



JCC Holiday Flash

Newsletter of the Joint Chamber of Commerce

Switzerland-Eastern Europe, Central Asia, South Caucasus (JCC)

December 2024/January 2025



Letter from the President



Dear JCC Members and Partners,

These are times of geopolitical and economic turbulence. We are witnessing regional wars, trade conflicts between China, the EU and USA, and a sluggish global economy. In this environment, companies are hesitant to make new investments and are even engaged in derisking from China, once a boom market for foreign investment.

At the same time new areas of development and business are emerging. AI is growing in importance. There is also a lot of talk about new, clean energy sources, though no clear policies from governments. While Ukrainian reconstruction is a central topic of discussion, there is no clear path forward and, first, the war must end.

In this environment, JCC has faced a challenging year. Our chamber of commerce already operates in a demanding region, which has been exacerbated by global political and economic volatility. It is difficult to attract Swiss SMEs to engage in trade and investment in the current business setting. Nevertheless, JCC is promoting the opportunities that have materialized in Central Asia and the Greater Caspian Region in the area of renewable energy, logistics, transportation, infrastructure and manufacturing.

In 2024, JCC organized 18 events– 12 webinars and 6 physical events. We partnered on a variety of activities and missions including the Swiss Days in Armenia and Uzbekistan, respectively. JCC also participated in two Joint Economic Commissions with Moldova in Chisinau and Ukraine in Kyiv.

JCC will organize a full program of activities in 2025 as in previous years, and work to attract new members. I am cautiously optimistic about the economies of Central Asia and South Caucasus, but believe that SMEs will still be hesitant to make large investments in the region. Hopefully, we will see the implementation of policies to attract investment in green/clean energy projects such as hydrogen which could catalyse more Swiss FDI.

In conclusion, I want to express my appreciation to the JCC board for its commitment and discipline in a particularly challenging time. A special word of thanks to Urs Klingelfuss who will step down as a board member after a long and rich tenure. Also, we are extremely grateful to our sponsors and partners for their generous support of JCC activities. Finally, a big thank you to our members, for your engagement and trust in JCC. We look forward to opening doors to new business opportunities for you in 2025!

Best Regards,

Marcel

Marcel Pawlicek

JCC President

“Why we joined JCC and the value of our membership?”

An interview with Olga Rasolka, Head, External Relations, LeverX

Why does LeverX believe it is important to join a chamber of commerce such as JCC?

Let me start with the slogan: *“Stay informed and stay ahead.”* Developing cutting-edge technologies, expanding geographically, and creating bridges between the countries are impossible without people & local communities. To build a strong foundation for local business growth and collaboration, LeverX partnered with JCC, the leading private sector organization in Switzerland that facilitates bilateral business connections between Switzerland, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and South Caucasus.

By collaborating with JCC, the company taps into a powerful network of like-minded professionals, gains broad

visibility, and remains constantly informed about important business issues.

By joining the chamber of commerce, you get expert assistance in networking and collaboration. Additionally, you have access to resources that are crucial for your business growth and success.

What has been valuable to you so far in your JCC membership?

Key factors LeverX appreciates about working with JCC:

- Attention to members
- Strategic thinking
- Comfortable environment
- Qualitative events
- Readiness & action

I remember the first meeting with Dorit Sallis, Managing Director of JCC, where LeverX outlined the plan to be an active member in Chamber's life that focused on innovation, expansion, and sharing knowledge and expertise. In 2002-2024, LeverX, in cooperation with JCC, organized a series of professional seminars and webinars, joined the delegation's missions, and shared our global expertise at Flagship Conferences. Working together we have become a big family where each party is open to share experiences and offer support.

What approaches and best practices do you propose for companies to get the most from their JCC membership?

The saying, "You get out what you put in" is relevant to our JCC membership. JCC offers the platform, contacts and expertise, in other words, rich material with which we can work to develop our business in the Eurasia region further. We are extremely active in the organization by offering ideas, implementing initiatives, participating in events and sustaining an ongoing dialogue with JCC management. I have observed that JCC management welcomes these inputs and is enthusiastic to pursue them together with us. In this way, LeverX maximises the benefit of our JCC membership while providing inputs that help the chamber grow, develop and enhance its value for other members. So my advice, to members is get involved and reap the opportunities, don't just wait for them to land in your lap.



Olga Rasolka Head,
External Relations,
LeverX

LeverX is a global system integrator with headquarters in Miami, Florida. Currently, the company has an international team of over 1,800 professionals working across 15 offices in 11 countries. For over 20 years, LeverX has been delivering SAP solutions. Its commitment to the enterprise technology domain has earned it the SAP Gold Partner and Preferred Vendor status. To date, the company has already completed 1'100+ projects for Fortune 500 companies and other clients worldwide. Emerline operates as a part of LeverX and provides full-scale software development services for emerging companies, transforming ideas into end-to-end IT solutions while continuously leveraging innovative technologies such as AI/GenAI, Augmented Reality, and Blockchain. LeverX is an official partner of the leading cloud providers: AWS, Microsoft Azure, and GCP. LeverX stands out as an ideal partner for enterprises seeking a forward-thinking approach to digital transformation.



JCC Launches Innovation and Technology Chapter

The rapid advancement of technology and innovation is transforming how businesses operate, compete, and grow. Recognizing the importance of staying ahead in this dynamic environment, JCC is proud to introduce the Technology and Innovation Chapter. This Chapter is designed to provide JCC members with cutting-edge information, resources, networking opportunities, and insights with a special focus on the capabilities and opportunities in the 11 countries of Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the South Caucasus (Eurasia) in JCC's portfolio.

The JCC Technology and Innovation Chapter aims to help members as follows:

- Understand and harness the power of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), big data, blockchain and more.
- Keep members up to date on new developments in the tech/digital arena of Eurasian countries.
- Provide a framework to establish and nurture strong business relationships between Swiss companies and their Eurasian counterparts in the digital and innovation sphere.
- Address the needs of members and foster expertise sharing within the JCC network.

The JCC Technology and Innovation Chapter is headed by JCC member **Daniel Zurfluh, Founder, KnowHow Bridge GmbH** and a steering committee of JCC members.

The first country showcased in the framework of the Chapter was Armenia which excels as a technology and innovation nation. At the launch webinar on November 28, 2024, Edita Ghazaryan, Deputy CEO, Union of Advanced Technology Enterprises (UATE), Mariam Babayan, Project Advisor and Aram Babayan, Team Leader, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH Armenia, illustrated the dynamic tech and innovation ecosystem that exists in Armenia.

The Chapter's 2025 program will showcase the technology and innovation landscape in each of the markets in JCC's portfolio and highlight opportunities for business collaboration with Swiss companies.



***Kick off 2025 with an understanding of what lies ahead
in global and regional business risk!***

JCC Business Lunch

“Mapping Risk in 2025: Global and Regional Business Impact”

January 15, 2025 12:00 - 14:30

A JCC event in partnership with Control Risks and Switzerland Global Enterprise (SGE)

Venue: Switzerland Global Enterprise, Stampfenbachstrasse 85, Zurich

2025 presents a complex and uncertain risk landscape. Geopolitical tensions, cybersecurity threats, technological disruption and different economic growth trajectories are just some of the issues that will shape the global environment. Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the South Caucasus (JCC) will be exposed to these risks and face some specific to the region.

Kick off 2025 with an understanding of the global and regional risk landscape, so that you can effectively plan your business strategy. Join us at the JCC lunch where you will hear a detailed risks analysis for 2025 from Florian Otto, Principal, **Control Risks**. Florian manages a team of analysts covering political, operational and security risks in Europe, the countries of the former Soviet Union and Turkey. Exchange views and network with members and partners from Switzerland and the region.

Please register here: <https://jointchambers.ch/jcc-events/jcc-networking-lunch/>

Selected Highlights from 2024



JCC AGM 2024
Keynote Speaker: Sweta Ghilani, Head, Europe Central Cluster, Novartis
March 19, 2024
Novartis, Basel, Switzerland



Swiss Days Armenia
Signing of MoU between JCC and ICC Armenia
May 13-17, 2024
Yerevan, Armenia



Tajikistan Business Webinar
Keynote Speaker: H.E. Mr. Sherali Kabir, Minister of Industry and New Technologies of Tajikistan
June 18, 2024



8th Joint Economic Commission Switzerland-Moldova
Mission to Moldova headed by Ms. Helena Budliger Artieda, State Secretary for Economic Affairs (SECO)
September 1-2, 2024
Chisinau, Moldova



JCC Business Roundtable: 14th Sanctions Package
Speakers: Andreas Bitzi, CEO, Business Solutions Partners and Laurence Ponty, Partner, Archipel Law
September 3, 2024
MAN Energy Solutions, Zurich, Switzerland



JCC Annual Flagship Conference on Central Asia and the South Caucasus
Keynote Speaker: Ambassador Andrea-Rauber Saxer, SECO
September 12, 2024
Geneva, Switzerland



The final JCC board meeting of the year took place on November 19, 2024 at CCIG Geneva.
L to R: Board members Jean-Paul Periat, Laurence Ponty, Xavier Cornut, Marcel Pawlicek, Igor Almazov, Urs Klingelfuss and Managing Director Dorit Sallis were joined by members Olga Rasolka, Viktor Lozinski and Jürgen Helmle, LeverX.

Thank you to our sponsors



About the Joint Chamber of Commerce

Switzerland-Eastern Europe, Central Asia, South Caucasus (JCC)

The Joint Chamber of Commerce Switzerland – Eastern Europe, Central Asia, South Caucasus (JCC) is the leading private sector organization in Switzerland that facilitates bilateral business between Switzerland and the following regions:

Eastern Europe: Ukraine and Moldova

Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan

South Caucasus: Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan

As the central unifying hub for all these countries' business activity in Switzerland, JCC assists Swiss firms to engage in trade and investment in its target markets, and companies from the region to do business in Switzerland. JCC members are mainly Swiss companies (SMEs and MNCs) in the manufacturing and service sectors. JCC also welcomes members from its target region. The chamber is headquartered in Zurich with representations in Western Switzerland and Ticino.

JCC provides members the following services:

- Regular events on latest business development in JCC's target region at steeply discounted rates;
- Members-only participation in JCC chapters' specialized chapter programs;
- Exclusive access to strategic partners and business opportunities in the target region and Switzerland;
- Lobbying and troubleshooting on members' behalf in JCC's target region;
- A channel for new business. JCC refers all service-related requests to members;
- A platform for members to showcase their expertise and connect with potential clients.

How to become a member?

Fill out the electronic registration form at the following link:

https://jointchambers.ch/become_a_member/

and press on send.

After receiving the form, JCC will send you a confirmation of membership and your invoice for the calendar year.

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