

Media release

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Coronavirus crisis has not slowed settling and founding of companies in the Basel Area

The number of companies settling in the Basel Area remained stable at a high level in 2020 despite the coronavirus pandemic. Last year, Basel Area Business & Innovation provided 27 companies with support in their efforts to settle in the region. Growing interest in the region was especially seen among companies in Asia. The number of startups supported by Basel Area Business & Innovation even reached a record high.

“We had an outstanding year despite the coronavirus,” says Domenico Scala, President of Basel Area Business & Innovation, the investment and innovation promotion agency of the cantons of Basel-Landschaft, Basel-Stadt und Jura. In 2020, the support services provided by Basel Area Business & Innovation enabled 27 new companies to settle in the region. That is three fewer than in the previous year, but in light of the coronavirus pandemic this can be seen as a remarkably positive result, for it far exceeded all expectations. Although many sectors in the Basel Area have been hard hit by the coronavirus crisis, the region remains an attractive business location for companies. This is reflected in the top-flight companies that have settled here, such as Moderna from the USA, Hengrui from China and Yokogawa from Japan.

More than two-thirds of the new companies that have settled here are engaged in the life sciences sector, which underlines the region’s leading position in this industry. Among the regions these new companies have come from, the renewed increase in firms from Asia is particularly striking. While five came from Asia in 2019, last year saw nine Asian companies settle here. At the same time, ten companies from European countries settled in the Basel Area, three from the USA and five from Switzerland.

The rising number of startups has also been very gratifying. In 2020, Basel Area Business & Innovation supported 82 newly founded companies in the Basel Area. This is 20 more than in the previous year and represents a new record. The increase shows how the Basel Area is blossoming into an ever more popular hotspot for startups. By their own estimates, the newly founded startups and the companies newly settled here expect to create around 580 jobs in the Basel Area over the coming three to five years.

“Coronavirus has accelerated digitalization – for us too,” says Christof Klöpffer, CEO of Basel Area Business & Innovation. The pandemic caused the organization to reposition itself in short order. Since travel became almost impossible, the settlement process was completely digitalized. Fairs, roadshows and partnering events were replaced by online conferences and webinars. Almost all the events that were organized took place online and with impressive success: the DayOne Conference with its 850 participants was the biggest event in the history of Basel Area Business & Innovation.

About Basel Area Business & Innovation

Basel Area Business & Innovation is the investment and innovation promotion agency dedicated to helping companies, institutions and startups find business success in the Basel Area. The organization targets and attracts companies to settle, supports founders of innovative ventures, and drives high growth initiatives in order to establish the region as the Swiss business and innovation hub of the future. The non-profit agency focuses on growing the area's cutting-edge industries life sciences, healthcare and production technologies and manages the Switzerland Innovation Park Basel Area, which houses the organization's accelerator programs. The agency serves the cantons of Basel-Landschaft, Basel-Stadt and Jura.

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