversified manner according to the location, utilization, size, and age of the properties. Investment is made directly in residential and commercial properties in cities (and their catchment area) providing for favorable economic prospects and a good infrastructure.

### ORGANIZATION

**FOUNDED**  
2008

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
Giacomo Balzarini (chairman)  
Mark Furger  
Kurt Ritz

Dr. Roger Schmid  
Patrick Vogler

**OFFICE**  
Thomas Regli (CEO)  
Daniel Hübscher (CFO)  
Markus Dammann (construction project management)  
Alexander Stegmann (controller)  
Marco Tanghetti (portfolio/asset management)  
Claudia Uster (accounting)

**REGISTERED OFFICE / ADDRESS**  
Artherstrasse 19, 6300 Zug

**AUDITORS**  
Ernst & Young Ltd.

**WEBSITE**  
[www.seewarte.ch](http://www.seewarte.ch)

Providing for ca. 1,300 apartment units, the emphasis of real estate investment lies in residential properties located in the economic areas of Zurich and Zug. Seewarte's real estate holdings also include a number of commercial properties and a shopping mall in Regensdorf. Constructed at the beginning of the 1970s by Ernst Göhner AG, the mall is the Seewarte Group's largest single property.

Apart from the mall in Regensdorf, a large number of other properties have been renovated during the past couple of years. In its refurbishment projects, Seewarte not only aims to sustainably enhance the quality of interior work and standard of amenities, but also maintain rental income at a reasonable level. Ecological concerns are also taken into account: The Im Langacher refurbished Göhner housing development in Greifensee — a Minergie-certified prefab construction —, and the Obermühleweid residential development in Cham were awarded a prize by the Nature & Economy Foundation for their exemplary near-natural landscaping.

New construction is currently in progress or in the project planning stage: rental apartments for the Bauherrenstrasse, Park Schönbühl and Streitholzstrasse properties in Zurich and the Asylstrasse/Aubrigstrasse property in Thalwil. Apart from refurbishing existing properties, the focus is also on expanding Seewarte's real estate portfolio. The last few years have seen the completion of the rental apartment complexes at Riedpark in Zug, Obermühleweid (stage I and II) in Cham, and the multi-family residence Langwisenstrasse located directly on the Limmat, in Unterengstringen. Other development projects include: Obermühleweid (stage III) in Cham, the Alte Post site in Brugg, and the village square in Regensdorf.

The most recent purchases are two redevelopment sites: Zürcherstrasse in Weiningen (Canton of Zurich) and the Gerichtsplatz square in Uster. In the wake of the dissolution of the Vegsimmo joint venture in 2020, the Seewarte Group assumed the town center redevelopment project in Arbon and sold off the last remaining jointly owned properties.



Mockup of the proposed Park Schönbühl redevelopment project in Zurich



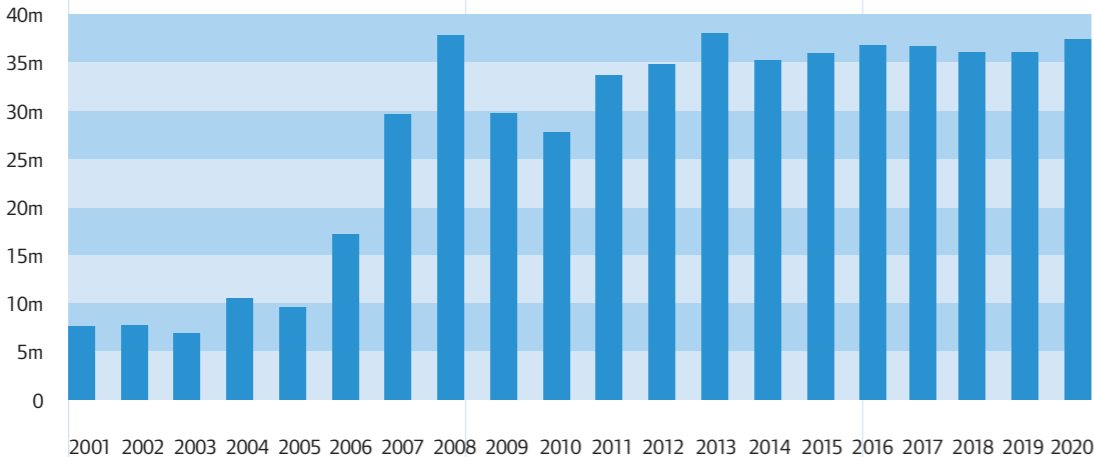
# OUR CHARITABLE WORK

## OVER 1,600 PROJECTS

In 2020 the Ernst Göhner Foundation approved funding totaling ca. CHF 37.4 million for 1,612 charitable projects. The minimum amount of disbursed funding established in the Foundation's charter has thus been exceeded many times over. Since its founding in 1957, the Foundation has supported over 32,000 projects with over CHF 600 million.

The COVID-19 crisis prompted the Foundation to approve CHF 1 million off-budget for emergency relief for people and families whose livelihood is jeopardized and the same amount for the support of volunteer aid workers in Switzerland and for aid outside of the country. Another 39 projects closely linked to the pandemic were approved in an expedited procedure and the funds disbursed. Funds that had been approved or already disbursed before the crisis were generously dealt with in an accommodating manner despite intermittent bans on gatherings, rejections of applications or adaptations of projects.

Approved funding 2001–2020 (in CHF)

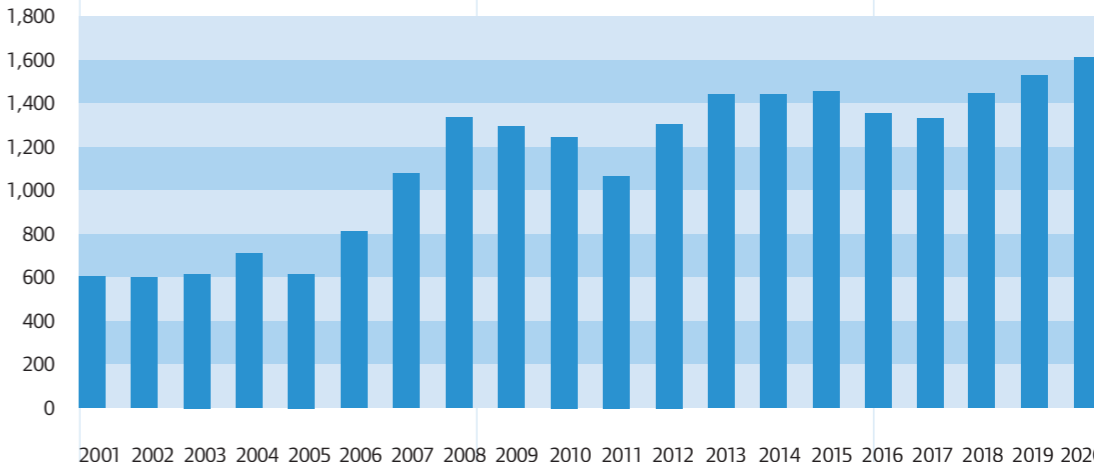


The number of projects for which funding requests are received has increased by almost 20% over the past ten years; at 2,750, the number of requests received in 2020 dropped below the previous-year figure by 10%. The Foundation recorded the highest annual growth rates of 20% in 2006 and 15% in 2007. This development was the desirable result of the more active sponsor policy introduced by the foundation board in the wake of the IPO of Panalpina World Transport (Holding) Ltd. (now: DSV Panalpina A/S) in 2005 and the significantly higher budget appropriated for this purpose.

During the year under review, 2,989 project proposals were reviewed, with funding being approved for 1,612 of them, the approval rate thus amounting to 54%. The increase in the approval figure during the past couple of years is not due to a more generous interpretation of the funding guidelines but rather to the advance advice provided to funding applicants and the more detailed information and checklists to be found on the Foundation's website and the request form published there. These actions have contributed to a significant increase in the quality of the applications received — also a result of the increasing professionalism of the industry in general — and a reduction in the number of patently unpromising projects.

The general criteria for the Ernst Göhner Foundation's funding and support activities are: quality, impact, sustainability, innovation and self-sufficiency, and orientation to societal needs. Support is provided in the form of funding in consultation and collaboration with other partners. In so doing, the Foundation does not assume any core tasks that are exclusively the remit of public funding, but rather provides supplementary funding or renders financial assistance in cases in which public authorities can be expected to participate at a later point in time.

Approved projects 2001–2020

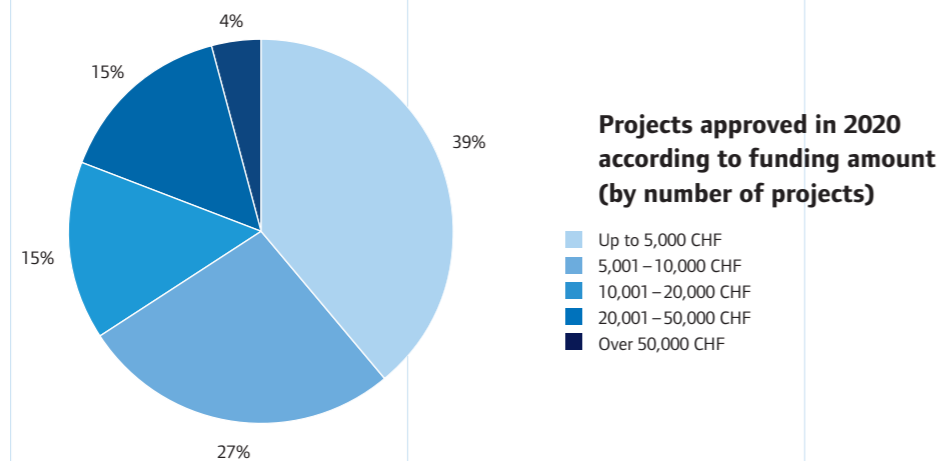


## DIVERSITY AND BREADTH OF PROJECTS AND FUNDING DISBURSED

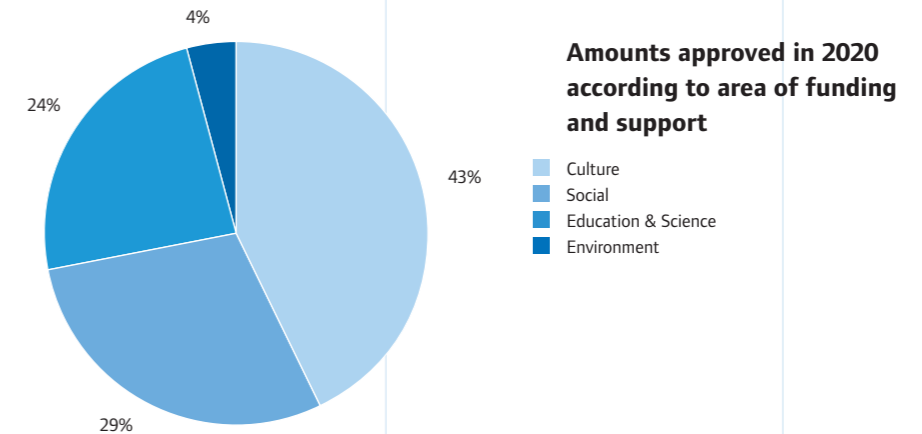
According to the precepts of its charter, the Foundation fosters diversity and breadth as a matter of principle. This is reflected not only in the broad range of various areas supported but also in the varying size of the funding amounts disbursed.

Consequently in the year under review, 39% of all approved projects received funding of up to CHF 5,000, with another 42% receiving between CHF 5,000 and CHF 20,000, and 15% receiving between CHF 20,000 and CHF 50,000, and 4% receiving over CHF 50,000.

If the total amount awarded to these projects is taken as a yardstick, this results in a different picture: Of all the funding amounts approved, approx. 47% was accounted for by the group of projects receiving over CHF 50,000 and only 7% by the group of small projects receiving CHF 5,000 or less.

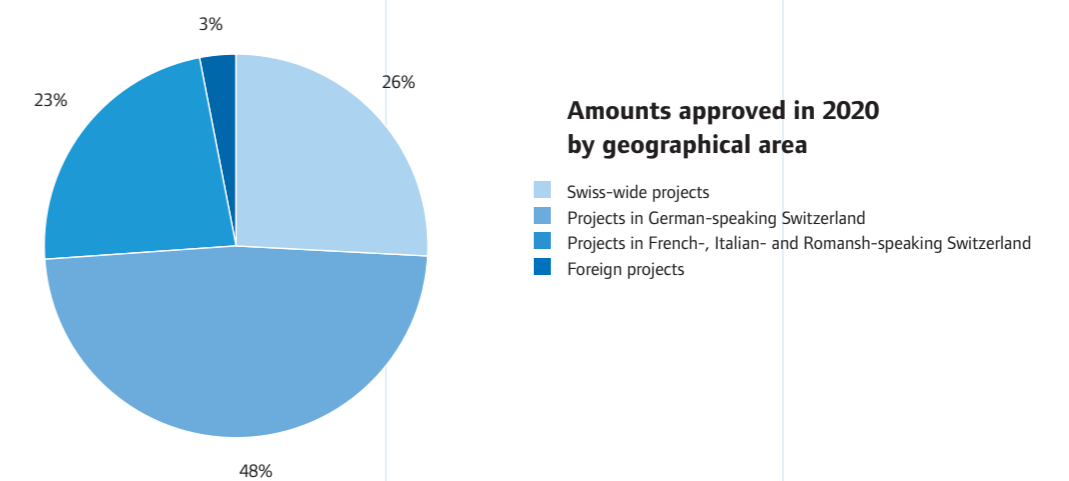


In 2020, 43% of the total funding disbursed went to Culture projects, with 29% going to Social projects, 24% to Education & Science projects, and 4% to Environment projects. The most significant change compared to the previous year occurred with regard to Education & Science projects, whose share increased from 13% to 24%.



The Ernst Göhner Foundation is active throughout Switzerland. However, selected projects abroad with a link to Switzerland or the Foundation's entrepreneurial activities are also taken into consideration.

In the past year 97% of all project funding approved was in Switzerland — with a distinct focus on the German-speaking area of Switzerland (48%) — vs. 3% of funding going toward projects abroad. 26% of the projects were linked to Switzerland as a whole. 23% of the total amount of approved funding went to the French-, Italian- and Romansh-speaking parts of Switzerland (18% to western Switzerland and 5% to Ticino). The regional distribution corresponds to the Ernst Göhner Foundation's mission as a charitable foundation active throughout Switzerland, with appropriate account being taken of all areas of Switzerland.



## OUR MOST SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS

The projects in which the Ernst Göhner Foundation is engaged involve innovative, creative and unconventional endeavors with a pioneering or experimental character in response to changes and new requirements of society for which no success can be guaranteed or expected in the near future, and thus experience difficulty in attracting funding. The largest project of this type is the Venture Kick initiative, whose designated purpose is to promote the transfer of scientific innovation and foster young entrepreneurs at Swiss institutions of higher learning. Since its launch in 2007, the project has advanced remarkably.

The PreSeed Money Fund — set up in collaboration with private charitable foundations — supports young entrepreneurs with a “killer” business idea and entrepreneurial flair in developing a business plan and financing their startups with up to CHF 150,000 and access to investors. The business plans of the candidates are further developed under expert mentoring in a “kick-start camp” competition. Extensive use is made of these volunteer support offerings.

Of the ca. 4,700 applications received since 2007 from over 20 Swiss institutions of higher learning, approximately 1,400 business ideas have been admitted to a presentation pitch before a qualified jury consisting of a pool of over 160 experts, including David Kurmann, representative of EGS Beteiligungen Ltd. Of this number, 755 projects have attracted funding of over CHF 34 million. This has resulted in the founding of 592 new companies that have succeeded in attracting startup funding from investors in excess of CHF 4.2 billion and creating over 8,100 new full-time jobs. Of the fledgling companies that were distinguished in the national “Top 100 Startups in Switzerland” competition in 2020, 53 were fostered by Venture Kick to kick-start their companies. Eight of these startups actually featured among the Top 10 Startups. The Ernst Göhner Foundation is represented by Dr. Suzanne Schenk on Venture Kick’s strategy council.

Executives of startups that have successfully competed at Venture Kick also benefit from a grant funded by the Ernst Göhner Foundation for taking advantage of the professional development opportunity “Management of Growth in Technology Companies” offered at the Henri B. Meier Business School of the University of St. Gallen.

The next step provides for fortifying the Swiss startup eco-system by bundling various philanthropic initiatives under the umbrella of a newly established foundation and by launching Kick Fund, which provides an opportunity to invest in the best Venture Kick startup.

The following projects figure among the most significant initiatives promoted by the Ernst Göhner Foundation during the past few years (apart from the various grant programs and Venture Kick preseed money fund to foster fledgling startups):

### EDUCATION & SCIENCE

- Construction of the Agora cancer research center in Lausanne
- Construction of the Student Project House (creative think, maker and contact space) of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich (ETH) and the HSG Learning Center of the University of St. Gallen
- Construction of the CERN Science Gateway (scientific education and outreach center) in Geneva

### CULTURE

- Expansion of Kunsthaus Zürich (Zurich Museum of Modern Art)
- Construction of the temporary concert hall of the Zurich Tonhalle and a concert hall in the new Cité de la Musique complex in Geneva
- Construction of new buildings housing the Cantonal Museum of Fine Art (MCBA), the Elysée Museum of Photography, and the Museum of Contemporary Design and Applied Art (mudac) in Lausanne

### ENVIRONMENT

- Construction of Lewa Savanne, a new enclosure for giraffes, rhinoceroses, zebras, ostriches, and antelopes in the Zurich Zoo
- Refurbishing the infrastructure of the Papiliorama (tropical garden for butterflies) in Kerzers

### SOCIAL PROJECTS

- Swiss Food Bank and “Tischlein deck dich” (an organization that collects and distributes food that has passed its sell-by date but is still safe to consume)
- Pro bono counselling via Pro Infirmis Switzerland for persons with disabilities and their next of kin
- Relief and emergency aid for people and their families whose livelihood is threatened by the COVID-19 pandemic and support for volunteer aid workers in Switzerland, in addition to actions to contain the COVID-19 pandemic outside of Switzerland by Doctors Without Borders and the International Committee of the Red Cross



Thomas Tesfaghiorghis heading a guided tour of the Bern Historical Museum

## WE'RE ACTUALLY ALL MIGRANTS

by Christian Schmidt (journalist and book author)

**People have always been on the move and will continue to be on the move in the future. Eritrean Thomas Tesfaghiorghis demonstrates this in his guided tours of the Bern Historical Museum. The idea for these tours originated with the Bern-based Multaka chapter.**

The seven of us are gathered at the entrance to the Bern Historical Museum at 3 p.m. on a Sunday afternoon. The tour of the collection is about to begin. Or put another way: The “participatory stroll” will soon be setting off as the Bern chapter of *Multaka* likes to refer to its guided tours. *Multaka* is Arabic and means: where paths cross, or meeting point.

We seven are all representatives of the species *Homo sapiens* — originating in eastern Africa a couple million years ago, then roaming thousands of miles in all directions, including Europe. Over the millennia we have changed and evolved, having lost our erstwhile dark skin coloring. Yet all skin tone variants are still encoded in our genes.

And so six of us currently happen to have a light complexion. Only the seventh member of our group is currently different. That means: they haven't been in Europe for very long. They also didn't roam here but rather came here as quickly as possible to escape the plight facing them in their home country. Yet they would prefer to live in the place of their birth, the home where their heart is, and they would prefer to speak a different language than the one they are forced to use to communicate with the people around them.

“Welcome,” says Thomas Tesfaghiorghis and dabs his forehead as if he were contending with the desert climate of his native country. Then he provides a nutshell bio of himself: Born in Eritrea in 1980. Native tongue: Tigrinya. Completed a degree in archeology in the Eritrean capital of Asmara, with a focus on the Kingdom of Saba (Sheba). Now museum guide. But because he can't survive off this alone, also an advisor in a home for asylum seekers and an interpreter. Tesfaghiorghis doesn't disclose why he came to be in Switzerland in 2012. He only says: “The political situation in Eritrea is bad.” And adding as if he has to justify his presence: “Migration is a global phenomenon.”

And that is Tesfaghiorghis' message. We are all migrants. Or we were at one time. Or will be again — if climate change should make Europe uninhabitable. At some point the paths of all wanderers cross one another, either by chance or on purpose like today.

Tesfaghiorghis guides us through the darkened rooms to the exhibits that have a special significance for him. For example, these tools made of flint. They originally belonged to the builders of the pile dwellings on Lake Burgäschisee. Tesfaghiorghis not only knows every item, he also knows the finds better than anyone else. He has continued his archeology studies in Switzerland and completed his master's thesis. One of the aspects examined by him: Where did the pile builders get the flint?

Not from area surrounding the lake, this type of rock is lacking entirely. So where did it come from? Tesfaghiorghis: “The pile builders brought it with them on their journey to the lake.” From karst rock areas, e.g. the Alps of France, several hundred miles away.

Tesfaghiorghis continues on, we’re all wanderers, we trust him implicitly. Our guide through the darkness explains the items made of bronze, a material that other migrants originally brought with them from the Balkans. He answers a question posed by one of the group: How far advanced were the Eritreans while we were building dwellings on wood piles here in Switzerland? The Kingdom of the Sabaeans flourished, says Tesfaghiorghis. It was so well developed that cities of 20,000 inhabitants could be sustained.

He comes to stand next to a stylized woman’s alabaster head, found in Yemen. The head shows that “not only are people on the move, art can also roam,” according to Tesfaghiorghis. Every object in this museum is an expression of a link between here and there. And not only that: Languages can also migrate. We are reminded of how often we use English expressions in our everyday exchanges in German or French. Or take knowledge, for example: “The U.S. would be in a bind without the software programmers who emigrated to the U.S. from India.”

Now his audience is beginning to ask themselves where they actually originate from. “My ancestors come from Poland,” says one. Another voice adds: “My four brothers have all emigrated, I’m the only one left.” A third one offers: “A genetic analysis showed that my ancestors come from the distant north *and* from the Balkans.

Tesfaghiorghis — who I now notice is wearing a sweater bearing “Harlem City” — listens silently, then nods, saying “I’m glad that our paths crossed.”

Multaka is an international network that organizes museum tours by migrants in fifteen European museums. The Multaka Bern chapter took up this idea in Switzerland and adapted it to the situation here. The goal is to organize participatory tours enabling the tour members to engage with their own roots and those of people with migrant or ethnic backgrounds. The guides are specially trained for this. The Ernst Göhner Foundation supports the Bern chapter of Multaka, convinced that Multaka fosters dialogue between the community of new arrivals and the local community, while enabling visitors to the museum to engage with the museum exhibits in a novel manner.

## HIS WILL BE DONE

by Christian Schmidt (journalist and book author)

**In the newly opened nature center on the shores of the Klingnau reservoir, BirdLife provides an educational nature trail through an artificially created wetland landscape — including nesting sites for the rare kingfisher.**

You fly over Kleindöttingen, there where the river Aare used to meander, only to be squeezed into a corset and dammed up to generate electric power. Yet able to reclaim some space and be transformed into the Klingnau reservoir. Your belly is a bright rust red, your back and wings an iridescent cobalt blue or dazzling turquoise, depending on the light. Sometimes you emit your distinctive piercing rattle call. People love you so much that you were chosen 2006 Bird of the Year. But that doesn’t prevent them from making your life increasingly more difficult.

You’re a kingfisher.

Below you, you see a gray industrial landscape. The buildings consume the land like a cancer: There are hardly any patches of green left between the industrial sites and the reservoir. In a narrow strip remaining near the shores of the reservoir, two pools of water glisten. The larger one is your destination. You land on a branch and are glad that the pond exists. Not only because you can appease your hunger but also because this steep section of shore and this strange wall with its holes pique your interest. You’re always on the lookout for places where you can find enough to eat and perhaps build your nest.

Back before the river was reengineered, your life used to be so much easier. The river formed old, abandoned channels, wetlands and gravel bars. When it carried off soil as happened when there was flooding, its banks changed so that they sloped sharply. And that’s exactly the kind of terrain you need. You dig your way in about an arm’s length and create a burrow at the back in which you lay your eggs.

You don’t seem to notice that everything here is artificial, i.e. nature aped by man, the pond, the steep bank, and the wall next to it. Or you don’t care. At any rate you remain motionless on the branch. You’re waiting for a little frog that is so imprudent as to come out of hiding. Or for a fat larva of a giant dragonfly to stir the mud and reveal its position. You find that much more engaging than the whispering that you also hear, whispering that is barely audible. It comes from a small wood cabin on the other side of the pond. A family is watching you through a narrow slit. They’re all excited to see you, a kingfisher.

Suddenly you fly away, over the heads of other two-legged creatures, in the direction of the smaller pond. They grow excited when they see your bright orange belly. There! There! Oh, how exquisite! And they relate the legend of how your belly came to be bright red: Once upon a time there was a storm and you soared higher than the sun, and the sun’s rays colored your belly forever. The two-legged creatures all belong to a nature and bird conservation group. One of the key reasons for their visit so early in the day is you.



Visit to the BirdLife Nature Center at the Klingnau reservoir

The group then turns their attention back to the magnifier viewer cup on the table in front of them. A teeny-tiny creature is crawling around, too small to be of interest to you. Someone wearing a vest with "BirdLife. Klingnau Reservoir Nature Center" on it explains: "This is a big-ear radix, a type of freshwater snail. It spends most of its life underwater but it still needs to breathe. So how does it do that?" Not getting an answer, the BirdLife member explains: "The snail pumps air into a cavity between its body and its shell."

You fly a couple of steep curves, coming to land in the crown of an oak tree, directly overlooking the meadow between the two ponds. A meadow that looks a lot different from those that remain around Kleindöttingen. No ryegrass grows here, there is no uniform lush greenery designed to coax the grazing cows to produce as much milk as possible. Flowering scented plants thrive here: mullein, viper's bugloss, chicory, Carthusian pink, ragged robin, kidney vetch, meadow salsify, daisies.

At the edge of this meadow there is a second group, accompanied by another BirdLife member. Telling them all to shut their eyes, the member picks a blossom whose seed has almost matured and has them smell it. What's that? What could it be? "It smells so familiar. It's on our table almost every day." Then the answer comes, and it's correct: "Carrots!" Waving her arm over the meadow, the BirdLife member says this plant used to be typical of river meadows. Unfortunately meadowland like this hardly occurs naturally any more. Which is why it had to be artificially seeded.

BirdLife Switzerland and BirdLife Aargau looked for a suitable site for a nature center on the Klingnau reservoir for a long time once the Aare had been transformed into a water conservation and migratory bird reserve of international significance in the wake of the construction of the dam. 310 species live or overwinter here, making the reservoir one of most species-rich bird sanctuaries in Central Europe.

When a small house located a few steps from the shore of the reservoir became available in 2015, BirdLife seized the opportunity to lease it. It is unique, one of a kind. With the aid of donations BirdLife converted the house into a meeting place for bird enthusiasts. BirdLife also installed an exhibition showing the chronology of the reservoir, its biodiversity and the phenomenon of bird migration. The adjoining land was transformed into an educational nature trail that recreates the various habitats of a meadowscape. The opening of the new center took place in the spring of 2019.

You're back at the large pond and land on the same branch. The visitors behind the observation slits have left, there are no more voices. In the corner of your eye you catch sight of the steep bank made of sunbaked earth, then next to it this strange wall, and in it a couple of holes.

You have inspected these holes on more than one occasion. A good sign, the people think. They built the shotcrete wall just for you, and they went to the trouble of making holes in it for you, because that's what you do. Or would do if you still could. But you haven't yet decided whether you want to take advantage of this imitation. It's not really clear why. Perhaps you're bothered by something minor

that the humans overlooked. Or you're just not ready to settle here yet. At other locations it took years for you to accept the artificial nesting walls. But then all of a sudden you did.

Yet you continue to sit here, motionless. Only you know what you're waiting for. The humans have since retreated to inside the building and are viewing the exhibition. These two-legged creatures are so strange: They are discussing how they had to first destroy your habitat only to have to recreate it. And prove that nature is not really needed any more, because man can recreate it. His will be done.

But if this extremely odd behavior enables you to survive and thrive, then the end justifies the means, they think. To be sure, your population is undergoing a slight increase. There may be three kingfisher pairs living in the vicinity of the Klingnau reservoir, or perhaps there is only one.

Nature studies are a recognized and promising way of making people of every age aware of the significance of nature and thus foster its protection and conservation. The new BirdLife Nature Center engages with this perception on several levels: with the recreated river meadowscape, the interactive exhibition, a nature trail, and excursions around the reservoir. It offers the potential of becoming a national attraction for those looking for somewhere to relax and get away from it all, and also as a destination for tourists, ornithologists, and field trips of school kids. In continuing its support for BirdLife that extends back many years, the Ernst Göhner Foundation contributed funding enabling the Klingnau reservoir nature center to be realized.

## "I LIKE PEOPLE"

by Christian Schmidt (journalist and book author)

**The Lucerne-based Contenti Foundation provides support to people with disabilities. The foundation recently moved into a new building complex. One of the reasons for the move: to promote inclusiveness.**

Hansruedi Zurbuchen's second-greatest source of happiness is very small: a sign a few square inches in size. "Hansruedi Zurbuchen", it says. It is located in the stairwell of the Himmelrich project in Lucerne, a building complex with 260 apartments. "When someone rings the doorbell, I open the door. Or I don't." Zurbuchen chuckles.

A sign with his own name. Like everyone else. He likes that.

And his greatest source of happiness? Zurbuchen first takes a sip of his soda. He's sitting outside in the Petrus Restaurant, integrated in the ground floor of the apartment complex. But his glass doesn't quite reach the edge of the table, it's shy by an inch or two. An insurmountable obstacle for Zurbuchen in his motorized wheelchair. So he waits until server Stefan notices his predicament and comes to his aid. "Hey, Stefan, thank you so much."

Now to his greatest source of happiness: "I now have a bathroom of my own." He pauses. "For the first time in my life."

Zurbuchen — born 71 years ago in the Bernese Oberland of central Switzerland — moved into the new Himmelrich complex at the end of 2019, together with twenty other people who also have had less luck in life than others. Together they share four apartments, each with a large kitchen and a spacious balcony, and each bedroom equipped with its own bathroom. They are aided and assisted in their day-to-day life by the team of the Contenti Foundation, founded in Lucerne in 1988 with the objective of offering men and women with disabilities a place to live and work.

Contenti is not a foundation like all the others: "We have something special in our DNA," director Paul Longoni summarizes Contenti's credo. Meaning: "Our goal is to integrate people with disabilities into society as much as possible. They should be able to partake of day-to-day life like everybody else." That can't be taken for granted, not even today.

Yet the foundation's previous infrastructure made it impossible to make good on this idea for many long years. Living together was made difficult by tiny rooms that featured next to nothing in the way of sound insulation. Bath and shower rooms were lacking, and the people entrusted to Contenti's care lived isolated from their surroundings for the most part. They experienced little of the day-to-day hustle and bustle of fellow human beings, the pulse of life.

Until Contenti decided to move. Longoni: "Like other foundations we could have moved to the country, into a new building surrounded by a rural landscape. But we did the opposite, we wanted



Hansruedi Zurbuchen with server Stefan in the Petrus Restaurant in Lucerne

to be in the thick of it, among people.” Which is why Contenti leased the apartments in Himmelrich, a development in which a conscious attempt is made to blend generations, social strata and cultures. “For us, the move was a key step to lived inclusiveness,” says Longoni.

Hansruedi Zurbuchen takes full advantage of all the possibilities afforded by his new home. Like now, sitting in Petrus and enjoying life. He pops out to purchase a bottle of wine in the local Denner around the corner, “for tonight,” he says. The fact that he can go shopping by himself whenever he likes is important to him. “I want to be independent.” On his way back he passes the facilities of Vicino, also one of his ports of call. Vicino is a neighborhood meeting place for senior citizens, providing services ranging from assistance with computers to jass game afternoons. Zurbuchen enjoys Vicino’s offerings. “I like people,” he says.

And if he weren’t retired he’d also now have a real commute to work. “For decades I did office work for Contenti, but my commute meant simply crossing the street.” That bothered him. Now that he lives in Himmelrich his commute would involve a 15-minute trip on his wheelchair through town, “just like everybody who goes to work.” But now he’s retired, “which I almost regret, but only because of the commute to work.” More chuckling.

Zurbuchen’s coke glass is empty. He drives his wheelchair inside Himmelrich, chats briefly with those in the rec room where some of his apartment mates are preparing quiche for dinner, rolls on, presses the remote with his chin and summons the elevator. He meets the most people in the elevator, he says. “I was also invited to coffee on one occasion.” Having arrived on his floor, he rolls past the doors of his neighbors. “If I had an emergency and needed help, I’d know I can ring someone’s doorbell.” In his room he sets the wine down and lets his carer put on his sunhat and sun glasses, then he’s off to his favorite haunt: the train station.

Here Zurbuchen will watch people run, wait, embrace, phone, and laugh. He’ll watch these goings-on for hours on end, people’s everyday life, their ups and downs — and be in the thick of it. All by himself.

A society that provides for total inclusiveness of all groups doesn’t exist, it’s a utopia. But achieving this goal, step by step, is a top priority for a modern, enlightened society. Equality is an obligation *and* a human right. Believing in the importance of inclusivity, the Ernst Göhner Foundation provided funding for the interior design and renovation of the new apartments in the Himmelrich complex to cater to people with disabilities. The Foundation supports the neighboring Vicino project for the same reason.





Laida Alberdi with the school kids of the youth orchestra in Zurich-Seebach

## FROM SEEBACH TO THE LUCERNE CULTURE AND CONGRESS CENTER (KKL)

by Christian Schmidt (journalist and book author)

**Since the Superar Suisse youth orchestra has been practicing in the Heumatt school, the inhabitants of the high-rise next door have been greeting one another. A tale about the miraculous effects of music.**

It's 10 o'clock, Saturday morning. In the music room of the Heumatt school in Zurich's Seebach district a dozen kids rest their bows on their violins and cellos and then look up expectantly at conductor Laida Alberdi. "... two ... three ... four ...," counts Alberdi. And then they begin. Outside the sun is shining, the shouting of fellow classmates playing outside enters through the open windows, but no one lets that bother them.

"Don't lift your bow off the string," says Alberdi. "And what about your fingering? Once more." The kids, all aged between five and twelve, start again. "Stop, stop! Fingers please. A - A - 3 - 3 - 2 - 2 - 1."

Alberdi, who hails from Spain, completed her violin studies with a *magna cum laude* distinction. She conducts the youth orchestra in Seebach founded by Superar Suisse. But it's not just any orchestra for kids. Superar Suisse selectively chooses schools with a high percentage of kids with an ethnic background to bring a new dimension to their lives via music, while fostering their integration at the same time. Unlike in other parts of the city where the majority of the school kids are Swiss, where piano or violin lessons are considered part of a proper upbringing, children here often lack any connection to instrumental music, whether for cultural or financial reasons.

Marc Sison is ten years old, in the fifth grade and plays the cello.

I asked him why he joined Superar Suisse.

"My classmates said come, let's attend a class. There they offered me a cello, and I took it."

It's Saturday morning. You could be sleeping in, playing ball or getting together with your buddies. Wouldn't you prefer that?

"No, I'd be staring at my smartphone like I usually do."

Why did you opt for the cello?

"It's big and can't be so easily broken."

What are you practicing right now?

"Fiddle-de-dee. And Pirates."

Pirates?

"Film music. *Pirates of the Caribbean*."

How often do you practice?

"Twice a week with the orchestra. I also practice an hour by myself."

Where do you come from, Marc?

"My dad comes from Spain, my mom from the Philippines."

## FROM ARTISAN GLAZIER'S TO FOUNDATION

Superar Suisse took on board the idea for an orchestra with school kids “from the wrong side of the tracks” from the El Sistema initiative in Venezuela. José-Antonio Abreu, a composer, politician and educator, began to take kids off the streets in 1975 and make music with them. This was so successful that they were able to benefit from a social and intellectual improvement.

Superar Suisse was noticing a similar effect in Switzerland. To verify this, Superar Suisse commissioned FHNW, the University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Northwest Switzerland, to analyze the sociocultural changes in the context of the orchestra. How does music education affect children, their families, the school and the town district? Does making music together improve integration? One effect is already clear: Right next to the school is a high-rise where many kids live who are members of the Superar Suisse orchestra. Since the kids started making music together, their parents have been greeting one another on the stairs.

“The kids’ enthusiasm is unbelievable, even motivating,” says conductor Laida Alberdi during a break. “Kids from very different countries and cultures come together, they practice the same piece for weeks and months on end, they are engaged and look forward to publicly performing their music and demonstrating their abilities some day. They are proud and happy.” She adds: “It’s a gift to see how the kids unite to become one and become an orchestra.” Then she turns back to the kids and raises her baton — “looong bow” — and taps the beats with her heel. “Stop. Take a good look at this place in your music. It is soft, it is delicate. Like you were walking through a misty forest. Feel that?” And to be sure, the bows now hardly touch the strings. The melody floats like a soft breeze through the room, finding its way through the open windows to the sunny Saturday morning outside.

There, before the school, another dozen string instruments have assembled. One case is propped against the other, small cases for the violins, medium-size ones for the cellos, and giant ones for the bases, while their owners stand next to them and chat. Soon orchestra practice for the older kids between twelve and twenty will begin. Laida Alberdi and her colleagues will be putting together another orchestra from among these kids and the members of the other Superar Suisse orchestras. The orchestra will be so good that it will perform in the Lucerne Culture and Congress Center (KKL), the Tonhalle concert hall in Zurich, and the Lugano Arte e Cultura center.

Superar Suisse is represented at seven locations in Switzerland at which it has established youth orchestras or choirs. A total of 500 children and young people participate. They are mentored and instructed by over thirty professional musicians. The association’s name comes from the Spanish verb *superar*, which means “to surpass”. The association aims high, going where no one expects it to reach. The joy of making music — not ability or talent — takes front and center stage. The Ernst Göhner Foundation supports Superar Suisse, in recognition of an idea that is positive not only in artistic and social terms but also serves as a model.

In 1957 Ernst Göhner established the family foundation Aabach Oberrisch, named after his estate Aabach, located in Risch on Lake Zug, where he had lived since 1950. In 1960 the Foundation, to which founder Ernst Göhner contributed a significant parcel of stock of Ernst Göhner AG, was entered in the commercial register under the new name of “Aaborn Foundation”, and thus was put under the oversight of the Canton of Zug. In 1969, the Foundation was renamed “Ernst Göhner Foundation”.

Shortly before his death at the end of 1971, Ernst Göhner sold the core parts of his group of companies to Elektrowatt AG. The Foundation’s charter was amended at the same time. In it founder Göhner explicitly established the entrepreneurial character of his foundation. To this day, the stake in Panalpina World Transport (Holding) Ltd. (now: DSV Panalpina A/S), acquired by Göhner at the end of the 1960s — and expanded later on by the Foundation —, the other corporate holdings, and the real estate portfolio are the essential sources of funding for the grants made by the Ernst Göhner Foundation.

The Foundation’s headquarters are housed in the Stadlin Villa in Zug, a listed heritage property constructed in 1895. During the traditional August 1st Open House Day organized by the City of Zug, the public has the opportunity to tour the villa and its gardens.

At the end of 2019, a fire broke out in the upper story of the Stadlin Villa due to a technical defect. Fortunately, the damage sustained proved to be minor since the fire department could be alerted in the nick of time. This was all the more important

since information management and archiving specialist Fokus AG had recently started to process the Foundation’s small archive and reorganize the archived material in boxes. Processing of the historical material will be completed in 2021.



Stadlin Villa, in Zug



Göhner building  
constructed using  
prefab elements  
in Volketswil, in 1966

## PREFAB CONSTRUCTION

Ernst Göhner (1900–1971) was a pioneer of the Swiss construction industry. He was adept at adapting new developments engineered abroad to the exigencies of Switzerland. The key impulses provided by Göhner to the Swiss construction industry were: rationalization and optimized organization. This essentially led to two innovations: the completion of complex construction projects by general contractors and standardized prefab building elements.

After the Second World War, Göhner co-developed with architect Gottfried Schindler (1904–1990) the SGS or Schindler Göhner System, in which the individual components are prefabricated and then assembled at the construction site. This meant that construction could be completed faster, more efficiently and economically, thus providing for relief in the overheated market created by the housing shortage of the 1960s and 1970s. The prefab construction of this period has increasingly been the subject of scientific inquiry for the past couple of years.

## A GÖHNER BUILDING: BLEICHERHOF COMMERCIAL COMPLEX IN ZURICH

Commissioned by Emil Georg Bührle (1890–1956), Ernst Göhner AG constructed the Bleicherhof building — located on Bleicherweg 18/20 in downtown Zurich — in 1939/1940. Otto Rudolf Salvisberg (1882–1940), a renowned professor of architecture at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) in Zurich, drew up the plans. With this

building he established a prototype of commercial architecture in the post-war period. Unexpectedly dying in 1940, this was to be Salvisberg's last project.

This commercial building elegantly traces the gentle curve of Bleicherweg. A colonnade extends along the front of the recessed shopping arcade. A glazed mezzanine floor projects out over the colonnade, the window strip extending along the entire length of the 220-foot building. The three upper floors are dominated by a fine-mesh window grid. A retreating garret floor featuring a pitched roof crowns the building. Two stunning spiral staircases are enclosed by light-flooded stairwells that project from the rear of the building façade.



Bleicherhof commercial building, Zurich 2020

Thanks to the innovative reinforced concrete design of the outer walls, interior spaces were created that could be remodeled to cater to changing needs since the design enabled load-bearing interior walls to be dispensed with. For Zurich's Talacker district, the grid-like façade and the flexible floorplan became defining features that inspired an entire generation of architects in the 1940s and 1950s.

## THE (COMPANY) FAMILY

The Göhner Company was founded in 1890 by Gottlieb Göhner, the father of Ernst Göhner, as a family-run business. Later on, various members of the family worked at Ernst Göhner AG, Tufa AG or Bauwerk AG. From 1931, Ernst Göhner's childhood friend and brother-in-law, Viktor Kühnlein-Göhner, was one of the inner circle of employees who oversaw the transformation of the then glazing company into the Göhner Group. Viktor Kühnlein was general manager of Tür- und Fensterfabrik TUFA AG (a door and window manufacturer located in Altstätten) during the 1940s. And Paul Göhner, one of Ernst Göhner's nephews, was managing director of Bauwerk AG (in St. Margrethen).

In the Foundation's charter, Ernst Göhner also provided for gifts to deserving employees of the companies of the Göhner Group and family members. The Göhner-Meritas Foundation, an employer-funded trust for over 400 beneficiaries, was established in 1972 for employees of outstanding merit to supplement occupational

retirement and disability benefits. Its beneficiaries and the retired employees of Göhner Merkur AG get together every two years at the invitation of the Ernst Göhner Foundation for a day's outing.

Gifts to the current 29 family members are made under the legal framework provided for family foundations. They are largely based on a lifecycle model providing for defined needs and situations. Support of education and occupational/professional training takes front and center stage, as do financing of owner-occupied residential property and providing financial aid in difficult times in the beneficiaries' lives.

Most of the family beneficiaries live in Switzerland, the others reside in the U.S. The oldest family members are nephews and the youngest are already great great grand nieces and nephews of founder Ernst Göhner.

Ernst Göhner and his wife,  
Dr. Amelia Göhner-Burkhard,  
in Dresden, 1928



## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- 1890 Founding of the artisan glazier's shop in Zurich by Gottlieb Göhner (1863–1920), the father of Ernst Göhner.
- 1900 Ernst Göhner born as the second youngest of six children on February 28, 1900.
- 1920 Ernst takes over the shop after his father's death. The sole proprietorship is later transformed into Ernst Göhner AG (publicly-listed corporation).
- 1925/32 Acquisition of TUFA AG (Türen- und Fensterfabrik AG), today: EgoKiefer AG; member of the Arbonia-Forster Group since 2004.
- 1934 Founding of Holzkarosserien AG (abbreviated: Holka AG). Sale to Th. Willy AG in 1966.
- 1940 Assumption of general agency for DKW (Auto Union GmbH) in Switzerland and, from 1954, in South Africa by way of United Car and Diesel Distributors, which subsequently also assumed agency for Daimler-Benz.  
  
After World War II: aid in rebuilding Auto Union GmbH in Germany. From 1951: significant stake in Auto Union GmbH, sold to Daimler-Benz AG (Stuttgart, Germany) in 1958.
- 1944 Founding of Bauwerk AG, today: Bauwerk Boen AG (wood working/parquet flooring).
- 1950 Founding of Reederei Zürich AG with Gottlieb Duttweiler and the Federation of Migros Cooperatives. Sale of stake some years later to Migros.
- 1962 Acquisition of interest in Alpina-Reederei AG (maritime shipping) in concert with Oerlikon-Bührle & Co. (25% stake each). Stakes later increased to 49% each. 1988: sale to German Harmstorf Shipping Group.
- Beginning of the 1960s Acquisition of German companies Bartels-Werke GmbH (wood working) and Ibus-Werke GmbH (manufacture of wood panels).
- 1969 Acquisition of 40% stake in Panalpina World Transport (Holding) Ltd. (subsequent to merger with DSV A/S in 2019 and change in corporate name to DSV Panalpina A/S).
- 1971 Sale of Ernst Göhner AG, Ego Werke AG, Bauwerk AG, Bartels-Werke GmbH and Ibus-Werke GmbH to Elektrowatt AG.  
  
Death of Ernst Göhner on November 24, 1971.

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- Andreas **FAESSLER**: “Des Mäzens Grab und sein Pendant” (“The Patron’s Gravesite and Its Counterpart”), in: *Zuger Zeitung*, Dec 13, 2017, p. 28
- Dorothee **VÖGELI**: “Man grüsst sich wieder. Das Regensdorfer Problemquartier Sonnhalde erwacht zu neuem Leben” [“People are greeting each other again. Problem Regensdorf district Sonnhalde is coming back to life”], and Fabian **FURTER**: “Das gebaute Manifest. Der Fachausschuss Wohnen und sein vergessenes Architektur-Handbuch” [“The constructed manifest. The Expert Committee on Residential Construction and its long-forgotten architecture manual.”], both published in: *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Oct 22–23, 2016, p. 20 ff.
- Fabian **FURTER** and Patrick **SCHOECK-RITSCHARD**: *Zwischen Konsumtempel und Dorfplatz. Eine Geschichte des Shoppingcenters in der Schweiz* (“Between Consumer Temple and Village Square. A Story of the Shopping Center in Switzerland”), Verlag Hier und Jetzt, Baden, Switzerland, 2014
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- Sigmund **WIDMER**: *Ernst Göhner (1900–1971). Bauen in Norm* (“Ernst Göhner (1900–1971). Building in Standards”), Verein für wirtschaftshistorische Studien

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