



Swiss Finance: Capital Markets, Banking, and the Swiss Value Chain

By Henri B. Meier, John E. Marthinsen, Pascal A. Gantenbein

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A timely guide to the complex financial markets and banking secrecy of Switzerland

Since 1934, when Switzerland's federal bank secrecy law was passed, the line between myth and reality with regard to Swiss banking has been blurred. But over the past decade, there have been dramatic changes in the pressures brought to bear on all facets of the Swiss financial markets and banking sector. Recent developments and agreements have potentially weakened Swiss banking secrecy, and with that said, it is time for a book that lays out the history of Swiss bank secrecy and puts these twenty-first century changes in perspective.

Swiss Finance is a thorough overview of the Swiss financial markets and the banking secrecy this country has become known for. It covers key topics to practitioners both abroad and in the United States involved in Swiss banking and the Swiss financial markets.

- Discusses what the Euro-debt crisis may mean for the role of Switzerland as a financial powerhouse
- Reveals how new secrecy agreements with the United States and Germany will impact private wealth management
- Addresses Asian competition for wealth management and tax havens

Switzerland is one of the largest financial markets in the world and a global power in private wealth administration. Whether you're a private wealth advisor, Swiss or U.S. banker, or other finance practitioner involved in the Swiss market, this guide is essential reading if you intend on achieving future success in this arena.

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- Sales Rank: #2134012 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Wiley
- Published on: 2012-10-30
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 10.30" h x 1.34" w x 7.30" l, 1.94 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 396 pages

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Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

How is it possible for a small country in the middle of Europe and surrounded by financial giants, like Germany and France, to have wielded such power (and for so long) in the global financial markets? *Swiss Finance: Capital Markets, Banking, and the Swiss Value Chain* explains the present-day state of Swiss capital and money markets, but rather than just capturing the here-and-now, it provides penetrating insights into how Switzerland got to where it is today.

For years, Switzerland's financial markets have accommodated the needs of investors looking for safety from political, economic, social, and currency risk and uncertainty. Understanding the intricacies of how Switzerland has addressed these potential sources of instability is essential for anyone who truly wishes to understand the underpinnings of Switzerland's financial and economic successes.

Part of the Robert W. Kolb Series in Finance, this reliable resource opens with an informative discussion of "Finanzplatz Schweiz," which describes Switzerland's fully integrated and automated electronic securities trading and post-trading infrastructure—a value chain managed by the SIX Group. The book explains the importance of Switzerland's self-regulatory financial structure, stock exchange laws, and regulations. From there, it moves on to chapters that:

- Describe and analyze the Swiss banking system, which is the most visible part of the nation's financial sector
- Consider the myths and realities of Swiss banking secrecy
- Focus on economic and financial implications of funds flowing to and from Swiss institutional investors—large savings pools of insurance companies, pension funds, and mutual funds
- Provide extensive insights on the Swiss National Bank, its monetary policies, as well as the Bank's size, structure, and history
- Put the Swiss franc foreign exchange markets into an international perspective
- Discuss the most important segments of Switzerland's financial markets, from debt and equity to derivatives
- Cover essential issues regarding Swiss taxes on investments and financing

Accessible by all, but designed with the serious financial professional in mind, this book puts the multifaceted dimensions of Switzerland's capital and money markets into perspective and provides thoughtful, penetrating answers to some of the most important questions about how a nation can build and maintain financial prominence in a rapidly changing financial environment.

From the Back Cover

Praise for *Swiss Finance*

"An outstanding presentation of the political, legal, and economic constituents that have contributed to Switzerland's prominent position in international financial markets."

—**Prof. Peter Gomez**, Chairman, SIX Group; former president, University of St. Gallen, Switzerland

"An excellent portrayal of Switzerland's role in the international financial market landscape. The Swiss finance market has been built up over a long period to satisfy the needs of investors around the world and is based on trustworthy institutions and the country's stability."

—**Karl Reichmuth**, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Privatbankiers Reichmuth & Co., Switzerland

"*Swiss Finance* explains why Switzerland has become the world's leading wealth administrator, showing the strong interplay among political stability, safety, rule of law, and direct democracy. One can only imagine how much better off the global economy would be today if Switzerland's capital markets were the 'norm' rather than the 'exception!'"

—**Jay Flaherty**, Chairman and CEO, HCP, Inc.; former managing director, Merrill Lynch

"*Swiss Finance* is an outstanding guide to the strengths and weaknesses of the Swiss financial value chain. One of the major challenges here and throughout continental Europe is the lack of risk capital for young innovative firms. With great expertise and passion, this book calls for joint efforts of politics and finance to create new chances for innovation and economic growth in global competition. A must-read!"

—**Prof. Heinz Riesenhuber**, former Federal Minister of Research, Germany; Member of German Parliament

"*Swiss Finance* derives its strengths from its limitations. Because Switzerland had a small internal market, its companies had to globalize before others, hence the strengths of the Roches and the Nestlés of Switzerland. Because the immediate users of the Swiss financial markets were scarce, Switzerland had to offer to *all* legitimate companies a market where efficiency, transparency, and predictability would be the hallmarks. *Swiss Finance* is the seminal treatise on the Swiss financial markets, which have transcended their domestic nature to be not only the model but also the beacon of corporate finance done the right way."

—**François Maisonrouge**, Managing Director, Evercore; former managing director of investment banking, Credit Suisse

"*Swiss Finance* provides a comprehensive, thoughtful, and thought-provoking assessment of Switzerland's role in global finance. It strikes a smart balance between Swiss self-confidence and pride grounded in stellar achievements as well as humility and respect in light of past failures and serious challenges ahead."

—**Dr. Peter Wuffli**, Chairman, IMD; former CEO, UBS Group

"This book provides a superb overview of the history and challenges of the Swiss financial system, its political and institutional foundations, and the reasons for its continuing success."

—**Mark Tracey**, Partner, Arkle Associates; former partner, Goldman Sachs

About the Author

Dr. Henri B. Meier is a cofounder of HBM BioVentures AG, HBM Partners AG, BioMedInvest AG, and BioMedCredit AG, which are among the global leaders in biotech venture capital firms. For the past twelve years, since his retirement from Roche Holdings, he has been active in helping and advising young entrepreneurs start new companies and foundations. Over the course of his distinguished career, he has held positions as an economist and financial analyst, as well as investment officer, at both International Finance Corporation and the World Bank in Washington, D.C.; a member of the Executive Committee of Handelsbank National Westminster (Zurich); and CFO, member of the Roche Group Executive Committee, and member of Roche's Board of Directors. Among Meier's many awards during this period were multiple recognitions as Switzerland's top CFO and recipient of the European CFO Excellence Award in 1999. He holds a master of economics and business administration degree and PhD from the St. Gallen School of Economics, Switzerland.

Dr. John E. Marthinsen is Professor of Economics and International Business at Babson College, where he holds the Distinguished Chair in Swiss Economics of the Glavin Center for Global Entrepreneurial Leadership. He has extensive consulting experience, working for both domestic and international companies, as well as the U.S. government. Marthinsen has served on the United Nations Association's Economic Policy Council and lectured at the Universities of Bern and Basel in Switzerland and the University of Nürnberg, Germany. From 2000 to 2009, he served as a member of the Board of Directors of Givaudan SA, a Swiss-based flavors and fragrances company. Among his most recent books are *Risk Takers: Uses and Abuses of Financial Derivatives, Second Edition* and *Managing in a Global Economy: Demystifying International Macroeconomics*.

Dr. Pascal A. Gantenbein is the Henri B. Meier Professor of Financial Management at the University of Basel's Center of Economic Sciences (WWZ). He also acts as a consultant in the fields of real estate portfolio management, asset management, and real estate institutions. Gantenbein has been a visiting professor with several academic institutions worldwide and was formerly assistant professor of business administration and finance at the Swiss Institute for Banking and Finance at the University of St. Gallen. He also received his master's degree and PhD from the University of St. Gallen.

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