

# #LifelongLearning

Your opportunity to remain competent.

Bern, 3 September 2019

Digital Day 2019

**More than 125 Swiss employers commit to lifelong learning**

**At the third edition of the Swiss Digital Day, the Union patronale suisse and digitalswitzerland will together launch the national #LifelongLearning campaign. The objective of the initiative is to further strengthen the awareness of lifelong learning among employees and employers. With a joint declaration of intent, more than 125 employers will undertake to enable their some 550,000 staff members to pursue lifelong learning within their organisations and to support them in doing so. At the same time, over 100 videos of employees from across Switzerland and their positive experiences with lifelong learning should encourage the Swiss population to invest in their own lifelong learning.**

The World Economic Forum anticipates that two-thirds of the jobs that will one day be filled by today's school children do not even exist yet. Various studies show that lifelong learning is gaining in importance and will play a key role in the digital transformation<sup>1</sup>. "On average, Swiss employees undertake less further training to advance their digital expertise than employees in other countries. The digitalisation of practically all areas of life, however, requires new skills. This is where the initiative of digitalswitzerland comes in", says Marc Walder, founder of the digitalswitzerland initiative. For this reason, digitalswitzerland is launching the national awareness campaign #LifelongLearning together with the Union patronale suisse (UPS). The objective of this campaign is to underline the importance of lifelong learning and, in particular, to increase levels of participation in further training aimed at digital skills. In doing so, the co-initiators digitalswitzerland and the UPS want to contribute to ensuring that the Swiss population can look forward to a promising professional future and to securing the competitiveness of the Swiss economy. This endeavour is fully in line with the thoughts of Federal Councillor Guy Parmelin: "Good training is a major advantage for mastering future challenges", emphasises the Head of the Federal Department for Economic Affairs, Education and Research.



The campaign at [www.lifelonglearning.ch](http://www.lifelonglearning.ch) includes more than 100 videos of people from throughout Switzerland with their inspirational stories about lifelong learning. These should

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<sup>1</sup> The recently published study by Swiss Federal Railways (SBB) and social partners entitled "Arbeitswelt SBB der Zukunft" (2019) provides a more detailed picture. Further studies include the Adecco "Future Skilling Report 2018", the OECD "Employment Outlook 2019" and the WEF "Future of Jobs Report" (2018).

serve to encourage people across the country to invest in furthering their digital skills. The awareness campaign #LifelongLearning goes one step further with [www.educationdigital.ch](http://www.educationdigital.ch), which offers a neutral web platform where more than 500 courses for digital skills from various providers can be found.

### **Employers invest successfully in the education system**

The digital transformation is further intensifying the shortage of skilled labour, meaning that lifelong learning is also essential for employers. Swiss employers are already among the biggest investors in the Swiss education system<sup>2</sup>. “Educational and further training offerings as well as complete retraining programmes should contribute to the handling of rapid changes or even turmoil on the labour market and allow employees to flourish on the employment markets of the future. It is therefore important that we create awareness for lifelong learning across Switzerland”, states Roland A. Müller, Director of the UPS, in explaining the organisation’s commitment to the campaign.

### **High barriers for those lacking qualifications**

In the context of digitalisation, the education sector itself is also undergoing change at a speed never seen before. “By international comparison, Switzerland boasts a high participation rate in the area of further training. Nevertheless, levels of participation among those who do not hold a qualification beyond the end of compulsory education in Switzerland is low. The barriers to accessing further training are considerably higher for them than for those with better qualifications – it is here that we need to start”, says Martina Hirayama, State Secretary for Education, Research and Innovation.

### **Employer promise for digital skills**

The Adecco Group has identified a further point. Its study conducted in cooperation with The Boston Consulting Group shows that Swiss employees lag behind employees in other countries when it comes to acquiring digital skills. Of the Swiss employees, 19% stated that they had recently acquired digital expertise compared to 39% when adopting an overall view for all countries. “We would be well advised to invest in further training for digital skills,” says Nicole Burth, CEO of the Adecco Group Switzerland. It is here that another important element of the #LifelongLearning campaign comes in: to mark the start of the campaign, more than 125 Swiss employers with a combined headcount of some 550,000 staff members will undertake to support further training and, in particular, the acquisition of digital skills to mark the start of the campaign<sup>3</sup>.

All stories (in video and text format), the employer pledge, the complete course offering, further information and offers as well as the campaign’s numerous partners can be found at [www.lifelonglearning.ch](http://www.lifelonglearning.ch).

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<sup>2</sup> According to the Federal Statistical Office (FSO), the majority of companies in Switzerland (89%) invest in further training.

<sup>3</sup> Number of employers and employees as at 12 noon on 30 August 2019.

### **About digitalswitzerland**

digitalswitzerland is the joint initiative of the economic and academic spheres and the public authorities aimed at shaping Switzerland into a leading international digital innovation hub. To this end, digitalswitzerland is already active in a wide range of fields such as collaboration, knowledge transfer, education, start-up ecosystems and the political framework. More than 150 of the best-known companies and organisations as well as innovative locations throughout Switzerland belong to the association. The initiative was launched in 2015.

### **Contacts**

Would you like to find out more about the campaign? The following contact persons would be happy to help you:

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### **About the Union patronale Suisse (UPS)**

The Union patronale suisse (UPS) is the voice of Swiss employers in business, politics and the public. As the employers' political opinion leader, the association contributes significantly to the creation of optimal conditions in Switzerland as well as to the realisation of a liberal and social market economy.

### **Contact**

Would you like to find out more about the campaign? The following contact person would be happy to help you:

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