

Press Release

Despite global uncertainties, the chemical and pharmaceutical industries remain the backbone of Swiss exports

Zurich, 29 January 2026. The chemical and pharmaceutical industry will remain a mainstay of Swiss foreign trade in 2025, with exports worth CHF 152.1 billion. Despite a challenging global environment, the industry achieved export growth of 2.2 per cent, underscoring its importance for employment, value creation and Switzerland as a business location.

With a share of over 52 per cent of total Swiss exports and an export volume of CHF 152.1 billion, the chemical and pharmaceutical industry defied a challenging global environment in 2025. It thus remains a key stabilising factor for Switzerland as a business location.

"The chemical and pharmaceutical industry contributes significantly to Switzerland's export success. It is therefore a key pillar of employment, value creation and prosperity," says Stephan Mumenthaler, Director of scienceindustries. "However, this success is not a foregone conclusion. It requires reliable framework conditions and secure access to the most important sales markets."

Against the backdrop of geopolitical tensions, high energy and raw material prices, and a still sluggish global economy, the positive export trend reflects the industry's strong innovative capacity and resilience. At the same time, it illustrates how heavily the Swiss economy depends on well-functioning international trade relations.

EU remains key partner – Bilateral Agreements III indispensable

More than half of the exports of scienceindustries member companies go to the European Union. In 2025, exports to the EU increased by 1.7 per cent to CHF 80.3 billion. With a share of 52.8 per cent, the EU clearly remains the most important sales region. There is also a high level of dependence on the import side: more than four-fifths of all chemical and pharmaceutical products (CHF 68.7 billion, +16.6 per cent) are sourced from the EU.

The EU is therefore not only a key sales market, but also an indispensable supplier of raw materials, semi-finished products and intermediate goods. Permanent, non-discriminatory access to the European Single Market is essential for the international competitiveness of the Swiss chemical, pharmaceutical and life sciences industries. scienceindustries therefore calls for the constructive and forward-looking development of bilateral relations with the EU. The Bilateral Agreements III represent an important step in this direction.

Strengthening global networking – expanding free trade

After the EU, the USA remains the second most important export destination, with an export volume of CHF 36.7 billion (+9.0 per cent). This is followed by Slovenia (CHF 26.2 billion) and Germany (CHF 17.8 billion). Italy (CHF 11.9 billion) and China (CHF 7.2 billion) complete the top six export destinations. These figures underscore the industry's high degree of international integration and the importance of open markets.

To remain successful in the future, as unhindered access as possible to global sales markets is essential. scienceindustries is therefore committed to the swift conclusion of an agreement with the USA and to the consistent further development and expansion of Switzerland's network of free trade agreements – particularly with high-growth regions outside Europe.

Location policy determines future competitiveness

At 77.8 per cent, pharmaceutical products account for the largest share of exports by scienceindustries member companies. In 2025, this sector achieved an export volume of CHF 118.4 billion, representing 41.3 per cent of total Swiss exports (excluding gold).

To safeguard this innovation and export performance over the long term, Switzerland requires reliable and competitive framework conditions. Additional regulatory and administrative burdens jeopardise investment, innovation and jobs. scienceindustries therefore calls for a business-friendly location policy, the reduction of unnecessary bureaucracy and the targeted promotion of research, development and innovation.

Further figures are available in the [foreign trade statistics](#) of the FCA.

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About scienceindustries:

scienceindustries, the Swiss Business Association for Chemistry Pharma Life Sciences, is committed to providing its approximately 250 member companies with internationally outstanding framework conditions. The chemical, pharmaceutical and life sciences industry in Switzerland employs around 80,000 people. As Switzerland's largest export industry, it makes a significant contribution to the country's prosperity.