

digitalswitzerland

Press release

Switzerland now ranks fifth in the IMD World Digital Competitiveness Ranking: good overall conditions, not (yet) living up to its full potential

Switzerland has moved up three spots in the rankings published today in the IMD World Digital Competitiveness Ranking compared with the previous year. The company now ranks fifth, behind the US, Singapore, Sweden and Denmark. digitalswitzerland is pleased with the results and sees further potential for improvement in Switzerland, particularly in the area of education and political involvement.

Zurich, 19 June 2018 – During the digitalswitzerland General Assembly and accompanying 'Digital Competitiveness Summits 2018' held on 20 June at IMD in Lausanne, IMD Business School Lausanne has now published its [IMD World Digital Competitiveness Ranking](#) for the second time.

The purpose of the digital competitiveness ranking is to assess the extent to which a country uses digital technology and explore how it leads to a transformation in politics, business and society at large. IMD in Lausanne analyses digital competitiveness based on three factors: knowledge, technology and 'future readiness'.

Major progress in the area of future readiness

Digitally speaking, Switzerland has become more adaptable and agile over the last year. The Swiss people use digital instruments increasingly in their everyday lives, and have been making more online purchases and payments with mobile devices. In addition, Swiss companies are using new digital technology to optimise their business models and processes. digitalswitzerland is very pleased with this development and will continue to move in this direction with initiatives and specific projects, such as societal awareness (Digital Day) and business collaboration (Challenge).

A need to catch up in the area of education

digitalswitzerland has also already launched projects in the educational field, such as [nextgeneration](#) (digital education for children and young people) and [educationdigital.ch](#) (continuing education platform). The ranking confirms that there is still room for improvement in this area. Switzerland is clearly lagging behind in terms of digital/technological skills, as well as university graduates in the natural sciences. Switzerland also scores low in terms of digital participation and e-government.



Nicolas Bürer,
Managing Director digitalswitzerland, interprets the results

1. How do you explain the rise to fifth place (from eighth last year) in the IMD World Digital Competitiveness Ranking 2018?

It's pleasing to see that Switzerland has made progress in the area of digital competitiveness; this is crucial if we are to succeed in the digital future. Compared with a year ago, we have made major progress to better prepare Switzerland for the digital future. The average Swiss person is now more closely engaged with digitalisation-related topics and is using new technology more and more in their everyday lives. We're seeing a shift in people's thinking, albeit slowly – in typically Swiss fashion, one step at a time. That's a good thing, but being overly cautious can also slow progress. I wish that we would all be bolder and more eager to experiment with new technology!

2. What else do we need to become the number one digital player globally?

Switzerland must become a digital innovation hub as quickly as possible. This includes involving people, companies and politicians alike and persuading them to be part of the digital transformation. Only when we have all stakeholders on board the digital high-speed train – no matter whether it's in the cities or in rural areas, young or old, women or men – will we be able to continue our steady course of development. Switzerland has all the necessary prerequisites to do this, but we must be willing to seize the opportunities and possibilities, without our fears making the hurdles even higher.

3. What is Switzerland doing right when it comes to digitalisation, and where is there room for improvement?

When it comes to education, we are certainly in a good position with our universities, in particular the two Federal Institutes of Technology. If we dig deeper, however, we see that there is still a lot of work to be done at primary and secondary school level, for example. We need to move forward here. A shift towards a general philosophy of life-long learning in Switzerland would be helpful in this endeavour. The era when you completed your school diploma and then simply sailed all the way to retirement is definitely a thing of the past. Our nextgeneration and educationdigital initiatives, as well as Digital Day on 25 October 2018, are examples of real projects for modern continuing education and are part of our work to raise awareness among the public at large.

Nicolas Bürer will be glad to offer a more in-depth interview, on request.

Registration for the first Digital Competitiveness Summit 2018:

Be part of this year's Digital Competitiveness Summit on 20 June 2018, from 5 pm at IMD in Lausanne. Marc Walder, CEO Ringier and founder of digitalswitzerland, Martin Vetterli, President EPFL, and Jean-François Manzoni, President IMD, will participate in the discussion. Moderator: Fathi Derder, National Council.

Send us a brief [email](#) with your registration.

About digitalswitzerland

digitalswitzerland is a joint initiative by industry, government and science which aims to make Switzerland a leading digital innovation hub worldwide. digitalswitzerland thus plays an active role in different areas, such as knowledge transfer, training, startup accompaniment and political frameworks. The association groups together more than 100 of the most renowned companies and organisations in Switzerland as well as the most innovative websites. The initiative was launched in 2015.

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