



Microcredit in Switzerland

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World Microfinance Forum Geneva

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	iv
1. Introduction	1
2. Context and definitions	1
2.1 What is a microenterprise?	1
2.2 How does Switzerland support microenterprises?	1
2.3 What is microcredit?	2
2.4 Who provides microloans?	2
3. Demand for microcredit	3
3.1 Three estimates of demand	3
3.2 Is demand satisfied?	3
3.3 Conclusions	4
4. Supply of microcredit	5
4.1 Microcredit providers in Western Europe: small and subsidised	5
4.2 What do we know about microcredit in Switzerland?	6
4.3 Suisse Romande: an in-depth study	6
5. Analysis	12
5.1 How do banks and non-commercial microloan providers differ?	12
5.2 Why do non-commercial providers struggle to achieve outreach?	12
5.3 What keeps banks from serving the market?	12
5.4 How important are business development services?	13
6. Time for action	13
6.1 Why now?	13
6.2 What needs to be done?	14
Annex: Compendium of Microenterprise Service Providers	15

List of Boxes

Box A. Definitions of SMEs	1
Box B. Examples of BDS providers	1
Box C. Examples of financial service providers	1
Box D. Definitions of microenterprise credit, microcredit, and personal microcredit	2
Box E. Case study – ADIE	2
Box F. Surveying the informal sector	4
Box G. Main findings from the European surveys of microfinance institutions	5
Box H. Case study – Vaud Cantonal Bank (BCV)	7
Box I. Case study – Aubonne Savings Bank (CAE)	8
Box J. Case study – la Glâne Raiffeisen Bank	9
Box K. Case study – Cautionnement Romand	10
Box L. Case study – Fondetec	11
Box M. Case study – Microcrédit Solidaire	11

List of Tables

Table 1. Top microcredit countries in Western Europe	5
Table 2. Lending to companies with up to 9 employees in Switzerland (CHF billions)	6
Table 3. Unsecured loans to companies with up to 9 employees in Switzerland	6
Table 4. Examples of commercial microcredit providers	7
Table 5. Example of credit guarantee cooperative	10
Table 6. Economic promotion loan funds in Suisse Romande	11
Table 7. Microcredit associations in Suisse Romande	11

Executive Summary

With the high number of wealthy people in Switzerland, it is often forgotten that about one seventh of the population lives on an income that puts them at risk of poverty. While some of these households survive on very low salaries, the majority live on alimony payments, welfare pay-outs, pensions or unemployment benefits. In fact the majority of the poor of working age are unemployed.

Switzerland's employment promotion policies include strong support for the creation and development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), with a particular emphasis on innovative undertakings. While SMEs absorb some of the unemployed, the most vulnerable ones such as single mothers, immigrants and people with low levels of education tend to have great difficulties in securing a salaried job.

International experience shows that a certain group of poor people can create their own job and sometimes even jobs for others by growing the income-generating activity that they already operate informally into a proper enterprise, or by setting up an enterprise from scratch. To be able to do this, they need business development services and financial products that are adapted to their needs. This includes access to microloans.

Microloans are defined as loans under CHF 30,000 to enterprises with up to 9 employees. Since repossession of assets would throw vulnerable people back into poverty, microloans should ideally be provided on the basis of alternative collateral or none at all. Most microenterprises created by the poor are non-innovative and therefore operate in competitive markets; they cannot afford to pay excessive interest rates.

It is challenging to determine the demand for such microloans. Methodologies proposed by different international organisations, when applied to Switzerland, lead to estimates that vary between 7,000 and 134,000 potential microborrowers. They rely on a combination of national statistics and the outcome of specific surveys, all of which are subject to debate.

A national survey of SMEs commissioned by SECO shows that only 17–18% of very small microenterprises have access to loans. Yet 90% of SMEs that do not have a loan say they do not need one; the remainder applied for bank loans but was refused. This suggests that the demand for microloans is largely satisfied. The question that remains unanswered is whether more people would have applied for loans if eligibility criteria were loosened and terms and conditions were more attractive.

WMFG research points to a hidden demand for microloans. It shows that a considerable proportion of microenterprises use loans from informal sources, including 23% from family and friends, which while often cheap and flexible are not always available when needed. Microenterprises often use home loans, consumer loans and credit cards to finance their business, none of which were designed to be used as such. Others use credit arrangements with suppliers, which depend on the supplier and can be expensive. It is possible that these people would prefer to have a business loan.

With respect to the supply of microloans, studies of Western European countries contradict each other, as a consequence of the varying success in estimating the supply of microloans by banks. In the absence of national data, WMFG sought to identify the main banks and non-banks involved in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, and conducted case studies of some of the leading institutions.

Non-banks can be divided into Economic Promotion Loan Funds and Microcredit Associations; they provide a very low number of loans. The leading organisations in terms of clients, Microcrédit Solidaire and Fondetec, together issued 40 microloans in 2010; most others provided less than 5.

The total number of microloans provided by banks is much more significant. The principal banks involved in microlending are Cantonal Banks, Raiffeisen Banks and Regional or Savings Banks. At the end of 2010 the Banque Cantonale Vaudoise (BCV) had 3,000 clients for its SME overdraft facility, a large proportion of which had a value outstanding below CHF 30,000. In 2010 Banque Raiffeisen de la Glâne and Caisse d'Épargne d'Aubonne each issued 10–15 microloans and overdraft facilities for business purposes, some of which for values as low as CHF 10,000. The 328 Raiffeisen Banks and 69 Regional and Savings Banks together potentially constitute an important source of microloans. Credit Guarantee Cooperatives play a small role in promoting microlending, with the largest of them, Cautionnement Romand, guaranteeing 29 loans under CHF 50,000 in 2010.

Banks and non-banks differ chiefly in three areas: eligibility criteria, documentary requirements and non-financial support. Because non-banks actively target, are more flexible with regards to documents and provide coaching or at least regular advice, they tend to reach poorer clients. It should be noted, however, that BCV's success in reaching out to very small enterprises is partly due to simplifications in documentary requirements and a streamlining of application procedures.

The reasons why non-banks struggle to achieve outreach are manifold. They include inappropriate structures, limited productivity and a shortage of funding. While lack of demand is often quoted, it is unclear to what extent this argument is valid.

Banks' leadership role has been achieved despite the banking sector's general lack of interest in microcredit. For the larger banks this is due to inappropriate organisational structures geared towards wealthier people and larger enterprises. Smaller banks are restricted by their focus on a limited geographical area which necessarily contains a small market for microloans. National policies do not encourage microloans, and a lack of networking among banks nationally and internationally prevents the spread of knowledge and experience.

Tailored business development services are very important to help the most vulnerable become self-employed. The lack of private and public investment in the development of microloan products is partly due to the lack of business development services providers targeting the poor.

It is time for a change. Banks need to show their social responsibility to regain the trust of the people, and what better way to show this than by serving the poorest in the community? Pioneers like ADIE and BCV have proven that it is possible to cover most of the costs and risks of microloans from interest through changes in lending methodology coupled with a focus on scale. In addition, Raiffeisen and savings banks have shown that it is worth cross-subsidising the smallest loans from other products sold to the same client or from larger loans, since this will pay off in the long run. Finally, non-banks like Microcrédit Solidaire and Fondetec have shown that even the most vulnerable can be banked provided they are offered the business development services they need.

To increase the supply of microloan services and ensure demand is truly satisfied, there is a need for action from several stakeholders. The federal and cantonal governments need to make microlending a priority and devise policies and incentives to stimulate its provision. Banks and non-banks need to increase their transparency by not only sharing their methodologies and lessons learnt but also their results in terms of outreach and profitability. Microcredit providers also need to make joint investments in microloan product development and staff training, and find ways to ensure that the microloan market that each one of them serves is large enough to be viable. Finally, structured collaboration with selected business development service providers may help to deepen outreach to the poorest.

1 Introduction

Despite its ranking as one of the most developed countries in the world, Switzerland has its share of poverty. In 2009, the population living below 60% of the median income and therefore considered at risk of poverty was 14.6%.¹ Particularly vulnerable are single-parent families, immigrants and people with a relatively low level of education. A large proportion of the poor is unemployed.

One strategy for poverty alleviation is to create and develop microenterprises. Microenterprises are not only a source of income; they also provide dignity and enhance social inclusion. Microenterprise promotion requires a supportive legal and regulatory environment, business development services and appropriate financial services.

What is being done to promote microenterprises in Switzerland? In particular, do poor people wanting to start or develop a business have access to appropriate financial services? When WMFG asked about the status of inclusive financial services in the country in which it is based, it found that very little information was available. This is what prompted the study presently in front of you.

This report investigates the demand for and the supply of loans that are affordable and accessible to the poor in Switzerland. Microloans are defined as loans under CHF 30,000 to individuals who run businesses employing up to 9 people. The study explores the volume and nature of demand for such loans based on the results of national and local surveys. It provides insight into product supply through case studies of some of the principal providers of microloans. Finally, the report identifies steps that stakeholders could take to ensure that microloans are available to those who need them, and that they are effective in promoting poverty alleviation.

The findings should interest banks as well as subsidised institutions involved in providing microloans. We believe the recommendations are particularly relevant to national policy makers, local governments, semi-public and private institutions that support microloans in Switzerland.

2 Context and definitions

2.1 What is a microenterprise?

In Switzerland microenterprises are officially defined as enterprises with up to 9 employees (see Box A). While many countries further classify microenterprise regarding assets or revenues, there is no agreement on such criteria in Switzerland.

Box A. Definitions of SMEs

	Number of full time equivalent employees
Microenterprise	1–9
Small enterprise	10–49
Medium-sized enterprise	50–249

Source: Banque National Suisse, Monthly Bulletin of Banking Statistics Supplement, September 2011.

2.2 How does Switzerland support microenterprises?

In practice microenterprises are generally treated as a subgroup of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The Swiss support system for SMEs includes:

- A national policy to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs),² which includes a concerted effort to reduce the legal obstacles for enterprise creation and development
- Business development services (BDS) including coaching, training, advice and access to networks. Providers can be subdivided into commercial actors, which charge cost-recovery fees, and non-commercial actors, which are able to charge more affordable rates or offer their services for free because they receive public subsidies and/or private donations. Box B gives examples of commercial and non-commercial actors

Box B. Examples of BDS providers

Commercial:

- Training institutes
- Consultancy companies
- Administration offices

Non-commercial:

- Cantonal and regional economic promotion agencies
- Local, sectoral and professional enterprise associations
- Specialised organisations for coaching, support and advice
- Web-based information platforms and one-stop shops
- University/polytechnic based initiatives
- Local business parks and incubators

Source: WMFG research.

- Financial services including current and savings accounts, payment and transfer services, overdraft facilities, loans, equity, and insurances. These are also provided by commercial institutions as well as non-commercial, subsidised actors. Box C gives examples

Box C. Examples of financial service providers

Commercial:

- Different types of banks
- Private equity funds
- Insurance companies

Non-commercial:

- Cantonal, regional or local economic promotion funds (loans, guarantees and risk capital)
- Regional guarantee cooperatives
- Loan and quasi equity funds of international and national associations
- Risk capital funds linked to universities or polytechnics
- Risk capital funds linked to business parks and incubators

Source: WMFG research.

Annex A provides an overview of the principal microloan and BDS providers in the French-speaking part of Switzerland.

1. Office Fédéral de la Statistique, Conditions de vie en Suisse en 2009 – Enquête sur les revenus et les conditions de vie, Communiqué de presse, 13 December 2010.

2. Federal Department of Economic Affairs (SECO), Switzerland's SME Policy, May 2009.

There is no specific microenterprise policy in Switzerland. The government as well as most support institutions implicitly assume that services designed for SMEs are accessible to microenterprises and meet their needs. Whether this is indeed the case is unknown. However, international experience suggests that microenterprises, and in particular those established by poor people, are different from larger SMEs. They generally find it difficult to make use of the services on offer and fail to benefit; support services need to be tailored to their particular characteristics to be effective.

2.3 What is microcredit?

This study focuses on microcredit as a poverty alleviation tool. It defines microloans as loans to create and develop businesses that are accessible and affordable to the poor.

The European Union defines such microloans as loans under EUR 25,000 (currently about CHF 30,000), to enterprises comprising up to 9 employees.³ This definition is reasonable for Switzerland, considering that a person at risk of poverty (living on a yearly income below CHF 28,700⁴) could pay such a loan over a period of 4 years without incurring an unaffordable debt burden.⁵

For microloans to be accessible they need to be adapted to the characteristics of the poor. The poor have few assets and losing them would make them even more vulnerable; microloan providers should therefore consider accepting alternative guarantees or even none at all. The poor also seldom start their businesses based on an original idea; they often set up non-innovative businesses in competitive markets and therefore cannot afford to pay excessive interest rates.

It is important to note that microloans as defined here are not the same as microenterprise loans. They are also not the same as personal loans for poor people. This is explained in Box D.

Box D. Definitions of microenterprise credit, microcredit, and personal microcredit

Microenterprise credit: Loans to create and develop businesses with up to 9 employees. Maximum loan size: none.

Microcredit: Loans to create and develop businesses with up to 9 employees that are accessible and affordable to the poor. Loans are mostly used to invest in working capital and sometimes in capital equipment. The purpose is to create or maintain a job for the client and possibly others. Loans may or may not be coupled with coaching services. Maximum loan size: CHF 30,000.

Personal microcredit: Loans to cover personal expenses that are targeted at the poor and financially excluded. Loans are mostly used to pay for health or training expenditures, household goods or vehicles, or to pay off pre-existing debts. The purpose is to (re)-establish clients' creditworthiness and access to the banking system. Loans are systematically coupled with information and support such as budget advice, financial capability training and debt settlement.

Source: Jayo (2010).

2.4 Who provides microloans?

In most countries banks tend not to provide microloans, because they believe the costs of providing such loans are too high in proportion to the revenue they generate, and

because the risks of lending to microenterprises with little traditional collateral to offer are too high.

To address this 'market failure,' governments and private funders have helped create non-profit organisations dedicated to providing microcredit. Over the past three decades some of these organisations have proven that it is possible to provide microloans in a profitable manner, and some have even transformed themselves into banks. This has been achieved thanks to specialized lending methodologies that reduce costs and risks, and economies of scale achieved through a relentless outreach commitment. As a consequence, some banks have started reconsidering microloans as a way of diversifying their product portfolio.

Box E below describes the Association for the Right to Economic Initiative (ADIE), a Western European non-profit organisation that has been very successful in proving that it is possible to provide microloans at very low costs and risks.

Box E. Case study — ADIE

ADIE is the only non-bank in France that is allowed to issue and manage microloans directly. While it initially lent from its own capital and later managed bank loans, thanks to a special legal disposition issued in 2001, ADIE now only borrows from banks and on-lends this money to microentrepreneurs.

In 2007 it provided 10,000 microloans to microentrepreneurs without access to bank loans, of which 8,500 to start-ups and 1,500 to existing businesses that already paid off their start-up loan from ADIE. Loans are only given to people who have no access to a bank loan, and can therefore not be combined with or substitute for a bank loan. An ADIE loan is often the last step before registration of the microenterprise.

Loan conditions:

- Maximum loan size: 5,500 Euros (average 2,750 in 2007)
- Maximum repayment period: 24 months (constant monthly repayments)
- Interest rate: 7.43%
- Solidarity contribution: 5% of the loan amount
- Grace period: no
- Guarantee: personal guarantee for 50% of loan by someone known to the client
- Possibility to increase the amount financed by quasi equity from state entity EDEN or an honour loan from ADIE (against more favourable conditions)

ADIE reaches a high number of vulnerable people that are excluded from the labour market. It reaches a higher proportion of social welfare recipients, job seekers and women than the average among entrepreneurs in France, 20% of its borrowers can hardly read or write, 18% live in poor neighbourhoods and 40% work in the informal sector before they establish the business that is financed by ADIE. ADIE allows 80% of its clients to reintegrate themselves professionally: 57% are still active in their business after 3 years, and among the 43% of those that are not, 54% find a salaried job.

At the end of 2007, ADIE's loan loss rate stood at 2.55%. It aims to cover the costs of its microcredit programme from income from this activity by 2011 through an increase in loan officer productivity.

Outstanding loans were largely financed by a large variety of banks (70%), 'salary savings' (10%), its own capital (8%) and public funds (6%). The risk on loans was shared by the State (48%), the European Investment Fund (9%), partner banks (20%), and ADIE and its clients (12%). Operational costs of financial services were largely covered by income from interest and solidarity contributions; those of non-financial services were largely covered by local communities, the European Union, companies through sponsorship and the State. Gifts from private persons covered a minor part of operational costs.

Source: ADIE, Microfinance Market Study in France, for the European Investment Fund within the framework of JEREMIE, 2008.

3. Jayo, Barbara e.a., 2008-2009 overview of the Microcredit Sector in the European Union, European Microfinance Network Working Paper No. 6, June 2010.

4. Federal Office of Statistics (2010) *ibid.*

5. Based on the rule of thumb that people should not pay more than one quarter of their annual income in payments on debt.

3 Demand for microcredit

3.1 Three estimates of demand

No Western European country has conducted a systematic survey of potential clients to establish the demand for microloans. Instead, several organisations have tried to estimate demand based on a combination of national statistics and findings of specific surveys. Below we will present three such estimates together with some comments on the methodology applied. For each case we work out what demand would be in Switzerland if the same methodology were to be applied.

Estimate 1

The European Commission estimates the market for microcredit in the first 15 member countries (all Western European) at 557,000 borrowers.⁶ The basis for its calculation is the population of working age at risk of poverty, which by convention is taken as those people who survive on less than 60% of the median income. This is multiplied by the percentage of people who would prefer to work for themselves rather than as a salaried worker (45%). Finally, the result is multiplied by a conservative estimate of the percentage of those who actually set up microbusinesses (3%).

If the same calculation were to be applied to Switzerland, the total number of poor people requiring microloans would be 7,000.⁷ This appears to be rather a conservative estimate. It should be noted that the European Commission estimate:

- Is distorted by the fact that percentages are applied to groups that did not constitute the source of the data
- Excludes those people who would set up a business if they had easier access to microcredit

Estimate 2

The European Investment Fund commissioned the French microfinance institution ADIE to undertake a market sizing exercise for France. ADIE's most conservative estimate of the market for microcredit in France is 301,000 borrowers per year.⁸ This figure is more optimistic than the European Commission estimate. We present this figure because it uses information from detailed surveys of entrepreneurs that are not available in other countries. The calculation consists of two parts:

- The demand for credit at start-up: the number of new microenterprises times the percentage that says they need less than 30,000 Euros (50%)
- The demand for credit in the first three years: the number of surviving new microenterprises each year times the percentages that say they need a loan each year (19%)

If this calculation were to be applied to Switzerland based on national statistics for the number of new enterprises and enterprise survival rates, 10,500 people would need

microloans each year.⁹ It should be noted that the ADIE estimate is based on the assumption that:

- All people who say they need less than 30,000 Euros to start up in fact need a loan at all
- Businesses during their first three years only need loans under 30,000 Euros
- Businesses surviving the third year no longer need loans under 30,000 Euros

Estimate 3

Maria Nowak, former President of ADIE and of the European Microfinance Network, offers an even more optimistic estimate of the microcredit market in the European Union based on yet a different set of assumptions: 11 million potential borrowers.¹⁰ Her calculation also consists of two parts:

- The demand for microcredit from existing formal microenterprises: 20% of the number of microenterprises
- The demand for microcredit from people with informal enterprises who would like to regularise their business: 25% of the active population living under the poverty line

Applying her methodology to Switzerland would result in an estimate of 134,000 potential borrowers, of which 54,000 formal businesses¹¹ and 80,000 informal businesses.¹² It should be taken into account that:

- The percentages above are estimates for the whole EU including Eastern Europe; it is likely that they are lower for Western Europe
- The estimates were made in the context of a presentation to the European Parliament in 2006, as part of a call to action

3.2 Is demand satisfied?

Demand is satisfied...

Early 2009 a working group established by SECO commissioned MIS Trend to carry out a Survey on SME financing, using a questionnaire developed by the European Union applied to a sample of enterprises with less than 250 employees. This study was executed in April and May 2009, and repeated in March and April 2010.¹³ Enterprises with 9 or fewer employees constituted 84% of the sample in 2009 and 82% of the sample in 2010.¹⁴

The survey found that 32% of all respondents had a bank loan or access to a line of credit. However, the percentage of microenterprises and young enterprises with a bank loan or access to a line of credit was much lower:

6. Commission des Communautés Européennes, Initiative européenne pour un développement du microcrédit en faveur de la croissance et de l'emploi, Communication de la Commission au Conseil, au Parlement Européen, Au Comité Economique et Social Européen et au Comité des Régions, 2007.

7. According to the Federal Bureau of Statistics population census data, in 2010 Switzerland had 4.9 million people of working age (between 20 and 64 years). The living conditions survey of 2007 estimates that 10.8% of that age group were at risk of poverty, so about 520,000.

8. ADIE (2008) *ibid.*

9. According to Federal Bureau of Statistics enterprise demography data, in 2010 the number of new enterprises created was 11,471. A 2008 study established survival rates for the secondary and tertiary sector of 80.7% after one year, 69.8% after two years and 65.8 after three years.

10. Nowak, M. *Croissance et cohésion sociale. Le microcrédit et l'Union Européenne*. 2006.

11. According to Federal Bureau of Statistics enterprise demography data, in 2008 Switzerland counted 452,000 establishments. The BFS publishes an analysis of enterprises by size for a subset of these establishments, which excludes public companies, the primary sector, the financial & insurance sector, activities of households as employers and activities abroad, as well as establishments that are open less than 20 hours a week. Out of this subset of 311,000 enterprises, 272,000 had up to 9 employees.

12. According to Federal Bureau of Statistics living conditions data, in 2008 Switzerland's active population under the poverty line consisted of 118,000 working poor and 203,000 unemployed (ILO definition).

13. MIS Trend, *Enquête sur le financement des PME en Suisse – Vague I, mai 2009 and Vague II, avril 2010, réalisé pour le Secrétariat d'Etat à l'Economie (SECO)*, undated presentations.

14. The data presented refer to the 2010 findings. While there are differences with the studies conducted in 2009, these are not pertinent to our study.

- Only 30% of enterprises with 1–9 employees
- Only 17% of enterprises that only consisted of the founder
- Only 18% of businesses with revenues under CHF 0.5 million
- Only 18% of businesses that were five years or younger

When respondents who did not have a bank loan or access to a credit line were asked why this was the case, the large majority (90%) said they did not need credit. 9% said they had been refused a loan, and 1% had other reasons.

The conclusion drawn from the survey, despite the fact that few small and young microentrepreneurs use bank loans, is that the business sector's needs for finance are largely satisfied. However, the survey does not explain why people felt no need for a loan. Did they really have no need for capital, or did they get their needs satisfied elsewhere? Alternatively, were they discouraged from applying for loans by existing eligibility criteria and loan conditions on offer?

...or maybe not?

To deepen its understanding of the financing needs of microenterprises, WMFG conducted a survey of enterprises with 9 or fewer employees and with less than CHF 2 million in assets between February and May 2011. For budgetary reasons, the study focused on French-speaking Switzerland. The sample was selected in collaboration with five SME support institutions.¹⁵ They sent an invitation to participate in the survey to eligible enterprises in their database. For 2,172 invitations WMFG received 115 valid responses.

The WMFG survey found that 20% of respondents with less than CHF 500,000 in revenues and 16% of respondents with businesses of up to 5 years old had a bank loan. This is consistent with the finding of the MIS Trend survey that relatively few small, young enterprises have bank loans. However...

- Not all bank loans were professional loans: several respondents specified that the loan was in fact a second mortgage on their home or a consumption loan. These types of loans have not been designed to meet the needs of entrepreneurs in an optimal manner. They require entrepreneurs to pledge and put at risk assets or income that are unrelated to the enterprise. Besides, the terms and conditions may not fit the enterprise's cashflow
- Not all bank loans were attractive and accessible: several respondents explained that they had been offered loans but refused them because of stringent conditions in terms of cashflow, guarantees and interest rates. It is likely that a considerable number of respondents did not apply for loans because they did not expect to be eligible

The WMFG survey strived to discover whether the lack of recourse to bank loans was a consequence of lack of need for capital or loans. It found that a lot of entrepreneurs used other sources of finance, none of which was ideal:

- 27% of respondents used donations and 23% had loans from family and friends; 5% had loans from other individuals. These sources, while often cheap and flexible, are not always available when needed and often insufficient to cover entrepreneurs' needs

- 11% used credit arrangements with suppliers and 10% used a credit card to spread payments on purchases. Both financing options tend to be more expensive than enterprise loans
- 6% had loans from state institutions and 3% had loans from non-governmental organisations. While often cheap, these loans tend to be one-off whereas microentrepreneurs generally need a long-term relationship with a financial institution. They do not necessarily result in entrepreneurs' subsequent graduation to a bank loan

The overall impression from the survey is that there is in fact an unmet demand for microloans but many microentrepreneurs do not turn to bank loans because they do not find the loan terms and conditions favourable, or they believe they are not eligible.

Box F. Surveying the informal sector

WMFG undertook a small survey to identify the needs of poor people with informal, non-registered income-generating activities. Since individual income information is carefully guarded by the authorities for privacy reasons, it was not possible to constitute a random sample. WMFG therefore opted for a street survey in neighbourhoods that were indicated as low-income by the tax authorities. 1,148 people were approached with a small set of questions to determine whether they fitted into the target group, and then asked to complete a confidential questionnaire on Survey Monkey in return for the chance to win a prize.

Surveyors encountered several challenges. A large proportion of people approached were unwilling to indicate whether they lived in the neighbourhood. People were also extremely reticent to admit that they had an income-generating activity as they believed this might jeopardise their benefits and welfare payments. Finally, even those people who did indicate they had an income-generating activity largely refused to answer questions about their funding sources.

While the survey gave many indications of the existence of unregistered income-generating activities, the response rate does not permit us to present quantitative data.

3.3 Conclusions

We have seen in this chapter that poor people who wish to establish or develop a microenterprise use small loans from a variety of formal and informal sources; however, informal loans are not always available when needed and the types of formal loans they use are not always tailored to the principal needs of a microenterprise.

In addition, many people do not apply for bank loans because they feel the terms and conditions are not attractive, or because they believe they are not eligible. They are often unaware of loans offered by state entities and non-governmental organisations.

Several organisations have developed methodologies for estimating the number of poor people who need microloans, which when applied to Switzerland lead to estimates of between 7,000 and 134,000 potential borrowers. Each of these methodologies is open to debate, and there is no consensus on the best way to calculate demand.

Besides, each methodology requires data on the activities of the poor that are not regularly collected. Their collection is made difficult by the fact that it involves developing an understanding of the extent to which people operate informal businesses and use informal loan sources; it requires overcoming their fear that this information will be shared with the authorities.

15. Swissfirms (which maintains a database of members of all Swiss Chambers of Commerce and Industry), the Vaud Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Geneva Federation of Artisans, Traders and Entrepreneurs (FAC), Genilem and MyCoplan.

4 Supply of microcredit

4.1 Microcredit providers in Western Europe: small and subsidised

4.1.1 What does the Western European market look like?

The European Microfinance Network (EMN) estimates that the number of microloans issued in Western Europe is very low, even when compared to the European Commission's conservative estimate of demand. Via its survey of microfinance providers it counted 51,000 microloans issued in 13 Western European countries during the period 2008–2009.

The majority of microloans were provided to clients by non-banks. Most of these targeted people excluded from mainstream finance and did in fact reach out to relatively poor people. They generally focused on the provision of non-financial services such as coaching and offered loans as an additional service. Most institutions were extremely small, and depended on public subsidies and private donations to cover the majority of their costs. Box G offers more details on the findings.

Individual country studies commissioned by the European Investment Fund¹⁶ largely confirm the findings of the EMN survey. They have found small numbers of loans largely issued by non-commercial microcredit providers.

However, a country study of France counted 121,000 loans issued in 2007, higher than the EMN's estimate for the whole of Western Europe! The difference is illustrated in Table 1. The figures in the first column come from the EIF's individual country studies whereas the second column shows data drawn from the EMN institutional survey.

Table 1. Top microcredit countries in Western Europe

	Number of microloans issued in 2007 ^a	Number of microloans issued in 2009 ^b
France	121,000	28,863
Germany	4,620	8,025
Spain	3,348	5,172

Sources:

^aCountry studies: ADIE 2008(ibid), EMN 2009 (ibid).

^bInstitutional survey: Jayo 2010 (ibid).

4.1.2 Why do the studies contradict each other?

The apparent contradiction can be explained by differences in methodology. ADIE, which conducted the national study on France, was able to use national data on microloans collected by the National Information System on New Enterprises, something which is not available in the other countries. As a consequence, the figure for 2007 includes far more bank loans (111,000) than in any other country.

This finding suggests that the EMN studies probably underestimate the involvement of banks in the microcredit market. We offer three possible explanations for this underestimation:

- Banks may have had difficulties responding to the microcredit questionnaires because they often do not offer microloans as a separate product from SME loans
- They may have underreported loans because often microloans provided by banks take the form of overdraft facilities, and the questionnaires did not explicitly ask to include those
- Banks may have been unwilling to respond for strategic reasons, be it from a competitive viewpoint (not wanting to disclose their activities to competitors) or because of the image they wished to project towards the authorities (preferring to express their social responsibility in words rather than in hard numbers)

Box G. Main findings from the European surveys of microfinance institutions

Since 2003 the European Microfinance Network has been conducting surveys of European microfinance actors. For the fourth survey, which took place in 2008–2009, it contacted 432 actors in 28 countries, and received responses from 170 actors operating in 21 countries in the European Union (EU), the EU candidate country Croatia and countries belonging to the European Free Trade Area (EFTA). It included one institution (Microcrédit Solidaire) from Switzerland.

Institutional form: In Western Europe *microcredit is predominantly provided to clients by non-banks*, in particular NGOs and microfinance associations. Despite the fact that many banks were approached for the survey, few participated; those that did only reported limited numbers of loans.

Sources of funds: *Public subsidies and private donations constitute non-banks' principal source of funding*, both for loan funds and for covering loan losses and operational costs. Income from interest income and fees tends to be minimal. Some non-banks borrow loan funds from banks, or manage these funds on their behalf. However, because they do not have a banking license, they execute all their transactions through banks.

Services: *Most microloan providers focus on the provision of non-financial services*. Only 24% of respondents were involved solely in micro lending; the remaining 76% carried out a number of activities which focus on business development and employment related services. This may be explained by the fact that competition among microenterprises is fierce and the bureaucracy to set up a new business is extreme. 42% of respondents also offered other financial services besides credit.

Clients: *Most microloan providers target people excluded from mainstream finance*. 70% of respondents stated that they targeted a specific clientele, in particular women, ethnic minorities, the unemployed and people on welfare. 78% of respondents supported start-up businesses and 62% supported existing businesses. 24% worked with registered as well as unregistered businesses.

Breadth of outreach: *The number of clients reached is relatively low*. In the 13 Western European countries covered by the survey the total number of loans disbursed in fiscal year 2008–2009 came to 51,027, equivalent to 477 million Euros. Of these, 73% of the number of loans and 63% of the value of loans were issued by institutions based in France and Germany.

Depth of outreach: *Microloan providers reach relatively poor people*. The weighted average loan size in the Western European institutions was considerably below the cut-off level, at 8,810 Euros. Loan sizes were generally below GNI per capita, with France, Italy and Norway showing the deepest outreach. Banks, non-bank financial institutions and government bodies tended to offer larger loans than credit unions, NGOs, savings banks or foundations.

Efficiency: *Most institutions are extremely small*. 57% of all respondents distributed fewer than 50 loans. Data on number of active borrowers and value of loans outstanding are incomplete due to a low response rate. What is clear, however, is that the institutions benefited from few economies of scale.

Profitability: *Most institutions are highly subsidy-dependent*. Only a third of respondents provided data on financial performance; of those that did, only 40% were operationally self-sustaining. While this can be partly attributed to limited economies of scale, loan losses were also considerable. Amongst the institutions that responded to the question, the average repayment rate was 63%, the average portfolio at risk rate was 16%, the average write-off rate was 9.5% and the average refinancing ratio was 14%.

Source: Jayo (2010).

16. European Microfinance Network, Cross-country Study on Western Europe: United Kingdom, Spain, Germany and Italy, for the European Investment Fund in the framework of JEREMIE, March 2009.

4.2 What do we know about microcredit in Switzerland?

There is no reliable source of information on the supply of microloans by banks in Switzerland. The Central Bank does provide information on the volume of loans and overdraft facilities to microenterprises. It reports that over the past ten years this has grown faster than loans to small and medium-sized enterprises.¹⁷ At the end of 2010 about 60% of the volume of bank loans outstanding was to enterprises with up to 9 employees.¹⁸

Table 2. Lending to companies with up to 9 employees in Switzerland (CHF billions)

	2009	2010
Big banks	79.2	61.1
Cantonal banks	62.8	68.3
Regional banks and savings banks	15.7	16.3
Raiffeisen banks	13.1	14.6
Other banks	16.8	19.7
Total	187.6	180.0

Source: Banque National Suisse, Monthly Bulletin of Banking Statistics Supplement, September 2011.

As can be seen in Table 2, in 2010 the main providers of these loans were the Cantonal Banks and the two Big Banks (UBS and Credit Suisse). They were followed by Regional Banks & Savings Banks, and Raiffeisen Banks. While the financial crisis has had a negative effect on loans to microenterprises, this has been largely due to a considerable contraction by the Big Banks. The other types of banks all increased their market share as well as their volume of lending to microenterprises.

Table 3. Unsecured loans to companies with up to 9 employees in Switzerland

	As a percentage of portfolio
Big banks	34%
Cantonal banks	12%
Regional banks and savings banks	7%
Raiffeisen banks	2%
Other banks	9%
Average	18%

Source: Banque National Suisse, Monthly Bulletin of Banking Statistics Supplement, September 2011.

Table 3 shows that all types of banks provide a certain proportion of their loans without guarantees. In this area the Big Banks are in the lead, presumably because their large size allows them to cover the risk through diversification.

While this is interesting information, it does not tell us what proportion of the total bank loan volume concerned loans under CHF 30,000. Unfortunately, banks are not required to report the number of loans nor to divide their portfolio by loan size. This makes it difficult to analyse the bank supply of microloans.

In addition, no organisation systematically collects data on microloans provided by non-commercial institutions. In general these organisations are only required to report to their funders. We have found that the data reported by such institutions varies greatly in quantity and quality, and some institutions do not publish their results at all.

4.3 Suisse Romande: an in-depth study

As there are no national statistics on microloans, WMFG has sought to start filling this gap by making an in-depth study of Suisse Romande (the French-speaking part of Switzerland). To this end it conducted a desk study complemented by a survey and case studies. The remainder of this chapter presents the results from the study.

Microloan providers in Suisse Romande can be divided into those related to the banking sector (banks and bank guarantee funds), and non-banks (economic promotion loan funds and microcredit associations). Banks are the most significant providers of microloans, with one cantonal bank having more than 3,000 clients with an average outstanding balance of CHF 40,000. Microcredit associations and some economic promotion loan funds reach very poor clients but the number of microloans we were able to confirm for 2010 was less than 50.

4.3.1 What is the role of the banking sector?

Banks

Since there are hundreds of banks in Suisse Romande, it was not possible for WMFG to obtain information on all of them. Instead, we analysed the background and microcredit activities of the three major groups of banks that according to national statistics provide significant numbers of loans to microentrepreneurs, and conducted detailed case studies of one institution within each group. The following pages present the analysis and case studies. Table 4 summarizes the case studies.

Our research shows that several local Raiffeisen Banks and Savings Banks provide small numbers of loans under CHF 30,000, some of which are not covered by any guarantee. The majority of these loans are given in the form of overdraft facilities. Even though they generally constitute a minor part of their portfolio (10–15 loans per year in the ones we studied), the large number of these banks (328 and 69 respectively) means that together they may form a significant source of microloans.

The local banks see the provision of very small loans as a way of showing that they are close to their clients. They provide loans to people who they believe could become significant clients in the future. Lending methodologies are generally not adapted to the special characteristics of small clients: loan officers require the same documentation and analysts carry out the same analysis that they would do for any SME. The costs are covered from cross-subsidisation; current income from larger loans is used in the expectation that the client will generate income for the bank in the future.

17. ASB, Baromètre bancaire 2011 – l'évolution conjoncturelle des banques en Suisse, Swissbanking, September 2011.

18. This figure is an underestimate of the volume of loans used for microenterprises, as it does not take into account people who mortgage their house or pledge their salary in order to obtain funds for their enterprises.

Table 4. Examples of commercial microcredit providers

Bank	Action radius	Minimum loan	Average balance outstanding	Interest rate	% without guarantee	Number of loans issued in 2010	Number of loans outstanding end 2010
Banque Cantonale Vaudoise ^a	Canton of Vaud	20,000	40,000	n.a.	100%	n.a.	3,000
Banque Raiffeisen de la Glane ^b	District of la Glane	10,000	30,000	3.5–6.5%	45%	10–15	100
Caisse d'Epargne de Aubonne ^b	District of Aubonne	5,000	n.a.	3.5–6.5%	20%	15	n.a.

Source: WMFG research.

^aCredit Direct PME.

^bMicroloans.

Cantonal banks are bigger and have more possibilities to develop a dedicated product. At least one cantonal bank has adapted its lending methodology for microloans considerably by reducing documentary and guarantee requirements, automating application procedures and streamlining decision-making processes. More than 3,000 clients have overdraft facilities for their business, and the average debit position on these facilities was CHF 40,000. They did not have to pledge a guarantee to get access to these overdraft facilities, and the interest rate they paid was not higher than on loans to SMEs.

Among the other banks, we found that banks that are known to target modest clients such as MIGROS Bank and Coop Bank do not offer microloans to enterprises. One other bank that does is Postfinance: it gives enterprises overdraft facilities as low as CHF 20,000, and actively markets this product. Because Postfinance was unable to provide figures on the number of clients that made use of this product, it was not possible to establish the significance of this product for the market.

Cantonal banks

Cantonal banks are banks where at least one third of capital and votes (but in some cases 100%) belongs to the cantonal authorities. While some are registered as public and others as private entities, they all follow commercial principles and are unsubsidised. In some cases the cantonal authorities partially or fully guarantee their liabilities. Cantonal banks operate principally at the level of their canton of origin, although a few have branches in other cantons or even abroad.

Whereas they were established in the 19th century with the purpose of offering loans against favourable interest rates and investments that are safe, most cantonal banks have since become universal banks. Most still focus on savings accounts and mortgage loans, but some have become very active in wealth management. The Union of Cantonal Banks, established in 1907, represents the banks' common interest towards third parties and develops collaboration amongst its members.

Today there are 24 cantonal banks, with a joint balance sheet of CHF 420 billion. Almost half of all registered enterprises have a relationship with a cantonal bank, and for about 30% of enterprises it is their principal bank. Enterprise loans from cantonal banks constitute about 38% of total credit outstanding. The proportion of microenterprise loans provided by cantonal banks is about the same.

Cantonal banks' decentralised structure, their long history and their excellent knowledge of the local economy make them well positioned to serve micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. Instead of pursuing short term profits, their priority is to develop stable long term partnerships. To achieve this, cantonal banks offer professional advice and a wide range of products and services.

Box H. Case study — Vaud Cantonal Bank (BCV)

Banque Cantonale Vaudoise (BCV) is a universal bank founded in 1845, with the mission of contributing to the economic development of the canton of Vaud. The state of Vaud holds the majority of its capital. As the second biggest cantonal bank in the country, BCV is among the five most important universal banks in Switzerland.

Until 2007, BCV used the same lending methodology for loans of CHF 20,000 as for loans of CHF 500,000. As it did not differentiate between loans of different sizes, for the smaller loans the delivery costs were disproportionate. The absence of a profit for the bank pushed it to reflect on the desirability of continuing to give very small loans. Taking into account its mission, the bank decided to create a new and better adapted product, the "Direct Credit for SMEs."

The principal objective was to increase the profitability of small enterprise loans (according to BCV's terminology <CHF 100,000) by simplifying and standardizing the offer of commercial funding. It wanted to maintain an attractive and competitive value proposition for clients, while at the same time meeting the client information requirements for Basel II.

The product is a current account overdraft facility of between CHF 20,000 and CHF 100,000, which can be used for working capital or investments. Even if in general the duration of the facility is unlimited, for investments in equipment the duration can be limited to the economic life of the financed good. The credit line does not require traditional collateral, but if the business is registered as an SA or a Sarl, a shareholder or partner guarantee is required. The interest rate varies according to the applicant, and there is a quarterly commission of 0.25% on the highest negative balance.

Interested entrepreneurs can submit a loan application via the bank's website. The application procedure is simplified for both the credit officer and the analyst. The credit decision is based on nine quantitative criteria (the enterprise's own capital, capacity to cover expenses, indebtedness...) and qualitative criteria (extract from the credit bureau, tax declaration, budget). A positive decision requires that seven of these nine criteria are met. The client commits to the submission of annual financial statements and to channelling all business transactions through a BCV account.

Clients have reacted positively to the offer. In 2010, BCV had 3,000 business accounts with overdrafts under CHF 100,000, representing an outstanding portfolio of CHF 120 million. To conclude, the internal simplifications have allowed the bank to respond to the need for modest loan amounts in a professional manner and in line with BCV's mission.

Source: WMFG Research.

Most cantonal banks consider microenterprises as very small SMEs. While in general they offer loans from CHF 100,000 upwards, they have the flexibility to offer lower amounts, as well as limited overdraft facilities. However, these loans and overdraft facilities are costly. As a consequence, they are only given to people with a business that has clear potential to grow into a larger SME.

Suisse Romande is home to 6 Cantonal Banks. In 2007 one of these banks, the Banque Cantonal Vaudoise (BCV) reflected on the lack of profitability of loans under CHF 100,000, and decided it was worth experimenting with a more streamlined product, adapted to the needs of microentrepreneurs. Box H describes this product. The continued availability of this product in 2011 suggests that the bank considers the product commercially viable.

BCV's reduced documentary and collateral requirements make microcredit available to people who previously would not qualify. As a consequence, it is making a significant contribution to financial inclusion.

Other cantonal banks that advertise a loan product under CHF 30,000 are those of Fribourg and Geneva. A subsequent study should document internal changes they have applied, and the relative success of the product tailored to the low end of the market.

Regional banks and savings banks

Regional banks and savings banks are a diverse group of banking institutions, which like the cantonal banks were largely established in the 19th century. They focus on the same activities as small and medium-sized cantonal banks (savings accounts and mortgage loans), but in general they cover a smaller geographical area. The majority are private companies, but some are registered as cooperatives and other legal entities.

In 1971, the majority of these banks founded the Union of Swiss Regional Banks, which in 1994 constituted RBA Holding. Its members are autonomous and there is no centralised management; the Holding provides optional services in areas such as IT. RBA holding currently has 41 members, of which 4 in Suisse Romande. Another 28 regional and savings banks do not belong to RBA, 5 of which are based in Suisse Romande. Since 2004 about 30 banks operate under the Clientis brand, which provides them with better access to the money and capital market as well as logistical services.

Over the past few years many small regional and savings banks have either been merged with or taken over by larger banks, and others have been closed. The remaining banks are mostly based in rural areas.

Regional/savings banks' independence is both a strength and a source for concern. On the one hand it provides them with the freedom to develop their own products. On the other hand, it prevents them from the benefits of shared facilities for product development, training, marketing and the exchange of experience.

The Caisse d'Epargne d'Aubonne, described in the next case study in Box I, is an example of a bank that serves microentrepreneurs. What the Aubonne Savings Bank offers is not necessarily representative for other regional and savings banks. In the absence of a shared policy to promote microenterprises, it remains unclear whether the regional and savings banks are likely to grow their joint microenterprise portfolio.

Box I. Case study— Aubonne Savings Bank (CAE)

Caisse d'Epargne d'Aubonne (CAE) is an independent relationship bank founded in November 1837. It is registered as a cooperative society without share capital and so without members; all its equity is the result of the accumulation of annual profits. In 2010 the Bank's assets amounted to CHF 284 million.

The Bank mainly promotes savings, and invests the majority of its funds in mortgage loans. On behalf of its clients and for its own account, it undertakes all banking operations with the exception of wealth management. CAE is mostly active in the district of Aubonne and surroundings. It is allowed to undertake activities in the whole country.

A small part of CAE's portfolio is dedicated to SME loans and overdraft facilities. CAE provides such loans to registered businesses as well as unregistered own account workers, and is open to applications from people with existing businesses as well as start-ups. Since it is located in a rural area its focus lies on agricultural businesses. In 2010 it had 150 SME loans and overdraft facilities outstanding for a total value of CHF 4 million, and an average value of CHF 270,000. In the course of the year it provided loans or overdraft facilities to approximately 25 SMEs.

Of these, 15 loans or overdraft facilities were micro in the sense of being worth less than CHF 30,000, including some as small as CHF 5,000. This constituted less than 5% of the Caisse's overall portfolio. An important criterion for the approval of a microloan or overdraft facility is whether the entrepreneur is likely to need larger loans or other services in future.

Of the micro portfolio, 65% was completely or partly covered by a real guarantee including mortgages and insurance policies, and 15% by a guarantee provided by the Cantonal Office for Agricultural Credit; 20% was not covered by any guarantee.

CAE charges an application fee of CHF 100, and an interest rate varying between 3.5 and 6.5% depending on the guarantee. Overdraft facilities carry an additional quarterly charge of 0.25% on the value of the largest overdraft taken during the quarter. The interest and fees are not sufficient to cover the costs of giving microloans. However, CAE would not give more microloans if it could charge a higher interest rate, citing no greater demand for the microloans or overdraft facilities they offer.

Source: WMFG Research.

Raiffeisen banks

Today's Raiffeisen banks have their origin in 1862, when Frederik-Wilhelm Raiffeisen, the mayor of the German town of Heddesdorf, wanted to save artisans and peasants from usurious moneylenders. His idea was to collect money from the village community in the form of savings deposits and make these available to the same community in the form of loans — secured against collateral — at affordable interest rates. Raiffeisen Banks are based on cooperative principles, where members are co-owners and therefore have a voice in the general assembly, but also carry part of the risk of the institution.

His idea was copied all over Europe, and the first Raiffeisen Bank was set up in Bichelsee in Switzerland by pastor Johann Traber. In 1902 ten Raiffeisen Banks together formed the Swiss Union of Raiffeisen Banks, now called Raiffeisen

Suisse. Soon Raiffeisen Banks emerged in all corners of the country.

After a period of consolidation and rationalisation, in September 2011 there were 328 legally autonomous Raiffeisen Banks in Switzerland, covering all geographical areas. Their agencies all belong to Raiffeisen Suisse, which coordinates the activities of the Group, puts in place framework conditions for the local banks' commercial activities (IT, infrastructure, refinancing, etc.) and assists them in all areas. Raiffeisen Suisse is also in the process of establishing new Raiffeisen banks in urban areas. It is currently the third most important banking group in Switzerland.

Raiffeisen banks are universal banks. They are funded largely from their own clients' savings, the savings of other Raiffeisen Banks (via a fund managed by Raiffeisen Suisse) and funds that Raiffeisen Suisse borrows on the market. The majority of these funds are invested in mortgage-backed loans to local clients.

At the end of 2010 more than 125,000 SMEs were clients of a Raiffeisen Bank. Among these, over 90% were microenterprises with less than 10 employees. Since most Raiffeisen Banks themselves have less than 10 employees, and they are strongly rooted in the local community, they are well-placed to understand the needs of SMEs.

Raiffeisen Banks have traditionally focused their loan activity on mortgages. Over the past couple of years Raiffeisen Suisse has been encouraging the diversification of risks through a greater focus on business loans, and it intends to intensify this activity over the coming years. To this end, it has set up a network of regional business lending expertise centres, and it offers training to local bank staff in business loan analysis and operations. However, the decision to expand SME lending lies with each individual bank.

The loan products offered to SMEs include Short Term Financing for Working Capital, provided in the form of an overdraft facility or a fixed term loan, and Middle to Long Term Financing for Fixed Goods.

Banque Raiffeisen de la Glâne, described in Box J, is one of the Raiffeisen Banks that is active in providing microloans; it is not representative as some Raiffeisen Banks do not provide any microloans. However, if Raiffeisen Suisse continues to promote SME lending, the 328 Raiffeisen Banks together could become a significant player in the market.

Bank loan guarantee funds

The Swiss federal and cantonal governments have long encouraged bank lending to SMEs through financial support to a series of guarantee funds. Guarantee funds aim to allow viable SMEs with growth potential easier access to bank loans. Banks are not only more inclined to lend to SMEs with guarantees, they also tend to be more flexible on other requirements. In addition, interest rates are often a function of the guarantee solidity.

Box J. Case study— la Glâne Raiffeisen Bank

Banque Raiffeisen de la Glâne (BRG) was formed in the beginning of the 2000s as the result of a merger of several older rural-based Raiffeisen Banks. Its headquarters in the town of Romont, Canton of Fribourg, were opened in 2002. At the end of June 2011 it had CHF 578 million in assets, of which 542 million in credit portfolio.

Historically, BRG has always had a significant number of SMEs among its clients, but their use of the bank was long limited to payment transactions and mortgage-based loans. Following the development of Raiffeisen Suisse' enterprise client strategy, BRG has been starting to offer SMEs a growing range of products. This has been accompanied by the training of SME lending specialists and the offering of this expertise in the form of advice to SMEs. The goal is to make SME clients more profitable to the bank by seeking to become their principal bank.

BRG offers existing microentrepreneurs and people who want to start a business the possibility to obtain a loan. Contrary to other establishments, there is no minimum to the loan amounts that can be offered*. Microentrepreneurs can either get an overdraft facility on current account with an unlimited duration, or a loan with a duration of between 3 and 7 years. While BRG prefers to have real guaranties for both types of financing, they are not a requirement. In September 2011 only 40% of the microcredit portfolio was covered by a guarantee that consisted of property or deposits. Of the remaining microcredit portfolio, 10% was covered by a personal guarantee, 5% by a state-funded Guarantee Cooperative; 45% of the portfolio was not covered by any guarantee.

Microloan interest rates are the same as those charged on loans to larger SMEs, currently varying between 3.5 and 6.5% per year depending on the nature of the guarantee provided. While there are no fees on microloans, overdraft facilities carry a commission of 0.25% per quarter.

BRG gives preference to businesses with high growth potential where the owner has put in some of his or her own capital. A certain proportion of loans is given to independents and to enterprises that are not formalised: registration in the Registre de Commerce and audited financial statements are no absolute requirements. BRG does not have a focus on particular industries, but does try to stay away from a set of sectors that are considered 'high risk', such as restaurants and catering.

In 2010 BRG disbursed 10–15 microloans for a total of CHF 300,000 to 400,000. At the end of the year it had about 100 microloans outstanding, representing less than 1% of its total portfolio.

The main constraint for expanding the microloan portfolio is its high costs: a microloan requires an annual review, whereas mortgage loans to private clients are analysed much less frequently (up to every 15 years). BRG believes that loans under CHF 50,000 cost more than they generate. They are only worthwhile when they are part of larger package of products sold to the same client. While it would be possible to reduce the costs per microloan by increasing the number of loans, demand for microloans is insufficient to justify the investment in staff training that this would require.

BRG is an important economic actor in the region. In line with Raiffeisen Suisse's SME development policy, it plays a determining role in the development of the economic base by acting as a reliable partner for its clients and in particular microenterprises.

Source: WMFG Research.

*Raiffeisen Suisse defines microloans as loans to natural or legal persons below CHF 50,000

At the beginning of this century the 11 guarantee funds, organised as cooperatives, varied greatly in their efficiency and effectiveness. In 2007 a country-wide review resulted in a major overhaul of the system and their merger into 3 regional guarantee cooperatives (Cautionnement Romand, CC Centre and OBTG) and one cooperative especially targeted at female entrepreneurs (SAFFA).

Table 5. Example of credit guarantee cooperative

Guarantee cooperative	Action radius	Minimum guarantee	Average guarantee	Fee	% under 50,000 issued in 2010	Number under 50,000 issued in 2010
Cautionnement Romand	Suisse Romande minus Jura	15,000	165,000	1.25%	14%	29

Source: WMFG research.

The cooperatives' mission is to encourage the creation, development and transfer of enterprises, the development of ideas as well as the creation, maintenance and safeguarding of jobs. To this end, each cooperative offers guarantees for bank loans up to CHF 500,000. A guarantee requires a full analysis by the cooperative in addition to the one already undertaken by the bank. Much of the operational work is delegated to 'antennae' or cantonal outposts, institutions selected for their knowledge of the local economy and their technical competence in supporting SMEs.

When a client defaults, the cooperative pays the bank. It assumes 35% of the losses; the remainder is covered by the Swiss Department for Economic Affairs (SECO). This system ensures that banks are encouraged to lend to clients they would otherwise find too risky, whereas at the same time cooperatives are discouraged from supporting clients with excessive risk.

Clients pay a 1.25% premium to cover the services of the guarantee cooperative. The premium goes towards covering the operational costs of the guarantee cooperative and part of the operational costs of the antennae. The cantonal governments provide capital to the cooperatives in accordance with the latter's commitments in each canton, and they cover part of the operational costs of cantonal outposts.

In 2010 the four cooperatives together approved 442 guarantees for a total value of CHF 83 million and they managed 1654 guarantees for a total value of CHF 215 million. More than half of guarantees were issued to cantonal banks and almost a quarter to regional and savings banks; Raiffeisen banks, big banks and other banks made relatively little use of this tool.

Credit guarantee cooperatives play an increasingly significant role in the promotion of SME loans by banks. However, there seems to be a move away from smaller loans, and it is possible that this is caused by the fact that the cooperatives have to cover their costs from the guarantee fees that they charge. Since these are a fixed percentage of the loans they back, the incentive is to push for an increase of the upper loan limit.

Box K describes the largest of the four cooperatives, Cautionnement Romand, and Table 5 summarises this case study.

4.3.2 What is the role of non-banks?

Economic promotion loan funds

All Swiss cantons and some cities have established economic development funds that invest in small and medium-sized enterprises. In most cases the funds seek to invest in

Box K. Case study—Cautionnement Romand

Cautionnement Romand (CR), previously known as the Credit Cooperative for SMEs in French-Speaking Switzerland (CRC-PME), covers the cantons of Fribourg, Geneve, Neuchatel, Valais and Vaud. Responsible for managing commitments to 824 clients to the tune of CHF 90 million it is the largest of the three regional guarantee funds.

In 2010 CR provided new guarantees for 209 bank loans, 83% of which were for loans to enterprises with up to 9 employees. According to its policies CR can provide loans as low as CHF 15,000 for projects worth as little as CHF 30,000; in 2010 14% of guarantees provided were for loans under CHF 50,000. This shows a certain commitment to microenterprises.

However, guarantees for microloans are not a focus area for CR. The cooperative requires a minimum of CHF 20,000 of own capital on the client's balance sheet and a proven annual revenue of CHF 100,000. In addition, over the past 5 years the average guarantee size approved has increased from CHF 80,000 to CHF 165,000. CR has been requesting an increase in the maximum loan size to CHF 1 million.

In the same year CR absorbed losses on 46 projects, resulting in a higher loss rate than the other cooperatives. CR states that it pursues this higher risk strategy to help ensure the preservation of valuable local expertise and employment.

In 2010 CR's costs were CHF 2.5 million, including CHF 1.4 million in honoured guarantees (i.e. payments to banks for clients who defaulted). Income from risk premiums and other fees covered about half of these costs. The government needed to provide only CHF 1.1 million to keep CR operating, which is a small amount, considering that CR managed CHF 90 million in loans that would otherwise not have been issued.

CR has equity capital of CHF 18m, and is currently responsible for CHF 23m (25%) of the total commitments it manages. Since usual banking criteria recommend the provision of guarantees for up to 2.5 times equity, it has considerable potential to increase its engagement in the sector.

innovative companies that are considered too risky by banks, but that have a potential to turn into enterprises that generate both significant employment and tax income for the supporting government. While some of these funds are fully funded by a government agency, in other cases private funders are sought to complement the funds. In some cases they collaborate closely with universities and polytechnics.

The landscape of economic promotion funds is very fragmented, with each one managing a small amount of money and focusing on its particular region or town. Few funds have full time staff; decisions generally are taken by boards consisting of a combination of government officials and private sector representatives who do not necessarily have experience in fund management or SME support. The set up of the funds does not encourage venturing into the labour-intensive and specialized business of providing microloans to businesses set up by people who would otherwise be unemployed.

While a large number of loan funds are supported by local and cantonal authorities, almost none of them consider loan

Table 6. Economic promotion loan funds in Suisse Romande

	Action radius	Average loan	Maximum loan	Average duration	Annual interest	Guarantee	Number of loans issued in 2010
Finergence	Canton of Neuchatel	100,000	100,000	2 years	0%	n.a.	3
Fondation pour l'Innovation Technologique (FIT)	Canton of Vaud	90,000	300,000	n.a.	0%	n.a.	5
Financer Autrement les Entreprises	Canton of Geneve	n.a.	250,000	n.a.	n.a.	Real guarantee	n.a.
Fondetec ^a	City of Geneva	77,000	500,000	3–5 years	5%	Life insurance	26
Fonds Capital Developpement	Region of Lausanne	n.a.	50,000	5+ years	Inflation	Depends	n.a.
Fondation Seed Capital Fribourg ^b	Canton of Fribourg	120,000	200,000	n.a.	0%	No guarantee	2

Source: WMFG research.

^a42% of loans under 50,000.

^bThe average loan is an objective. The organisation was set up in 2010.

requests under CHF 100,000. Table 6 provides an overview of the principal ones active in Suisse Romande that aim to support very small enterprises, and that can provide loans under CHF 30,000. As can be seen, for several of these organisations microloans are only a small part of their portfolio.

Fondetec is an exception in that it explicitly seeks to support some microbusinesses as an alternative to unemployment, and that it does not make innovation a requirement. Box L offers more details on Fondetec.

Box L. Case study—Fondetec

Fondetec was established in 1997 as a private foundation with a CHF 20 million capital donation from the Municipality of Geneva. Its Board of Directors is composed of representatives of the political parties that constitute the Municipal Council.

Fondetec aims to promote new enterprises that create employment, to support and develop existing enterprises and to stimulate innovation in the town of Geneva. To this end, it provides loans, guarantees and help in restructurings. Fondetec charges an inscription fee of CHF 300 as well as an interest rate of 5%. Besides a personal pledge, in principal it requires no other guarantee than a life insurance for 120% of the value of the loan.

In 2010 Fondetec approved 26 applications for loans or guarantees for an average value of CHF 75,000. Of these, 10 were for values under CHF 50,000 and none was for a value higher than CHF 200,000. At the end of 2010 Fondetec was managing 74 loans and guarantees and a total loan portfolio of CHF 3.5 million.

The income from activities over 2010 was CHF 230,000 whereas the total operational costs including loan losses were 1.62 million, leading to an operational loss of CHF 1.39 million. This amount was debited to the foundation's capital.

By the end of the year Fondetec was left with CHF 6.5 million in capital. This does not include the donation of CHF 10 million the Municipal Government approved in the same year to recapitalise the foundation.

Source: WMFG research.

Microcredit associations

Switzerland has a multitude of private associations and foundations that support entrepreneurs, but most of them only provide business development services and assist clients in applying for a bank loan. Two associations see microcredit as a core activity. They are described in Table 7.¹⁹

19. The Fonds d'Innovation of the Banque Alternative Suisse is somewhat of a hybrid: an association created by a bank. In 2010 it issued 6 very small loans, but none under CHF 30,000. For further information, please see Annex A.

Table 7. Microcredit associations in Suisse Romande

	Action radius	Average loan	Maximum loan	Average duration	Annual interest	Guarantee	Number of loans issued in 2010
Microcredit Solidaire	Switzerland	18,000	30,000	1–4 years	3.5–5%	Life insurance	30
Reseau Entreprendre Romandie ^a	Suisse Romande	29,000	60,000	5 years	0%	No guarantee	0

Source: WMFG research.

^aAverage of the portfolio of Reseau Entreprendre International (the Suisse Romande section was only set up in 2010).

Microcrédit Solidaire, described in Box M, is currently the only organisation that exclusively provides collateral-free loans under CHF 30,000, and that charges an interest rate comparable to that charged by banks. It was joined in 2010 by Reseau Entreprendre Romandie, a chapter of Reseau Entreprendre International. The Romandie chapter did not yet start lending in 2010; it is hoped that the 510 loans made by the international network in 2010 are an indication of its future activities in Switzerland.

Box M. Case study—Microcrédit Solidaire

Microcrédit Solidaire is a non-profit association originally established in 1998 by George Aegler, who was inspired by Mohammad Yunus' pioneering work in Bangladesh, and adapted his microcredit methodology to the Swiss context.

MS's official goal is to help people with an original idea but no access to bank loans due to a lack of guarantees, by providing them with a microloan and coaching services.

MS provides loans of up to CHF 30,000 without requiring any other guarantee than a life and an unemployment insurance policy. The loans are for a period of 4 years or more and have to be paid back in monthly instalments. The interest rate varies between 3.5 and 5% depending on the client. A set of volunteer experts provide personalised coaching to all loan applicants at the project formulation stage as well as during the repayment period of the loan.

While in the first 10 years of its existence MS issued an average of 10 loans per year, in 2010 it stepped up activities and issued 30 loans. Of these, 60% were issued to women and 43% were issued to people who were previously unemployed. 64% of loans went to finance activities in the area of independent trading, distribution and a diversity of services. The average loan size was CHF 18,133.

The recent growth in the number of issued loans is partly thanks to a new partnership with the local government department of the canton of Vaud which is responsible for the unemployed. Under this partnership it entertained loan requests from people on a so-called 'reinsertion income,' a kind of unemployment benefit that allows a person to start-up a business without having the obligation to apply for jobs. MS received a subsidy to cover the costs of serving these clients. It is hoped that a partnership with Soroptimist International will result in another significant increase in the number of clients over 2011–2013.

At the end of 2010, MS had total assets of CHF 805,000 of which a portfolio of microloans outstanding of CHF 536,000. Assets are largely the result of capital donations. MS' income from credit operations of CHF 30,000 covered 12% of its operational costs. These costs included those of depreciation and provisions, but not those of its 24 volunteer experts, who offered their services for free. The difference between operational income and expenditure was covered by donations from a range of private and public sponsors.

5 Analysis

5.1 How do banks and non-commercial micro-loan providers differ?

We saw in Chapter 4 that both banks and non-commercial institutions provide services that fall into our definition of microloans: low values, flexible guarantee requirements and reasonable interest rates. So what are the principal differences between these types of providers? Three important differences are eligibility criteria, documentary requirements and non-financial support.

Non-commercial institutions that focus on microcredit generally have a series of target groups. For example, Microcrédit Solidaire specifically targets women, immigrants and the unemployed. It markets its services among these groups and has worked out collaborative arrangements with the cantonal authorities to get access to these groups. Subsidised institutions in other countries go as far as targeting ex-convicts and people with a history of indebtedness. Banks, on the other hand, do not tend to seek out the most difficult to serve: they offer a product that may be interesting to the poor but do not measure their results by the number of loans provided to the most vulnerable. People with an account at the bank that shows their past income and expenditure pattern have a definite advantage.

All lending institutions require a series of documents to back up the loan application. These generally include a business plan, proof of business registration, extracts from the credit bureau and, in the case of existing businesses, the balance sheets and income statements over the previous years. An important difference is that while banks have to obey the Basel Committee's Know Your Customer requirements, non-commercial institutions are free to omit a document if they feel this is not required. It should be noted, however, that banks have some flexibility: BCV has managed to reduce documentary requirements for microloans while still staying within the Basel rules.

Finally, non-commercial lenders generally provide more or less intensive coaching to their clients, based on the assumption that this will increase the likelihood of repayment. This coaching may include help in the preparation of the loan application and the accompanying documents. Banks, on the other hand, do not provide coaching. In general a client who requires a coaching referral is not considered ready for a loan; in exceptional cases will banks make the use of coaching services a requirement for the loan.

5.2 Why do non-commercial providers struggle to achieve outreach?

Chapter 4 has shown that some economic promotion funds and associations reach out to the poor, as evidenced by the profile of their clients and the low loan sizes disbursed. However, they reach very small numbers of clients. Why is this the case? A number of possible explanations present themselves: lack of demand, inappropriate structures, low productivity and a lack of funding.

In terms of demand, we have seen that it is likely that a considerable proportion of poor people have some kind of income-generating activity to supplement welfare payments and unemployment benefits. All non-commercial providers

require clients to formalise their business; they often provide help in the process of registration. However, there are many reasons why poor people do not wish to formalise their business. Formalisation not only involves the risk of losing access to state benefits, it also makes the business visible to the tax authorities, thus reducing the take-home income for the entrepreneur. As a consequence, only a small proportion of the poor is interested in a microloan.

Economic promotion loan funds usually cover a limited area such as a canton or a city; in other words, economic promotion is highly fragmented. In an effort to minimise costs, the subsidising authorities often propose a structure without permanent staff; loan analysis and decision-making are carried out by a board that meets periodically, and practical matters are executed by local government staff as part of a wider set of tasks. While this structure is effective in reducing costs, the lack of dedicated resources also results in a lack of marketing and outreach to make the fund known. The structure often contains few incentives to increase the level of activities.

Associations, on the other hand, generally employ a small team of dedicated staff and/or rely on good-willing volunteers. Even if non-profit staff tend to earn less than bankers' salaries, at current levels of productivity interest income is insufficient to cover their wages. In addition, it is difficult to expect high productivity from unpaid volunteers. Finally, the scarcity of microcredit associations in Switzerland leads to an absence of more efficient business models to copy or with which to compete.

Since microenterprise promotion for poverty alleviation is not a national or cantonal priority, the budget dedicated to economic promotion funds for microloans is almost always limited. The limited impact of non-governmental organisations does not motivate private sponsors to provide more funding than they currently do.

5.3 What keeps banks from serving the market?

Chapter 4 showed that many of today's banks were founded by people who had a vision of helping the financially excluded and the poor. While nowadays some banks in Switzerland provide microloans, the majority of those that do dedicate only a very small portion of their portfolio to this market. In addition, many banks do not even start to consider a loan unless it is above CHF 100,000. Swiss banks face the same problem as their peers in the surrounding countries: they believe that the costs and risks of microlending do not justify the benefits. But why do they seem to be even more reticent to provide microloans?

Big banks are not structured for microlending. Switzerland's name in banking is largely built on its success in wealth management and investment banking. Policy support and good returns have encouraged larger banks to focus on these areas, and internal structures have thus been built around large transactions for relatively well-off clients and large businesses. Global strategies and internal incentives do not encourage an investment in dedicated structures for the relative small national market for microloans, even if this can be served profitably.

Smaller banks in Switzerland do not have access to a large enough market for microloans. They are high in number and their business is generally restricted to a certain geographical

area; this necessarily means that the number of potential clients for microloans they can serve is also small. This does not encourage the development of dedicated products and the investment in staff training that is required to do microlending well. Geographical restrictions also do not permit the diversification of risks and the achievement of economies of scale, both necessary to conduct the business profitably.

There is little political encouragement for microlending. Swiss federal and cantonal governments' employment policies focus on creating innovative SMEs. Unlike in the European Union, there is no supranational body that promotes microloans and offers technical as well as financial support to institutions that wish to play an active role.

Microloan providers rarely exchange knowledge and experience of microlending inside Switzerland or with the surrounding countries. There is no Swiss network of microloan providers, and only Microcrédit Solidaire is a member of the European Microfinance Network.

5.4 How important are business development services?

An important distinction between non-commercial microloan providers and banks is that in general the former provide business development services (BDS) to their clients, whereas the latter do not. We saw in Chapter 2 that BDS include coaching, training, advice and access to networks. The debate on whether microloan providers themselves should offer BDS is unresolved.

All microloan providers agree that Switzerland's legal environment is highly complex, making setting up or even running a business a considerable challenge. While the federal government department for economic affairs (SECO) has been working on the simplification and streamlining of procedures for SMEs, meeting all the requirements is beyond the capacities of many microentrepreneurs.

Non-commercial microloan providers see their principal role as the inclusion of the financially excluded. They feel that BDS, and in particular coaching and advice, are a necessary ingredient to ensure that those people who are currently not considered credit-worthy become potential microloan clients. BDS is what will help to generate a greater pool of entrepreneurs who will eventually be eligible for bank loans.

Banks on the other hand often look at microlending as a social responsibility, and in some cases as a long term investment in clients who at some point may become profitable. They do not see BDS as their task, for a series of reasons. Since they generally make a loss on loans under CHF 30,000, they do not want to spend even more money on those clients by providing them with BDS. In addition, they are specialised in financial services and do not necessarily have BDS expertise. Finally, the combination of credit and BDS can create a conflict of interest: a bank that has provided coaching services to an enterprise that comes into trouble may have difficulties in recovering bad debts.

In principle banks could rely on specialised BDS providers to supply them with potential clients. However, as we saw in Chapter 2, most BDS providers consider microentrepreneurs as a subgroup of SMEs; our research has shown that virtually none of them have developed services that are tailored to

the needs of unemployed people who wish to formalise or set up a business.

The overall problem that results from this is that there are insufficient BDS targeted at people who wish to set up an enterprise as a way out of unemployment, and as a consequence the market for microloans is very small. In turn, the apparent lack of a market results in little funding for non-commercial microloan providers and too little investment in the development of dedicated products by banks.

6 Time for action

6.1 Why now?

As we write this report, protestors on the streets of many Western countries are expressing their disdain for bankers and accusing them of making money on the backs of the common man. What a contrast with the middle of the 19th century, when the founders of many small banks were among the most respected individuals in the community. After all, these were the men who invested their capital in an institution seeking to bring financial services to those who until then had been relegated to their family's scarce savings and to usurious moneylenders for loans. They were social entrepreneurs ahead of their time.

What better time for Swiss bankers to reflect back upon their roots, the grassroot banking ideals of those early visionaries that lay the groundwork for the country's current banking industry? It is not easy to regain the trust of the people, but reaching out to those people who even now remain excluded from the financial system is certainly one way to help re-establish the high respect in which Switzerland's banking industry was once held. It is also a way to assist in compensating the effects of the banking crisis on the most vulnerable in society.

If earlier on banks were hesitant to offer tiny business loans to people unable to offer a real guarantee because it was simply too costly and too risky to do so, that excuse no longer exists. Pioneer institutions like ADIE in France and BCV in Switzerland have now proven that it is possible to cover most if not all of the costs and risks of such microloans from interest income through changes in lending methodology coupled with a focus on scale. In addition, Raiffeisen Banks and Savings Banks in Switzerland have shown that it is worth cross-subsidising the smallest loans from other products sold to the same client or from larger loans, since this will pay off in the long run. Finally, associations like Microcrédit Solidaire and economic promotion funds such as Fondetec have shown that even the most vulnerable can be made bankable provided they are offered the business development services they need.

The only remaining excuse for not serving the poor might be that the market for microloans is not big enough to be profitable. Is it though? This is difficult to say: measuring demand for a product that does not exist is fraught with methodological difficulties. Certainly BCV's continued investment in its microloan product in the canton of Vaud and Postfinance's recent active marketing of its overdraft facility for microenterprises countrywide suggest that at least two banks think it is worth testing this out.

6.2 What needs to be done?

Microlending is not just a matter of a decision to issue very small loans. It requires the development of highly simplified and standardised systems and processes to ensure the tiny bit of interest that such loans generate cover the costs of their analysis, delivery and recovery. It also requires a business strategy that involves covering costs through the achievement of significant economies of scale. The past two decades have seen major progress in the documentation and dissemination of strategies and methodologies for profitable microlending.

An increase in microlending in Switzerland first of all requires the dissemination of knowledge and experience among all microloan providers, both existing and potential. We believe there would be much benefit to the creation of a Swiss network of banks, associations and economic promotion funds which would be charged with that task. It would be useful if the network could encourage microlenders to share their lending methodologies and lessons learnt. This would include the sharing of data on numbers and volumes of microloans as well as indicators on efficiency and profitability. The network should also tap into international knowledge on microlending collected by the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP) and the European Microfinance Network (EMN).

A major challenge in Switzerland is the fact that most banks and economic promotion funds operate within restricted geographical areas such as cantons, districts and towns. This makes it difficult to achieve the kind of economies of scale necessary to make a microloan product profitable.

It is necessary to explore creative ways of resolving this issue. One way is through joint investments in product development and staff training. Raiffeisen Suisse already undertakes these tasks on behalf of all its member banks and could consider doing the same for a separate microloan product; cantonal banks, savings banks and economic promotion funds could consider similar arrangements. Another way to achieve scale is by extending microloan services beyond the geographical limits that exist for other products. The statutes of some savings banks already permit them to serve the entire country; it is just a matter of deciding to make use of the possibility for the microloan product.

Another way to overcome the geographical limitations issue is to increase the size of the local market. A much larger number of people would demand microloans if they had access to business development services that helped them formalise or create their business. Microcrédit Solidaire and Fondetec already provide varying levels of such services to the most vulnerable and should step up the volume. Banks should systematically assess the quality and efficiency of specialised business development providers that serve the smallest, and select the best for long term collaboration. Alternatively, they could develop a joint microenterprise coaching service funded from their social responsibility budgets.

What is the role of the government in all this? International experience shows that microenterprises founded principally for self-employment have different needs from SMEs. There are good arguments for supplementing the federal government's SME policy with a specific microenterprise policy. Whereas the government does not, in principle, advise banks, it could put in place policies that would create the right incentives. The current set-up of the credit guarantee cooperatives it co-funds implies incentives to guarantee larger loans; this is worth reconsidering. Other instruments used internationally include adjustments to banks' capital requirements for microloans and tax discounts on the income earned on microloans.

Local governments play an important role in the funding of both microloan and BDS providers. In line with the recommendations above, they could look into possibilities for consolidating some of the functions of the different economic promotion loan funds. In addition, they could pay special attention to efficient BDS providers specialized in preparing the most vulnerable for bank loans. It would also be useful if they could co-fund a possible microenterprise BDS advisory service that might be established jointly by the banks.

WMFG believes that the implementation of the above suggestions will contribute to ensuring that the people at risk of poverty in Switzerland have access to microcredit and BDS, and thus that the country's wealth is shared among all its people including those at the bottom of the pyramid. ■



Annex
Compendium of Microenterprise
Service Providers

Compendium of Microenterprise Service Providers

This compendium contains detailed information on two sets of organisations:

1. Organisations that provide microloans and guarantees for microloans (loans under CHF 30,000), often as part of their SME loan portfolio
2. Organisations that provide coaching, support and/or advice to people wishing to start or formalise a business (usually not distinguishing between SMEs and microenterprises)

The purpose of the compendium is to provide a sketch of the landscape of service providers to which unemployed people can turn if they wish to formalise or establish a business. While an effort has been made to identify the most significant service providers, the compendium does not seek to be exhaustive.

Any apparent focus on the cantons of Geneva and Vaud is unintentional. It is the consequence of:

- The local authorities' relative success in making an inventory of the service providers in their respective canton
- The explicit focus of organisations in these cantons on support to small and new SMEs

1. Organisations that provide microloans and microguarantees

As discussed in the report to which this compendium is an annex, these organisations can be subdivided into:

- 1.1 Non-banks:
 - 1.1.1 Economic promotion loan funds
 - 1.1.2 Associations
- 1.2 Banks and related institutions:
 - 1.2.1 Banks
 - 1.2.2 Non-profit bank loan funds
 - 1.2.3 Guarantee cooperatives

This section of the compendium includes those organisations that provide both microloans and coaching services.

2. Organisations that provide coaching, support and advice to microentrepreneurs

These organisations can be subdivided into:

- 2.1 Local economic promotion agencies
 - 2.1.1 Cantonal authorities
 - 2.1.2 Organisations for regional and district promotion (examples)
- 2.2 Enterprise associations
 - 2.2.1 Cantonal chambers of commerce
 - 2.2.2 Other employers' organisations (examples)
- 2.3 Specialised organisations for coaching, support and advice
 - 2.3.1 National
 - 2.3.2 Suisse romande
 - 2.3.3 Cantonal (examples)
- 2.4 Websites with useful information for start-ups

Local economic promotion agencies are generally initiated by governments at the cantonal and sub-cantonal level; private actors may be members of the agencies and co-fund their activities. The agencies normally assist existing and potential entrepreneurs in their dealings with the local administration, and orient them towards other competent organisations that are able to respond to their needs. Most cantonal agencies also offer a variety of guarantees and subsidies; where they have a fund that issues microloans it should be included in Section 1. This compendium includes all cantonal agencies but only some examples of the dozens of sub-cantonal agencies.

Enterprise associations include chambers of commerce as well as employers' organisations (employers' unions and arts & crafts unions), sector organisations and professional associations. Their principal goal is the provision of services to and the representation of the interests of their members. However, some of them offer specific support to people wishing to start up a business. This compendium includes information on a few enterprise associations that advertise such specialised services.

Specialised organisations for coaching, support and advice have a multitude of origins. Most of them only provide services to selected entrepreneurs and focus on innovative businesses with a high potential for growth. The compendium excludes initiatives that are linked to specific universities because they tend to focus on existing students, as well as incubators because they tend to be open to only a very small number of high potential entrepreneurs.

Caveat

The information in this compendium is mostly based on research executed over the course of 2011. Information from websites and other public sources has in some cases been complemented with data collected through a survey and in-depth interviews. While every effort has been made to ensure that the information presented correctly reflects the institutions' goals, activities and terms of services, WMFG cannot be held responsible for any errors or misinterpretations. Users are strongly recommended to visit the website of each organisation for the most up-to-date information.

1.1 Institutions non-bancaires

1.1.1 Fonds de prêt de promotion économique



Finergence

Fondation pour le financement initial
d'entreprises novatrices

Institution	Finergence (Fondation pour le Financement Initial d'Entreprises Novatrices)
Type d'institution	Fondation
Rayon d'action	Canton de Neuchâtel
Année de création	2003
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apporter un soutien matériel au lancement de projets à caractère innovateur, scientifique et technologique • Fournir le capital initial (ou seed-money) en amont de l'intervention d'autres partenaires financiers tels que capital-risqueurs et banquiers
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Société de capitaux : prêt qui peut être accompagné d'un prêt convertible à la société • Conseils et supports fournis sous forme de parrainage ou par un coach • Projets agréés para Neode Parc Scientifique et Technologique
Clients éligibles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projets agréés para Neode Parc Scientifique et Technologique • Autres projets à caractère innovateur, scientifique ou technologique
Taille du prêt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum : CHF 500,000 (le 1er versement ne pourra cependant pas excéder les CHF 300,000) • Moyen : CHF 100,000
Durée du prêt	2 ans
Charges	Taux d'intérêt annuel : 0%
Garantie	Soit en blanc, soit avec garantie
Site web	www.finergence.ch
Email	Info@finergence.ch
Téléphone	032 722 15 15
Adresse	Rue de la Serre 4 Case Postale 2012 2001 Neuchâtel

1.1 Institutions non-bancaires

1.1.1 Fonds de prêt de promotion économique



Institution	Fondation pour l'Innovation Technologique (FIT)
Type d'institution	Fondation
Rayon d'action	Canton de Vaud
Année de création	1994
Mission générale	Apporter un soutien au développement de projets à contenu technologique innovant présentant de grandes chances de faisabilité technique et économique, et donc des possibilités d'aboutir à la création ou au développement d'entreprises
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Un encadrement pour le jeune entrepreneur dans l'établissement de son plan d'affaire en vue de ses premiers contacts avec des clients, fournisseurs, distributeurs ou partenaires • Un accès à des prestations de coaching, pourvues par des prestataires de services tels que le PSE ou la CTI • Un accès aux locaux du PSE, à proximité des laboratoires de l'EPFL et de l'UNIL • Un accès à un réseau professionnel pour toutes questions de nature légale, financière, technologique ou organisationnelle • L'octroi de prêts pouvant représenter la moitié du budget global du projet
Clients éligibles	Projets réalisés en collaboration avec une des Hautes Ecoles de Suisse Romande, et encore en phase très initiale
Taille du prêt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum annuel : CHF 100,000 • Moyenne annuelle : CHF 90,000 • Maximum total : CHF 300,000
Durée du prêt	3 ans au plus
Charges	Taux d'intérêt annuel : 0 %
Site web	www.fondation-fit.ch
Email	admin@fondation-fit.ch
Téléphone	021 613 35 35
Adresse	Chambre Vaudoise du Commerce et de l'Industrie A. d'Ouchy 47 - CP 315 1001 Lausanne

1.1 Institutions non-bancaires

1.1.1 Fonds de prêt de promotion économique



Institution	FAE (Financer Autrement les Entreprises)
Type d'institution	Fondation
Rayon d'action	Canton de Genève
Année de création	2006
Mission générale	Accompagner des PME existantes ou en création dont le développement présente un intérêt pour le canton en termes d'emplois et de savoir-faire
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garantie de remboursement des crédits bancaires commerciaux ou leasing jusqu'à CHF 4 Mio maximum • Renforcement des fonds propres en réalisant une prise de participation minoritaire au capital jusqu'à CHF 4 Mio maximum • Avance de liquidités de CHF 250,000 maximum contre la cession de factures ouvertes • Contribution au financement de mandats d'évaluation, d'accompagnement et/ou d'audit • Cautionnement solidaire pour un crédit commercial jusqu'à CHF 500,000 octroyé par Cautionnement Romand
Clients éligibles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entreprise localisée dans le canton de Genève, à but lucratif et dont la viabilité est démontrée • Avantage compétitif identifiable • Impact sur le maintien ou la création d'emplois • Respect des conventions collectives et des principes du développement durable
Taille du prêt	Maximum : CHF 250,000
Durée du prêt	n/d
Charges	n/d
Site web	www.fae-ge.ch
Email	fae@fae-ge.ch
Téléphone	022 827 42 84
Adresse	14, Avenue Industrielle CH-1227 Carouge

1.1 Institutions non-bancaires

1.1.1 Fonds de prêt de promotion économique



Institution	Fondetec (Fondation pour le Développement des Emplois et du Tissu Economique en ville de Genève)
Type d'institution	Fondation de droit public
Rayon d'action	Ville de Genève
Année de création	1997
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promouvoir de nouvelles entreprises créatrices d'emplois • Soutenir et développer des entreprises existantes • Stimuler l'innovation
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cautionnement • Prêts directs • Aide à la restructuration
Clients éligibles	Toute entreprise
Taille du prêt	Maximum : CHF 500,000
Durée du prêt	3–5 ans
Charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frais d'inscription non-remboursable : CHF 300 • Taux d'intérêt annuel : 5%
Garantie	En fonction du cas
Site web	www.fondetec.ch
Email	Fondetec@fondetec.ch
Téléphone	022 338 03 60
Adresse	Rue Hugo-de-Senger 3 1205 Genève

1.1 Institutions non-bancaires

1.1.1 Fonds de prêt de promotion économique



Institution	Fonds Capital Développement
Type d'institution	Fonds
Rayon d'action	Les 26 communes membres de Lausanne Région
Année de création	2006
Mission générale	Promouvoir la création d'entreprises novatrices
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	Prêts
Clients éligibles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Le projet doit présenter un caractère novateur et doit concerner la conception, la production, la distribution et/ou la commercialisation de biens et de services • Il doit s'inscrire dans une perspective de développement durable, de respect des réglementations légales en vigueur, en particulier des conventions collectives de travail et de respect de l'éthique commerciale • Sont toutefois exclus du champ de financement les projets en phase recherche et développement • Sont aussi exclus les métiers liés à la restauration ou apparentés • Les prêts ne sont pas destinés à financer le fonds de roulement du bénéficiaire
Taille du prêt	Maximum: CHF 50,000
Durée du prêt	5 ans ou plus
Charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taux d'inscription : CHF 150 • Taux d'intérêt annuel : 0% • Les prêts intègrent une compensation de l'inflation
Garantie	En fonction du cas
Site web	http://lausanne-region.cms3.geomatic.ch/xml_1/internet/FR/application/d17/d49/f73.cfm
Email	a.rochat@lausanneregion.ch
Téléphone	021 613 73 33
Adresse	Lausanne Région Av. de Rhodanie 2 Case postale 49 1000 Lausanne 6

1.1 Institutions non-bancaires

1.1.1 Fonds de prêt de promotion économique



Institution	Fondation Seed Capital Fribourg
Type d'institution	Fondation
Rayon d'action	Canton de Fribourg
Année de création	2010
Mission générale	Favoriser l'innovation dans l'économie fribourgeoise, notamment en contribuant au financement et au développement d'entreprises ou de futures entreprises dans les domaines à haute valeur ajoutée, scientifique et technologique, présentant un intérêt économique évident pour le canton de Fribourg. Il s'agit ici de susciter et d'encourager des vocations entrepreneuriales, notamment au sein de nos universités, instituts de recherche et hautes écoles.
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prêts • Dans certains cas, aussi une prise de participations directes dans la société détenant le projet
Clients éligibles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrant dans leur première phase de développement • Orientés vers les domaines à forte valeur ajoutée, scientifiques ou technologiques • Répondant à un besoin du marché et démontrant un potentiel commercial
Taille du prêt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum : CHF 200,000 • Le financement du projet sera en principe réalisé par tranches successives en fonction de l'avancement du projet selon une planification clairement définie par un contrat établi entre la Fondation et le porteur de projet
Durée du prêt	n/d
Charges	Avec ou sans intérêt
Garantie	Aucune
Site web	http://www.seedcapital-fr.ch/v1.0/
Email	info@seedcapital-fr.ch
Téléphone	026 425 46 14
Adresse	CP 1248 Avenue de Beauregard 1 1701 Fribourg

1.1 Institutions non-bancaires

1.1.2 Associations de microcrédit



Institution	Microcrédit Solidaire
Type d'institution	Association
Rayon d'action	Suisse
Année de création	1998
Mission générale	Aider des personnes qui visent l'indépendance économique par la création d'une petite entreprise ayant son siège en Suisse mais qui n'ont pas, à cette fin, accès au crédit bancaire, notamment faute de pouvoir fournir toutes les garanties usuellement exigées.
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Évaluation : Des conseils et une expertise pour évaluer la faisabilité et la viabilité de votre projet • Financement : Un microcrédit pour démarrer ou assurer une activité économique et rémunératrice pour l'entrepreneur • Accompagnement : Un programme de suivi individuel visant à soutenir l'évolution financière et économique de la microentreprise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Pendant la phase d'élaboration du projet – Lors du démarrage (durant la première année ou davantage) – Sur demande
Clients éligibles	Tous
Taille du prêt	Maximum : CHF 30,000
Durée du prêt	Maximum 5 ans
Charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frais d'ouverture de dossier : CHF 150 (50 pour les demandeurs d'emploi) • Frais de traitement CHF 150–500 selon la valeur du prêt • Taux d'intérêt annuel : 3.5–5%
Garantie	Assurance vie
Site web	www.microcredit-solidaire.ch
Email	ms@microcredit-solidaire.ch
Téléphone	021 646 94 93
Adresse	Pré-du-Marché 23 1004 Lausanne

1.1 Institutions non-bancaires

1.1.2 Associations de microcrédit



Institution	Réseau Entreprendre Romandie
Type d'institution	Association
Rayon d'action	Suisse Romande
Année de création	2010
Mission générale	Identifier, faire émerger et réussir de nouveaux entrepreneurs, créateurs ou repreneurs d'entreprises significativement porteuses d'emplois, et de leur apporter toute l'aide utile pour concrétiser et pérenniser leur projet. L'originalité de Réseau Entreprendre® International tient à son action orientée vers les projets à potentiel en termes de création d'emplois ainsi qu'à l'engagement de chefs d'entreprise bénévoles qui, non seulement, accompagnent les nouveaux entrepreneurs, mais encore animent et financent le fonctionnement de l'association.
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Une aide à l'élaboration de projet et une validation par des chefs d'entreprise • Un prêt d'honneur • Un accompagnement humain de proximité par un chef d'entreprise en activité pendant une durée minimale de 2 ans • Un club d'échanges, d'entraide et de formation avec d'autres nouveaux entrepreneurs • L'accès à un réseau international unique de chefs d'entreprise
Clients éligibles	Les projets à potentiel en termes de création d'emplois
Taille du prêt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum : CHF 20,000 • Maximum : CHF 60,000
Durée du prêt	5 ans
Charges	Taux d'intérêt annuel : 0%
Site web	http://www.reseau-entreprendre.org/site/fr/s01_home/s01p01_home.php
Email	romandie.entreprendre@bluewin.ch
Téléphone	079 706 73 81
Adresse	n/d

1.2 Institutions bancaires et organisations liées

1.2.1 Banques



Institution	Banque Cantonale de Fribourg (BCF)
Type d'institution	Banque Cantonale
Rayon d'action	Canton de Genève
Mission générale	<p>En matière de collaboration avec sa clientèle des entreprises, les Banques Cantonales misent sur une relation de partenariat caractérisée par une confiance mutuelle.</p> <p>A l'instar des PME, la maximisation du profit à court terme n'est pas une priorité des Banques Cantonales. En revanche, un partenariat stable et prospère à moyen et à long terme, constitue l'un de leurs objectifs prioritaires. Au sein de ce partenariat, les Banques Cantonales peuvent soutenir les entreprises en leur proposant des conseils professionnels et en leur offrant une vaste gamme de produits et services. Grâce à la diversification de cette offre, les différents besoins des clients PME sont individuellement pris en charge.</p>
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	Crédit en compte courant
Clients éligibles	Entreprises
Taille du prêt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum : aucune • Maximum : aucune
Durée du prêt	Indéterminée
Charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taux d'intérêt variable, dès 4.5% • Commission trimestrielle de 0.25%
Site web	www.bcf.ch
Email	info@bcf.ch
Téléphone	0848 223 223
Adresse	Boulevard de Pérolles 1 1701 Fribourg

1.2 Institutions bancaires et organisations liées

1.2.1 Banques



Institution	Banque Cantonale de Genève (BCGE)
Type d'institution	Banque Cantonale
Rayon d'action	Canton de Genève
Mission générale	<p>En matière de collaboration avec sa clientèle des entreprises, les Banques Cantonales misent sur une relation de partenariat caractérisée par une confiance mutuelle.</p> <p>A l'instar des PME, la maximisation du profit à court terme n'est pas une priorité des Banques Cantonales. En revanche, un partenariat stable et prospère à moyen et à long terme, constitue l'un de leurs objectifs prioritaires. Au sein de ce partenariat, les Banques Cantonales peuvent soutenir les entreprises en leur proposant des conseils professionnels et en leur offrant une vaste gamme de produits et services. Grâce à la diversification de cette offre, les différents besoins des clients PME sont individuellement pris en charge.</p>
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	Prêt professionnel sans ou avec amortissement
Clients éligibles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Petites entreprises • Indépendants • Professions libérales
Taille du prêt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum : CHF 20,000 • Maximum : CHF 150,000
Durée du prêt	3, 4 ou 5 ans
Charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taux d'intérêt fixe • Aucune commission trimestrielle
Site web	www.bcge.ch
Email	info@bcge.ch
Téléphone	058 211 21 00
Adresse	<p>Quai de l'Île 17 Case postale 2251 1211 Genève 2</p>

1.2 Institutions bancaires et organisations liées

1.2.1 Banques



Institution	Banque Cantonale Vaudoise (BCV)
Type d'institution	Banque Cantonale
Rayon d'action	Canton de Vaud
Mission générale	<p>En matière de collaboration avec sa clientèle des entreprises, les Banques Cantonales misent sur une relation de partenariat caractérisée par une confiance mutuelle.</p> <p>A l'instar des PME, la maximisation du profit à court terme n'est pas une priorité des Banques Cantonales. En revanche, un partenariat stable et prospère à moyen et à long terme, constitue l'un de leurs objectifs prioritaires. Au sein de ce partenariat, les Banques Cantonales peuvent soutenir les entreprises en leur proposant des conseils professionnels et en leur offrant une vaste gamme de produits et services. Grâce à la diversification de cette offre, les différents besoins des clients PME sont individuellement pris en charge.</p>
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	Crédit Direct PME
Clients éligibles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entreprises suisses • Indépendants (suisse ou titulaires d'un permis C)
Taille du prêt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum : CHF 20,000 • Maximum : CHF 100,000
Durée du prêt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illimité en général • Pour le financement d'un équipement, la limite peut être amortie en fonction de la durée de vie économique du bien financé
Charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taux d'intérêt : variable, déterminé individuellement en fonction de la situation • Commission trimestrielle de 0.25% sur le solde débiteur le plus élevé
Garantie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sans garantie en général • Pour les SA et les Sàrl, le cautionnement de l'actionnaire est nécessaire
Site web	www.bcv.ch
Email	info@bcv.ch
Téléphone	0844 228 228
Adresse	Place St-François 14 1003 Lausanne Case postale 300 1001 Lausanne

1.2 Institutions bancaires et organisations liées

1.2.1 Banques



Institution	Postfinance
Type d'institution	Banque
Rayon d'action	Suisse
Mission générale	La Postfinance s'engage durablement pour le succès de votre entreprise avec un conseil global, des produits performants, des interlocuteurs à votre écoute et qui viennent à votre rencontre
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limite de crédit • Crédit en compte courant
Clients éligibles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limite de crédit : petites entreprises jusqu'à 9 collaborateurs • Crédit en compte courant : toute entreprise
Taille du prêt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limite de crédit maximum : CHF 3,000 • Crédit en compte courant minimum : CHF 20,000
Durée du prêt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limite de crédit: 32 jours maximum • Crédit en compte courant: illimitée
Charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limite de crédit : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Taux d'intérêt : 7.5% – Sans commission • Crédit en compte courant : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Taux d'intérêt : 4.25–5.875% – Sans commission
Garantie	Sans garantie
Site web	www.postfinance.ch
Email	Cf site
Téléphone	0848 888 710
Adresse	Nordring 8 3030 Berne

1.2 Institutions bancaires et organisations liées

1.2.1 Banques

RAIFFEISEN

Institution	Banques Raiffeisen
Type d'institution	Banques
Rayon d'action	Selon la banque
Mission générale	Développer le bien-être des communautés locales
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crédit d'exploitation • Conseils
Clients éligibles	Entreprises
Taille du prêt	Minimum : aucune
Durée du prêt	Indéterminée
Charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taux d'intérêt : variable, dépend de la solvabilité et des garanties fournies • Commission trimestrielle de 0.25%
Site web	www.raiffeisen.ch
Email	direct@raiffeisen.ch
Téléphone	0844 888 808
Adresse	<p>Raiffeisen Suisse Voie du Chariot 7 1003 Lausanne</p> <p>Raiffeisenplatz 9001 Saint-Gall</p>

1.2 Institutions bancaires et organisations liées

1.2.2 Fonds bancaires à but non lucratif



Institution	Fonds d'Innovation de la Banque Alternative Suisse (BAS)
Type d'institution	Association
Rayon d'action	Suisse et international
Année de création	1997
Mission générale	Soutenir des projets, institutions et entreprises dignes d'encouragement, mais qui ne remplissent pas (encore) les conditions de crédit de la BAS
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participations • Prêts • Cautions
Clients éligibles	<p>Les secteurs suivants sont pris en compte :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture biologique • Energies renouvelables • Entreprises écologiques • Entreprises sociales et solidaires • Formation et culture • Mobilité et environnement • Santé et prévention • Vivre et habiter
Taille du prêt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum: CHF 10,000 • Maximum: CHF 50,000
Durée du prêt	n/d
Charges	n/d
Site web	www.bas.ch
Email	info@bas.ch
Téléphone	062 206 16 16
Adresse	Amthausquai 21 Postfach, 4601 Olten

1.2 Institutions bancaires et organisations liées

1.2.3 Coopératives de cautionnement



Institution	Cautionnement Romand (ancien CRC-PME)
Type d'institution	Coopérative de Cautionnement
Rayon d'action	Cantons de Fribourg, Genève, Neuchâtel, Valais et Vaud
Année de création	2007
Mission générale	Promouvoir, par voie de cautionnement, le développement économique et la création d'emplois et d'idées, en facilitant l'accès au crédit bancaire aux indépendants et aux petites et moyennes entreprises (PME) artisanales, industrielles ou commerciales, existantes ou en création, ne disposant pas de l'entier des fonds propres nécessaires ou des garanties suffisantes souhaitées
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	Cautionnements en faveur d'un établissement bancaire établi sur sol helvétique qui sera à même d'offrir un intérêt préférentiel à l'entreprise
Clients éligibles	Petites et moyennes entreprises ou industries, artisans et commerçants, actifs dans quelque branche que ce soit, à l'exception de l'agriculture, qui démarrent, se développent ou se restructurent
Taille du prêt	Cautionnement romand peut s'engager pour les montants de crédit suivants : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum : CHF 15,000 • Maximum : CHF 500,000
Durée du prêt	Conformément au but du crédit mais au maximum dans un délai de 10 ans voire 15 ans dans le cadre d'un crédit hypothécaire
Charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A l'intervention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Taxe unique d'inscription de CHF 250.- pour une raison individuelle et CHF 500.- pour une société de personnes ou de personne morale – Contribution unique aux frais d'expertise de 1.2% (min. CHF 500.-, max. CHF 4'000.-) • Annuellement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prime risque de 1.25% sur le montant cautionné – Frais de gestion annuelle du dossier de CHF 250.-
Site web	www.crcpme.ch
Email	contact@cautionnementromand.ch
Téléphone	021 721 11 91
Adresse	Avenue Général Guisan 117 Case postale 109 1009 Pully

1.2 Institutions bancaires et organisations liées

1.2.3 Coopératives de cautionnement



Bürgschaftsgenossenschaft für KMU
Coopérative de Cautionnement pour PME

Institution	CC Centre, coopérative de cautionnement pour PME
Type d'institution	Coopérative de Cautionnement
Rayon d'action	Cantons de Berne, Jura, Soleure, Argovie (Fricktal seulement), Bâle-Ville, Bâle-Campagne, Lucerne, Obwald et Nidwald
Année de création	2007
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourager et soutenir les entreprises artisanales PME par la couverture de capital-risque • Soutenir la création ou le maintien de places de travail • Elargir son action en faveur de l'artisanat, des banques ainsi que de l'économie en général, tout en consolidant sa place dans le marché • S'efforcer d'agir pour une croissance qualitative et quantitative selon le principe «qualité avant quantité»
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<p>La CC Centre octroi des cautionnements pour :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Création de jeunes ou nouvelles entreprises • Reprises d'entreprises existantes • Développement d'entreprises ou financement de la croissance • Financement d'investissements de toute nature (machines, immeubles artisanaux, etc.) • Financement de fonds de roulement • Assainissement durable • Couverture de garantie pour travaux, garantie de loyer, etc.
Clients éligibles	Petites et moyennes entreprises indépendantes (PME), avec statut personnel ou juridique
Taille du prêt	La CC Centre peut s'engager pour les montants de crédit jusqu'à CHF 500,000
Durée du prêt	1 à 10 ans (en général de 5 à 10 ans)
Charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avance de frais <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – CHF 300.00 • Frais d'examen du dossier selon importance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – CHF 500.00 à CHF 4'000.00 au maximum <p>Dans les cantons qui ont souscrits des contrats de prestations avec la CC Centre, réduction substantielle de ces frais.</p> • Prime risque <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1,25% annuellement sur le montant cautionné
Site web	www.bgm-ccc.ch
Email	info@bgm-ccc.ch
Téléphone	034 420 20 20
Adresse	Bahnhofstrasse 59 D Case postale 1104 3401 Berthoud

2.1 Agences de promotion économique locale

2.1.1 Autorités cantonales



**Promotion économique
du canton de Fribourg**
Suisse

**Wirtschaftsförderung
Kanton Freiburg**
Schweiz

Institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion économique du canton de Fribourg • Direction de l'économie et de l'emploi du canton de Fribourg • Guichet-entreprises Fribourg
Type d'institution	Administration publique
Rayon d'action	Canton de Fribourg
Année de création	1972
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soutien aux entreprises fribourgeoises lors de projets d'extension • Implantation de nouvelles entreprises dans le canton • Mise en œuvre de la nouvelle politique régionale dans le canton de Fribourg
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aides financières • Allégements fiscaux • Recherche d'un site pour votre entreprise (terrains ou locaux) • Recrutement de personnel • Soutien lors des démarches administratives (permis d'établissement, permis de travail, écoles, infrastructures locales, etc.) • Recherche de logements (appartements et maisons) • Contacts avec les établissements de formation supérieure (Université de Fribourg, Haute école de gestion, Ecole d'ingénieurs et d'architectes, Ecole de multimédia et d'art de Fribourg) • Contacts avec les experts et spécialistes des secteurs privés et publics susceptibles de vous aider dans le développement de votre projet • Coordination de la procédure relative à votre implantation • Contacts avec la société Capital Risque Fribourg SA • Mise à disposition d'un responsable de projet
Site web	www.promfr.ch
Email	promfr-guichet@fr.ch
Téléphone	026 425 87 00
Adresse	Avenue de Beauregard 1 1700 Fribourg

2.1 Agences de promotion économique locale

2.1.1 Autorités cantonales



Institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion économique du canton de Genève • Département des affaires régionales, de l'économie et de la santé Guichet PME-PMI
Type d'institution	Administration publique
Rayon d'action	Canton de Genève
Année de création	n/d
Mission générale	Promouvoir de nouvelles entreprises créatrices d'emplois
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	Le Service la promotion économique, et son Guichet pour entreprises, vous accompagne et vous conseille gratuitement dans tous vos projets de création et de développement et de transmission d'entreprise à Genève. Grâce à son important réseau de compétences, le Service est capable de vous fournir des prestations sur mesure quel que soit le stade d'avancement de votre projet
Site web	www.ge.ch
Email	guichet-pme@etat.ge.ch
Téléphone	022 388 34 34
Adresse	Rue des Battoirs 7 Case postale 740 1211 Genève 4

2.1 Agences de promotion économique locale

2.1.1 Autorités cantonales

JURA CH RÉPUBLIQUE ET CANTON DU JURA

Institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion Economique du canton du Jura • Service de l'Economie — Jura
Type d'institution	Administration publique
Rayon d'action	Canton de Jura
Année de création	n/d
Mission générale	La Promotion économique a pour principale mission de susciter et soutenir le développement de l'économie jurassienne, à travers la diversification, la modernisation, l'innovation d'entreprises existantes mais aussi l'implantation et la création de nouvelles entreprises
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soutiens financiers et fiscaux • Aide dans la recherche de locaux, bureaux, bâtiments industriels ou terrains • Accompagnement lors des démarches avec l'administration publique • Intermédiaire avec les investisseurs • Mise en contact avec les acteurs de l'économie locale • Information économique • Conseil et assistance tout au long du processus d'implantation • Soutien à la promotion des exportations • Aide dans la recherche de collaborateurs
Site web	www.jura.ch
Email	bde@jura.ch
Téléphone	032 420 52 20
Adresse	12, rue de la Préfecture 2800 Delémont

2.1 Agences de promotion économique locale

2.1.1 Autorités cantonales



Institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion Economique du canton de Neuchâtel • Office de Promotion Economique Neuchâtel (OPEN)
Type d'institution	Administration publique
Rayon d'action	Canton de Neuchâtel
Année de création	n/d
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Favoriser la création de start-up en mettant en place des conditions-cadres propices • Encourager l'entrepreneuriat en soutenant les projets prometteurs • Attirer des entreprises extérieures et permettre leur développement à long terme • Faciliter les implantations de nouvelles entreprises en les guidant dans leurs démarches • Soutenir les entreprises existantes dans leur expansion en leur apportant les aides indispensables • Promouvoir l'innovation et le maillage en mettant en contact des entreprises ou des spécialistes complémentaires • Stimuler les investissements
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conseil et soutien pendant le temps du démarrage • Mise en contact avec des partenaires (réseau) • Rôle de coordinateur avec les autorités cantonales et fédérales • Analyse des dossiers pour des aides financières ou fiscales • Soutien à l'entrepreneuriat (coaching de base) • Soutien à l'implantation • Une aide fiscale
Site web	www.e-den.ch
Email	open@ne.ch
Téléphone	032 889 68 23
Adresse	Rue de la Collégiale 3 2000 Neuchâtel

2.1 Agences de promotion économique locale

2.1.1 Autorités cantonales



Institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion Economique du canton du Valais • Service du Développement économique et touristique du Valais Business Valais
Type d'institution	Administration publique
Rayon d'action	Canton de Valais
Année de création	n/d
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offrir aux entreprises valaisannes les conditions cadres favorables à leur éclosion, leur développement et leur compétitivité • Garantir une organisation qui réponde aux besoins réels des entreprises valaisannes • Favoriser l'implantation sur sol valaisan d'entreprises étrangères à haute valeur ajoutée (collaboration avec le GGBA) • Contribuer à créer les conditions cadres favorables pour dynamiser et pérenniser l'économie cantonale • Servir de coordination entre les différentes institutions communales, cantonales, étatiques ou paraétatique et les entreprises • Soutenir financièrement des projets d'entrepreneurs ou d'entreprises • Faciliter l'accès des entreprises aux prestations de transfert de technologie et d'appui à l'innovation • Faciliter les démarches administratives • Contribuer à la diversification du tissu économique valaisan
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<p>Information et conseils sur :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investir ou vous implanter en Valais • Créer une entreprise • Développer une entreprise • Mener un projet • Législation • Autres
Site web	http://www.vs.ch
Email	sde@admin.vs.ch
Téléphone	027 606 73 50
Adresse	Service du développement économique Maison de Courten, Rue St-Théodule 1951 Sion

2.1 Agences de promotion économique locale

2.1.1 Autorités cantonales



Institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion Economique du canton de Vaud • Service de l'Economie, du Logement et du Tourisme (SELT)
Type d'institution	Administration publique
Rayon d'action	Canton de Vaud
Année de création	n/d
Mission générale	Servir les milieux économiques pour tout projet de création, de développement ou d'implantation d'entreprises
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fournir les premiers renseignements aux créateurs d'entreprises • Faciliter l'implantation des entreprises étrangères dans le canton • Renseigner sur les démarches au sein de l'administration publique cantonale • Aiguiller les entreprises pour la recherche de terrains et de locaux • Orienter vers les organismes de financement et de conseils publics ou privés • Mettre à disposition des aides financières pour le démarrage, l'implantation ou le développement d'entreprises • Stimuler l'innovation et favoriser le transfert de technologies • Encourager l'internationalisation du tissu économique vaudois • Assurer la promotion de l'image du canton auprès des milieux économiques en Suisse et à l'étranger
Site web	www.vd.ch
Email	info.selt@vd.ch
Téléphone	021 316 58 20
Adresse	Rue Caroline 11 CH-1014 Lausanne

2.1 Agences de promotion économique locale

2.1.2 Organisations de promotion régionale et de district*



Institution	Association pour le Développement du Nord Vaudois (ADNV)
Type d'institution	Association
Rayon d'action	Nord Vaudois
Année de création	1969
Mission générale	L'Association a pour but de contribuer au développement harmonieux du Nord Vaudois, notamment sur les plans économique et social
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conseils à la création et démarrage d'entreprise • Recherche de terrains et de locaux industriels et artisanaux • Soutien à la recherche de financements, fonds propres, cautionnements • Relais des appuis et prestations cantonales • Orientation vers les organismes spécialisés • Mise en contact avec les entreprises régionales et les technopôles ainsi que recherche de partenaires • Inscription dans la base de données des entreprises régionales • Cours d'appuis pour apprentis et formation continue ciblée entreprises
Site web	www.adnv.ch
Email	contact@adnv.ch
Téléphone	024 425 55 21
Adresse	Pl. de la Tannerie CH - 1400 Yverdon-les-Bains

2.1 Agences de promotion économique locale

2.1.2 Organisations de promotion régionale et de district



Institution	Communauté Régionale de la Broye (COREB)
Type d'institution	Association intercantonale
Rayon d'action	Canton de Vaud et canton de Fribourg
Année de création	1988
Mission générale	<p>Le but principal de la COREB est le développement économique de la Broye. Transports, politique régionale, déchets, économie, formation et tourisme sont autant de domaines où la COREB joue un rôle moteur pour le développement de la Broye.</p> <p>Contrairement aux autres associations de district, la Broye est intercantonale. La COREB travaille activement à l'harmonisation de la Broye en proposant de plus en plus de projets à cheval sur les cantons de Vaud et Fribourg. Pour se faire elle a mis en consultation auprès de ces deux cantons un Plan Directeur Régional qui édicte les lignes à suivre afin de développer la région harmonieusement.</p>
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recherche ou la location de locaux • Demande d'aide en matière de modification de la gouvernance • Recherches en personnel • Conseils pour des contacts avec des instituts spécialisés • Recherches de financement • Coaching
Site web	www.coreb.ch
Email	info@coreb.ch
Téléphone	026 663 90 80
Adresse	Rose de la Broye CH -1470 Lully

2.1 Agences de promotion économique locale

2.1.2 Organisations de promotion régionale et de district*



Institution	Coordination du Développement Economique Vaudois (CODEV)
Type d'institution	Association faïtière des associations régionales du canton de Vaud
Rayon d'action	Canton de Vaud
Année de création	2000
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mener une réflexion constructive sur le développement économique et touristique • Partager les connaissances et les expériences de chaque région • Mettre en place des synergies entre les diverses régions • Veiller à une cohérence des actions sur le plan cantonal en partenariat avec le SELT, service de l'économie du logement et du tourisme et avec le Développement Economique Vaudois (DEV) • Prendre position et défendre les intérêts des régions
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informations concernant les sites et locaux d'entreprise • Conseils et appuis divers aux entreprises • Traitement confidentiel des demandes de facilités fiscales • Soutien aux demandes de permis d'établissement et de travail • Accompagnement des demandes d'aide financière • Collaboration avec les centres de transfert technologique • Interface avec les organismes de financement tels que "Capital Proximité" • Conduite de la stratégie de promotion des pôles de développement
Site web	www.codev.ch
Email	contact@adnv.ch
Téléphone	024 425 55 21
Adresse	Place de la Tannerie 1400 Yverdon-les-Bains

2.2 Associations d'entreprises

2.2.1 Chambres de commerce cantonales



Institution	Chambre de Commerce d'Industrie et des services de Genève (CCIG)
Type d'institution	Association
Rayon d'action	Canton de Genève
Année de création	1865
Mission générale	La CCIG a pour but de représenter, promouvoir et défendre les intérêts du commerce, de l'industrie et des services du Canton, dans le cadre de l'intérêt général de l'économie suisse
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fournir des services aux entreprises • Améliorer les conditions cadre ayant trait à l'économie • Promouvoir ses membres par la mise en relation d'affaires • Informer et documenter ses membres
Site web	www.ccig.ch
Email	ccig@cci.ch
Téléphone	022 819 91 11
Adresse	Case postale 5039 CH - 1211 Genève 11

2.2 Associations d'entreprises

2.2.1 Chambres de commerce cantonales



Institution	Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie Jura (CCIJ)
Type d'institution	Association
Rayon d'action	Canton du Jura
Année de création	1978
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Défendre et représenter les intérêts des entreprises membres auprès des autorités et des administrations publiques • Fournir des appuis pratiques aux chefs d'entreprise dans la gestion courante de leur activité • Développer et animer une plate-forme d'échanges utiles avec et entre les entreprises membres
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mises en relations d'affaires avec des partenaires suisses et à l'étranger • Renseignements sur les conditions d'implantation ou de création d'entreprises dans la République et Canton du Jura • Banques de données sur des entreprises jurassiennes par secteur et par branche d'activité • Renseignements sur la réglementation en vigueur en Suisse et en Europe • Publications sur des thèmes économiques, juridiques ou fiscaux
Site web	www.ccij.ch
Email	ccjura@cci.ch
Téléphone	032 421 45 45
Adresse	Rue de l'Avenir 23 2800 Delémont

2.2 Associations d'entreprises

2.2.1 Chambres de commerce cantonales



CHAMBRE DE COMMERCE FRIBOURG

HANDELSKAMMER FREIBURG • CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FRIBOURG

Institution	Chambre de Commerce Fribourg (CCFR)
Type d'institution	Association
Rayon d'action	Canton de Fribourg
Année de création	1918
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Défendre et améliorer les conditions cadres des entreprises fribourgeoises • Fournir des services, des prestations et des produits aux entreprises du canton • Assurer une mise en relation optimale des acteurs économiques entre eux • Jouer un rôle de trait d'union entre l'économie et l'Etat • Informer, soutenir et documenter ses membres
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation de séminaires et publi-séminaires • Gestion professionnelle de secrétariats d'associations • Formations continues, cours et séminaires • Caisse d'allocations familiales • Organisation d'événements (START! Forum des métiers, Fribourgissima) • Swissfirms : base de données actualisée des entreprises • Renseignements et conseils pour les entreprises • Service juridique (dès la fin 2011) • Semaines économiques (SEMECO) • Commerce international : légalisations, carnets ATA/CPD, certificats CITES et conseils imports-exports
Site web	www.ccfribourg.ch
Email	info@ccfribourg.ch
Téléphone	026 347 12 20
Adresse	Route du Jura 37 Case postale 304 CH - 1701 Fribourg

2.2 Associations d'entreprises

2.2.1 Chambres de commerce cantonales

Chambre neuchâteloise du
commerce et de l'industrie



Institution	Chambre Neuchâteloise du Commerce et de l'Industrie (CNCI)
Type d'institution	Association
Rayon d'action	Canton de Neuchâtel
Année de création	1945
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Défendre les intérêts généraux de ses membres en assurant une veille politique, c'est-à-dire en entretenant des relations suivies avec les autorités politiques afin de promouvoir des conditions cadres favorables au développement des entreprises • Offrir une palette de prestations, notamment des opportunités de rencontres entre les dirigeants de l'économie, des conseils à l'exportation, un service juridique et des caisses sociales
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conseils juridiques • Réseautage • Export • Prestations sociales
Site web	www.cnci.ch
Email	cnci@cnci.ch
Téléphone	032 722 15 15
Adresse	Rue de la Serre 4 - Case Postale 2001 Neuchâtel

2.2 Associations d'entreprises

2.2.1 Chambres de commerce cantonales



Chambre Valaisanne
de Commerce et d'Industrie

Institution	Chambre Valaisanne du Commerce et de l'Industrie (CCI Valais)
Type d'institution	Association
Rayon d'action	Canton de Valais
Année de création	1917
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion de conditions cadres favorables au développement de l'économie valaisanne • Participation à l'élaboration de la politique économique cantonale en conformité avec les intérêts des membres • Coordination des efforts des différents secteurs économiques cantonaux et promotion du développement économique sous l'angle de l'initiative privée • Représentation des intérêts de l'économie valaisanne en tant qu'organe consultatif vis à vis de l'économie suisse et des autorités fédérales et cantonales • Collaboration avec les chambres de commerce et d'industrie au plan national et international • Promotion des exportations de l'économie valaisanne et exploitation d'un service de légalisations et d'informations pour les exportations • Information des membres, des autorités et du public concernant l'évolution de l'économie et, en particulier, de l'économie valaisanne • Gestion de commissions et de secrétariats dans l'intérêt des membres et selon les besoins
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Représentation directe et permanente lors de chaque activité de lobbying de la CVCI • Expérience associative d'une équipe motivée • Réseau politique et économique étendu de la CVCI • Service multilingue français, allemand, italien et anglais • Centre d'informations statistiques et économiques • Espace de rencontre neutre, idéalement situé à Sion • Inscription gratuite dans l'annuaire d'entreprises www.swissfirms.ch
Site web	www.cci-valais.ch
Email	info@cci-valais.ch
Téléphone	027 327 35 35
Adresse	CP 288, Rue Pré-Fleuri 6 1951 Sion

2.2 Associations d'entreprises

2.2.1 Chambres de commerce cantonales



Institution	Chambre Vaudoise du Commerce et de l'Industrie (CVCI)
Type d'institution	Association
Rayon d'action	Canton de Vaud
Année de création	1898
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Réseautage : proposer aux entreprises membres tous les atouts d'une structure associative (réunions, échanges et discussions) dans un cadre privilégié • Politique : promouvoir l'ouverture, grâce à des conditions-cadres stimulant la compétitivité et le développement harmonieux du secteur privé, et par des interventions appropriées auprès des responsables politiques, en Suisse comme, au besoin, à l'étranger • Services : fournir aux entreprises membres des services originaux et de qualité, utiles à la marche de leurs affaires et qui complètent les prestations disponibles sur le marché
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caisses sociales • Commerce extérieur • Service juridique • Arbitrage et médiation • Création d'entreprise • Transmission d'entreprise • Conjoncture économique • Formation • Conseils économiques • Locations de salles de séances • Autres
Site web	www.cvci.ch
Email	cvci@cvci.ch
Téléphone	021 613 35 35
Adresse	Avenue d'Ouchy 47 1006 Lausanne

2.2 Associations d'entreprises

2.2.1 Chambres de commerce cantonales



Institution	Chambre de l'économie sociale et solidaire, APRÈS-GE
Type d'institution	Association
Rayon d'action	Genève
Année de création	2003
Mission générale	La Chambre de l'économie sociale et solidaire, APRÈS-GE, s'engage pour la promotion et la reconnaissance de l'économie sociale et solidaire (ESS) dans la région genevoise. Née en 2004, elle compte aujourd'hui près de 250 membres collectifs (associations, coopératives, fondations et entreprises)
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme de formation continue spécialement conçu pour les acteurs de l'ESS • Le site www.apres-ge.ch, pour une meilleure visibilité de votre organisation • Programme d'expériences Professionnelles dans l'ESS (PPE+) • La Newsletter électronique mensuelle, un espace de communication privilégié avec le réseau de l'ESS • Les "Cafés de bonnes pratiques" • L'incubateur Essaim • La Ruche: espace de co-working d'APRÈS-GE • La permanence de soutien-conseils d'APRÈS-GE
Site web	www.apres-ge.ch
Email	corinne.taddeo@apres-ge.ch
Téléphone	022 321 81 28
Adresse	Rue Liotard, 5 1202 Genève

2.2 Associations d'entreprises

2.2.2 Autres organisations patronales*



Institution	Fédération des Artisans, Commerçants et Entrepreneurs de Genève (FAC)
Type d'institution	Association
Rayon d'action	Canton de Genève
Année de création	1922
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Défendre et promouvoir les artisans et commerçants actifs à Genève • Renforcer et soutenir la présence du commerce de proximité dans les milieux économiques et politiques genevois • Encourager la formation professionnelle • Engager des actions pour favoriser le commerce genevois. • Aplanir les tâches administratives de ses membres en leur offrant des services personnalisés • Promouvoir la Fédération des Artisans, Commerçants et Entrepreneurs de Genève • Protéger l'accès aux commerces et les places de parking
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comptabilité • Traitement des salaires • Service juridique • Service notarial • Aide au financement
Site web	www.fac.ch
Email	fac@fac.ch
Téléphone	022 347 65 13
Adresse	Case postale 2362 1211 Genève 2

2.2 Associations d'entreprises

2.2.2 Autres organisations patronales*



Fédération des
Entreprises
Romandes
Genève

Institution	Fédération des Entreprises Romandes (FER)
Type d'institution	Association
Rayon d'action	Canton de Genève
Année de création	1928
Mission générale	La Fédération des entreprises romandes Genève a trois grandes missions : la défense de l'économie privée, la fourniture de services à ses membres et la conduite d'une réflexion sur l'évolution de la société
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<p>La FER Genève apporte un soutien précieux aux porteurs de projet et aux créateurs d'entreprise. Le service contact-entreprises de la FER Genève répond aux questions suivantes :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment choisir la forme juridique la plus adaptée à son projet ? • Comment connaître les obligations de l'employeur en matière d'assurances sociales et en cas d'engagement de collaborateurs ? • Où trouver les structures d'aides au financement ?
Site web	www.fer-geneve.ch
Email	fer-ge@fer-ge.ch
Téléphone	022 715 31 11
Adresse	98, rue de Saint-Jean - Case postale 5278 - 1211 Genève 11

2.3 Organisations spécialisées d'accompagnement, d'appui et de conseil

2.3.1 Organisations nationales d'accompagnement, d'appui et de conseil



Institution	Genilem
Type d'institution	Association
Rayon d'action	Vaud — Genève, Valais, Fribourg, Arc jurassien, Zürich/Ostschweiz, Aargau, Berne
Année de création	1995
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Augmenter les chances de succès d'entreprises en démarrage. • Promouvoir le renouveau de l'économie suisse • Favoriser la création d'entreprises innovantes
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnostic de votre projet d'entreprise, des conseils et une assistance au démarrage • Formations spécialisées utiles aux créateurs d'entreprise • Réseau de parrains et de partenaires • Accompagnement professionnel pendant 3 ans après sélection • Accès facilité aux sources de financement, de conseil expert, de formation • Accès à un réseau et à divers outils de communication
Site web	www.genilem-suisse.ch
Email	Cf. le site web
Téléphone	Cf. le site web
Adresse	Cf. le site web

2.3 Organisations spécialisées d'accompagnement, d'appui et de conseil

2.3.1 Organisations nationales d'accompagnement, d'appui et de conseil



Institut für Jungunternehmen

Institution	IFJ Institut für Jungunternehmen
Type d'institution	Institut
Rayon d'action	Suisse
Année de création	1989
Mission générale	Encourager les start-up dans le domaine des hautes technologies
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services diverses : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Plate-forme d'information gratuite sur internet – Outils taillés sur mesure comme le logiciel «Business Navigator» ou le CD-Rom «Business Praxis» – Formations – Accompagnement des start-up lors de foires – Organisation de venture apéros à travers toute la Suisse • Venture lab : programme national de formation des start-up par les étudiants dans le domaine des hautes technologies, financé par la Commission pour la technologie et l'innovation CTI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Conférence pour les curieux – Cours semestriel pour étudiants – Ateliers intensifs sur la stratégie – Coaching par des entrepreneurs expérimentés • Venture kick : initiative de soutien par capital d'amorçage à fonds perdu à des start-up issues des hautes écoles suisses et qui sont encore dans leur phase de démarrage
Site web	www.ifj.ch
Email	info@ifj.ch
Téléphone	021 533 09 81
Adresse	Romandie PSE-C 1015 Lausanne

2.3 Organisations spécialisées d'accompagnement, d'appui et de conseil

2.3.1 Organisations nationales d'accompagnement, d'appui et de conseil



Institution	Startups
Type d'institution	Société Anonyme
Rayon d'action	Suisse
Année de création	
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aider les jeunes entrepreneurs avec des conseils et des actes à faire leur chemin dans l'indépendance • Les intégrer dans notre réseau d'entreprises • Libérer les jeunes entrepreneurs de charges dont ils ne disposent pas nécessairement de connaissances (par exemple comptabilité, impôts, protection des marques, etc.) • Motiver et leur montrer les différentes opportunités
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offrir des informations détaillées sur la création d'entreprise en ligne et à des conditions attrayantes, ou même gratuitement • Conseiller de jeunes entrepreneurs avant la création de leur entreprise et mettre à leur disposition tout un réseau d'entreprises partenaires. Si un entrepreneur lors de la création se décide pour un produit ou un service d'un partenaire, celui-ci prend en charge une certaine partie des frais de création. En choisissant assez de nos partenaires, la création peut même être gratuite • Accompagner les jeunes entrepreneurs même après leur création et mettre à leur disposition tout ce dont ils ont besoin pour un départ couronné de succès — du comptable jusqu'à l'avocat en passant par un agent publicitaire (ceci toujours à des conditions spéciales)
Site web	www.startups.ch
Email	geneve@startups.ch
Téléphone	022 735 96 66
Adresse	InterExperts SA 17, rue des Pierres-du-Niton CH - 1207 Genève

2.3 Organisations spécialisées d'accompagnement, d'appui et de conseil

2.3.2 Organisations romandes d'accompagnement, d'appui et de conseil

ASSOCIATION PME

Institution	Association PME
Type d'institution	Association
Rayon d'action	Suisse Romande
Année de création	1905
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soutenir les PME dans leur développement • Créer des opportunités d'affaires • Favoriser le contact et l'échange entre ses membres
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Un réseau d'échange et de réflexion • Un réseau de compétences et de services • Des permanences de conseils • Des conférences et séminaires • Une formation pragmatique par le biais d'ateliers • Sorties d'entreprise dans une ambiance amicale
Site web	www.pme-cevd.ch
Email	info@pme-cevd.ch
Téléphone	021 641 16 30
Adresse	World Trade Center Lausanne Av. de Gratta-Paille 2 Case postale 476 1000 - Lausanne 30

2.3 Organisations spécialisées d'accompagnement, d'appui et de conseil

2.3.2 Organisations romandes d'accompagnement, d'appui et de conseil



Institution	Platinn
Type d'institution	Association
Rayon d'action	Antennes cantonales à Genève, Fribourg, Lausanne, Neuchâtel, Jura
Année de création	2009
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L'association a pour mission principale de renforcer le système d'innovation d'affaires de petites et moyennes entreprises (PME) • Elle soutient principalement les projets relatifs aux quatre vecteurs d'innovation d'affaires : produits/service, processus, distribution/présence, clients
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services de développement des affaires • Services de développement de partenariats et coopération • Services de développement de l'organisation, des ressources et processus • Services d'augmentation de la capacité d'innovation
Site web	www.platinn.ch
Email	info@platinn.ch
Téléphone	026 347 48 48
Adresse	Rue de Romont 33 P.O. Box 1205 CH - 1701 Fribourg Switzerland

2.3 Organisations spécialisées d'accompagnement, d'appui et de conseil

2.3.2 Organisations romandes d'accompagnement, d'appui et de conseil



Institution	Rezonance
Type d'institution	n/d
Rayon d'action	Suisse Romande
Année de création	1998
Mission générale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rezonance a pour mission d'enrichir les représentations du monde des professionnels romands à travers la culture du réseautage et des réseaux sociaux • Rezonance.ch est une plate-forme ouverte, neutre et indépendante qui favorise l'émulation de toute une région par le réseau, les échanges et l'enrichissement mutuel. C'est le plus grand réseau professionnel de Suisse romande !
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conférences libres et gratuites, les First • Services de réseautage sur son site web collaboratif rassemblant 35'000+ personnes
Site web	www.rezonance.ch
Email	admin@rezonance.ch
Téléphone	n/d
Adresse	n/d

2.3 Organisations spécialisées d'accompagnement, d'appui et de conseil

2.3.3 Organisations cantonales d'accompagnement, d'appui et de conseil

NewStart

Un projet pour l'avenir

Institution	Newstart Sàrl
Type d'institution	Filiale genevoise de la société « OTP Organisation & Training Partners SA »
Rayon d'action	Canton de Genève
Année de création	1993
Mission générale	NewStart contribue à la formation des porteurs de projet en création d'entreprises à Genève
Type de services fournis aux clients/membres	<p>Newstart offre un accompagnement dans la préparation à l'indépendance professionnelle, notamment au travers d'une étude de marché, de la conception d'une stratégie marketing et de l'établissement d'un plan financier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NewStart 1 — Cours d'introduction "Les fondamentaux de la création d'entreprise" (10 jours) • NewStart 2 — Cours de réalisation (20 jours)
Site web	www.newstar-t.ch
Email	info@newstar-t.ch
Téléphone	022 716 32 92
Adresse	Avenue Blanc 53 1202 Genève

2.4 Sites web avec des informations utiles pour le démarrage d'entreprise

Association industrielle et patronale de Neuchâtel

<http://www.aip-ne.ch>

Banque cantonale vaudoise

www.bcv.ch/creation

Business navigator

www.businessnavigator.ch

Centre patronal vaudois

www.centrepatronal.ch

E-starter

www.estarter.ch

Fédération vaudoise des entrepreneurs

www.fve.ch

Ma société

www.ma-société.ch

Mon entreprise

www.monentreprise.ch

Secrétariat d'état de l'économie

www.pmeinfo.ch

Startbiz

www.startbiz.ch

Swissbusiness24

www.swissbusiness24.ch