

Press release dated 20 March 2017

ALTERNATIVE BANK SWITZERLAND LOOKS BACK ON A POSITIVE RESULT

Alternative Bank Switzerland Ltd. achieved a very good result in 2016. Lending activities increased by 13.5 percent, which is particularly encouraging. The negative interest rates introduced on customer deposits at the beginning of 2016 had the desired impact.

In accordance with its articles of incorporation, Alternative Bank Switzerland's mission is to contribute to the sustainable development of economy and society through its activities. The Bank does not seek to maximize its profits, but aims to earn enough money to enable the company to develop soundly in accordance with its mission. ABS achieved this goal in 2016:

Successful development of the lending business

With a balance sheet total of 1.654 billion Swiss francs, the bank granted loans of 1.213 billion Swiss francs. 84 percent of loans were awarded to projects and companies offering demonstrable social or ecological added value. The 13.5 percent growth of lending is significantly higher than in previous years and above the Swiss market average. The main driver behind this has been the financing of major construction projects in the area of affordable cooperative housing in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. Generally, ABS has experienced significant business growth in this region since the opening of its new offices in Lausanne-Flon.

Solid foundation for the future

The shareholder base of ABS grew by 16 percent last year and the bank now counts over 6,000 shareholders. Thanks to their commitment, the bank was able to increase its equity from 109.9 to 142.2 million Swiss francs, reaching a risk-weighted capital ratio of 17.25 percent. "We have built a solid foundation to implement our strategy and develop our business model in accordance with our mission," comments CEO Martin Rohner.

Steering effect of negative interest rates

Growth of the customer base was less pronounced in 2016 than in previous years. The bank gained a net total of more than 900 new customers. The number of clients increased to 31,551. Customer deposits increased by 2 percent to 1.496 billion francs. This figure is significantly lower than in the years following the financial crisis. ABS customers deposit less money in their bank accounts and instead request more off-balance sheet services. Total assets under management rose accordingly by 5 percent to 1.792 billion francs. This is due to negative interest rates charged by the ABS on all accounts since 1 January 2016. "We hoped to achieve a steering effect from this measure, and this has indeed been the case. There has been a positive impact on the bank's profitability," summarises Martin Rohner.

Positive result

ABS generated a positive result from its business activities. It was able to further build up reserves by over 5 million Swiss francs and reports a profit of 1.8 million Swiss francs. This represents an increase of 33 percent year-on-year.

More information and interview appointments

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Photo material made available



- Martin Rohner, CEO

[See picture in high resolution at www.abs.ch](http://www.abs.ch)

Photographer: Jean-Christophe Dupasquier



- Headquarters of Alternative Bank Switzerland in Olten

Photographer: Patrick Lüthy

Alternative Bank Switzerland: ecological, social and transparent for more than 25 years

Alternative Bank Switzerland Ltd., established in 1990, is supported by more than 6,000 shareholders. It has a balance sheet of 1.6 billion Swiss francs and more than 30,000 customers. As a mission driven bank it does not seek to maximize profits but emphasizes its ethical, social and ecological principles.

ABS invests its customers' money sustainably in projects and businesses with a social and ecological focus. At least 80 percent of loans must demonstrate a measurable social or ecological added value. To account for the impact of customers' money the Bank publishes a list of all of its loans.

ABS principles are equally rigorous when it comes to investments or its human resource policy. It is committed to gender equality and operates without a bonus system or financial incentives. On the basis of its ethical principles, ABS provides the usual services offered by an investment, savings and credit bank throughout Switzerland.