

*Ligue Européenne de Coopération Economique LECE  
European League for Economic Co-operation ELEC  
Europäische Liga für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit*

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## Annual Report 2008 / Outlook 2009

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of May 2008 the Swiss Section of ELEC organised a public conference together with the “Verein Europatage”. Thomas Cottier held a speech on “The Aims and Realities of European Integration: Stocktaking from a Swiss Point of View” in the main auditorium of the University of Bern. The paper is available at: [http://www.elec-lece.eu/D4infCH\\_FE.htm](http://www.elec-lece.eu/D4infCH_FE.htm).

The chair of the Swiss section participated at the Central Council of the 5<sup>th</sup> of June 2008 in Berlin. He was enriched by international contacts and impressed to see new efforts made by ELEC to recruit younger people to the League. He was impressed by the participation of a large Polish delegation – an indication of strong interest in European affairs which currently is difficult to mobilise in Switzerland.

At the annual general assembly of the Swiss Section, which took place on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September 2008, the president of the Swiss Section held a presentation on the current situation between Switzerland and the European Union, the next steps to be taken and the question of what possible effects the global financial crisis might have on the relationship. Over twenty guests including eleven members of the Swiss Section of ELEC participated in a lively discussion before moving on to the statutory items.

At the general assembly 2007 it was unanimously decided to concentrate on the institutional deficits which have resulted from outsourcing and a lack of co-determination and networking in Switzerland in the future. Therefore, after having reviewed the current situation in general in September, the conference of the 21<sup>st</sup> of November dealt with the dispute between Switzerland and the European Union on the cantonal corporation taxation and the problems involved in not having the possibility of dispute settlement except under WTO law. After scientific contributions on the legal foundations in Swiss and international law, perspectives and options for competitive non-discriminating regulations were discussed by a panel and in a plenum of over sixty people.

In line with the institutional concern, the main event next year will be the Enlarged Central Council, to take place from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2009 in Bern where the topic will be related to the foreign affairs of the European Union as discussed at the General Council in Berlin, specifically in connection with the financial crisis and its possible effects on the financial architecture. It will be our pleasure to welcome you to a cocktail party on Thursday evening, to the meeting of the Central Council at the World Trade Institute and in the evening to dinner on Friday and, counting on being able to find the necessary means, to an excursion on Saturday.

Hotel rooms at preferential rates have been reserved at four hotels in Bern and more information will be made available on the ELEC Homepage shortly.

Further activities and research in 2009 including the annual general assembly in autumn will continue to focus on domestic affairs, the evolving relations with the European Union, the question of the Swiss institutional deficit and how it can best be dealt with.

Thomas Cottier

Rachel Liechti-Mckee



President

Secretary