

Press release

Bern, 11 July 2017

“Digital test” by ICTswitzerland – excessive special legislation is harming the digital economy

ICTswitzerland, the umbrella organisation for the ICT industry, has put the regulatory framework conditions in Switzerland to a “digital test” at the request of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). In the concluding expert opinion to SECO, ICTswitzerland identified an urgent need for action in the areas of electronic ID, the framework conditions for handling of data, and the proposals for expanding digital infrastructure. The members of the ICT umbrella organisation see the greatest obstacles to the digital transformation in the numerous political demands for new rules and regulations and excessive special legislation.

At the request of the federal government, SECO carried out a survey among trade associations, social partners and selected companies on the concrete regulatory hurdles for digitalisation and for digital business models. ICTswitzerland used this opportunity to formulate its expert opinion based on the concerns of its various member companies and associations.

“One of the greatest dangers for digitalisation is the current tendency to respond to every technological challenge by issuing new regulations, or by trying to subject new business models to unsuitable old laws come what may instead of quickly and pragmatically updating them,” says **ICTswitzerland CEO Andreas Kaelin**. Therefore ICTswitzerland is calling for more effort to be made during the legislative process itself to curb the proliferation of regulations and excessive special legislation. This also means that more consideration should be given to the consequences and costs for the organisations concerned. The proliferation of overlapping and sometimes contradictory regulations is hampering the development of SMEs and start-ups in particular. One notable current example is the various new duties on telecommunication and Internet providers to monitor communications (law/ordinance on the monitoring of postal and telecommunications traffic) and to block services offered from abroad on the Internet (gambling act).

As for the concrete hurdles in existing regulations, ICTswitzerland would like to highlight the high hurdles in the way of expanding mobile communications, the gaps in the law concerning the release of data in cases of bankruptcy, the need to update employment and telecommunications law, and the availability of highly qualified experts from abroad. One other main concern is the need to introduce a Swiss e-ID as quickly as possible, as **ICTswitzerland Chairman and National Councillor Marcel Dobler** notes: “All Swiss citizens should be able to identify themselves electronically on the Internet with the same degree of validity as a passport or ID card in the physical world. The Swiss e-ID is a basic requisite for the effective digitalisation of our society.”

Additional information: [ICTswitzerland expert opinion commissioned by SECO](#) (only in German)

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About ICTswitzerland

ICTswitzerland is the umbrella organisation for the ICT economy. The association, founded in 1980, includes 28 large and medium-sized companies as well as 21 trade associations. ICTswitzerland represents their interests towards the public, government authorities and other associations, aims at the promotion and continuing development of digital technologies, and the education and higher training of ICT specialists. In Switzerland around 210,000 ICT specialists are employed in all sectors of the economy and in public administration (2015). With a gross value added of CHF 28 billion (2014), the ICT core sector is the sixth-largest business sector in Switzerland. <http://ictswitzerland.ch/en>