

Communications

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Interim results of the Swiss National Bank as at 31 March 2015

The Swiss National Bank (SNB) reports a loss of CHF 30.0 billion for the first quarter of 2015.

The loss on foreign currency positions amounted to CHF 29.3 billion. A valuation loss of CHF 1.0 billion was recorded on the gold holdings.

The SNB's financial result depends largely on developments in the gold, foreign exchange and capital markets. Strong fluctuations are therefore to be expected, and only provisional conclusions are possible as regards the annual result.

Loss on foreign currency positions

The negative result on foreign currency positions amounted to CHF 29.3 billion in total.

On 15 January 2015, the SNB decided to discontinue the minimum exchange rate of CHF 1.20 per euro with immediate effect. This led to an appreciation of the Swiss franc and, as a result, to exchange rate-related losses on all investment currencies. For the first quarter of 2015, these amounted to a total of CHF 41.1 billion.

Interest income provided a positive contribution, at CHF 1.6 billion, as did dividend income, at CHF 0.3 billion. The generally lower interest rate level resulted in price gains of CHF 3.7 billion on interest-bearing paper and instruments. Equity securities and instruments benefited from the favourable stock market environment and contributed CHF 6.2 billion to the net result.

Press release

Valuation loss on gold holdings

A valuation loss of CHF 1.0 billion was registered on the gold holdings, whose quantity remained unchanged. Gold was trading at CHF 37,127 per kilogram at the end of March 2015 (end of 2014: CHF 38,105).

Profit on Swiss franc positions

The profit on Swiss franc positions totalled CHF 328 million. It was essentially made up of CHF 236 million of negative interest charged on sight deposit account balances since 22 January 2015, as well as price gains of CHF 78 million and interest income of CHF 17 million on Swiss franc securities.

Provisions for currency reserves

As at the end of March 2015, the SNB recorded a loss of CHF 30.0 billion before the allocation to the provisions for currency reserves.

In accordance with art. 30 para. 1 of the National Bank Act (NBA), the SNB is required to set aside provisions permitting it to maintain the currency reserves at the level necessary for monetary policy. The allocation for 2015 will be determined at the end of the year.

Press release

Income statement, 1 January–31 March 2015¹

In CHF millions

	Item in Notes	Q1 2015	Q1 2014	Change
Net result from gold		-1 017.2	2 634.5	-3 651.7
Net result from foreign currency positions	1	-29 261.3	1 735.6	-30 996.9
Net result from Swiss franc positions	2	328.3	77.6	+250.7
Net result, other		1.7	1.3	+0.4
Gross income		-29 948.5	4 449.0	-34 397.5
Banknote expenses		-1.9	-5.4	+3.5
Personnel expenses		-40.8	-40.1	-0.7
General overheads		-31.3	-25.0	-6.3
Depreciation on tangible assets		-9.7	-9.9	+0.2
Interim result		-30 032.2	4 368.7	-34 400.9

1 Unaudited. The external auditors only audit the annual financial statements.

Press release

Balance sheet as at 31 March 2015¹**Assets**

In CHF millions

	31.03.2015	31.12.2014	Change
Gold holdings	38 612.4	39 629.6	-1 017.2
Foreign currency investments	531 911.4	510 062.4	+21 849.0
Reserve position in the IMF	1 642.9	2 037.3	-394.4
International payment instruments	4 034.5	4 413.8	-379.3
Monetary assistance loans	202.5	213.3	-10.8
Claims from Swiss franc repo transactions	-	-	-
Swiss franc securities	3 898.4	3 978.3	-79.9
Tangible assets	409.7	417.4	-7.7
Participations	134.7	133.5	+1.2
Other assets	500.6	316.2	+184.4
Total assets	581 347.3	561 201.9	+20 145.4

¹ Unaudited. The external auditors only audit the annual financial statements.

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Liabilities

In CHF millions

	31.03.2015	31.12.2014	Change
Banknotes in circulation	66 897.0	67 595.8	-698.8
Sight deposits of domestic banks	373 918.0	328 006.2	+45 911.8
Liabilities towards the Confederation	13 968.4	9 046.4	+4 922.0
Sight deposits of foreign banks and institutions	18 747.4	17 486.9	+1 260.5
Other sight liabilities	37 478.7	33 126.8	+4 351.9
Liabilities from Swiss franc repo transactions	-	-	-
SNB debt certificates	-	-	-
Foreign currency liabilities	9 512.1	14 753.1	-5 241.0
Counterpart of SDRs allocated by the IMF	4 412.5	4 727.2	-314.7
Other liabilities	140.7	154.8	-14.1
Equity			
Provisions for currency reserves ^{1,2}	54 787.0	54 787.0	-
Share capital	25.0	25.0	-
Distribution reserve ^{1,3}	-6 820.2	-6 820.2	-
Annual result 2014	38 312.9	38 312.9	-
Interim result	-30 032.2		-30 032.2
Subtotal equity	56 272.4	86 304.6	-30 032.2
Total liabilities	581 347.3	561 201.9	+20 145.4

1 Before appropriation of profit (cf. *Annual Report 2014*, p. 152).

2 The provisions for currency reserves form part of the profit appropriation, performed after the General Meeting of Shareholders on 24 April 2015. For the 2014 financial year, they amount to CHF 2.0 billion.

3 The distribution reserve only changes once a year, as part of the profit appropriation. After the profit appropriation for 2014, it will amount to CHF 27.5 billion.

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Condensed changes in equity

In CHF millions

	Q1 2015	Q1 2014
Equity at beginning of period¹	86 304.6	47 991.8
Distribution of dividends to shareholders	–	–
Profit distribution to Confederation and cantons	–	–
Interim result	–30 032.2	4 368.7
Equity at end of period	56 272.4	52 360.5

¹ At the beginning of the period, equity is composed of share capital, provisions for currency reserves, the distribution reserve and the annual result.

Condensed cash flow statement

In CHF millions

	Q1 2015	Q1 2014
Cash flow from operating activities	2 633.0	2 074.3
Cash flow from investing activities	–54 890.0	–29 975.1
Cash flow from financing activities	4 223.2	–5 801.3
Net increase (–) / decrease (+)	–48 033.8	–33 702.1
Fund at beginning of period	–361 095.7	–284 969.7
Fund at end of period	–409 129.5	–318 671.8
Net increase (–) / decrease (+)	–48 033.8	–33 702.1

The fund is made up of foreign currency sight deposits and call money, both of which form part of foreign currency investments, less Swiss franc sight deposits with the SNB.

The SNB is listed on the Swiss stock exchange (SIX Swiss Exchange) in the Domestic Standard and applies the generally accepted accounting principles, Swiss GAAP FER. These principles require the publication of a cash flow statement. In view of the SNB's central bank role, this is of limited informative value.

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Notes

Accounting and valuation principles

The SNB is a special-statute joint-stock company with head offices in Berne and Zurich. These interim results were drawn up in accordance with the entire existing Swiss GAAP FER guidelines (Accounting and Reporting Recommendations) as well as the provisions of the NBA and the Swiss Code of Obligations (CO). They present a true and fair view of the financial position, the cash flows and the results of operations of the SNB.

The structure and designation of the items in the balance sheet and the income statement take into consideration the special character of the business conducted at a central bank.

Compared with the annual financial statements as at 31 December 2014, there were no changes to the accounting and valuation principles.

The SNB interim results as at 31 March 2015 constitute an interim report in accordance with Swiss GAAP FER 31, with condensations in presentation and disclosures.

Swiss GAAP FER 31 requires the presentation of earnings per share. This has no informative value in view of the special statutory provisions for the SNB. Shareholders' rights are determined by the NBA and their dividends, in particular, may not exceed 6% of share capital (with a nominal value of CHF 250 per share, a maximum of CHF 15); the Confederation is entitled to one-third and the cantons to two-thirds of the remaining distributable profit. Therefore, no presentation of earnings per share is made.

Valuation rates

	Year under review			Previous year		
	31.03.2015 CHF	31.12.2014 CHF	Change In percent	31.03.2014 CHF	31.12.2013 CHF	Change In percent
1 EUR	1.0452	1.2024	-13.1	1.2193	1.2268	-0.6
1 USD	0.9728	0.9923	-2.0	0.8839	0.8908	-0.8
100 JPY	0.8109	0.8300	-2.3	0.8567	0.8489	+0.9
1 CAD	0.7645	0.8557	-10.7	0.8020	0.8384	-4.3
1 GBP	1.4394	1.5459	-6.9	1.4705	1.4736	-0.2
1 kilogram of gold	37 127.40	38 105.48	-2.6	36 727.76	34 194.73	+7.4

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Notes to the balance sheet and income statement

Item no. 1: Net result from foreign currency positions

Breakdown by origin in CHF millions

	Q1 2015	Q1 2014	Change
Foreign currency investments	-29 131.2	1 743.4	-30 874.6
Reserve position in the IMF	-138.6	-7.8	-130.8
International payment instruments	22.5	0.8	+21.7
Monetary assistance loans	-14.1	-0.8	-13.3
Total	-29 261.3	1 735.6	-30 996.9

Breakdown by type in CHF millions

	Q1 2015	Q1 2014	Change
Interest income	1 603.7	1 778.4	-174.7
Price gain/loss on interest-bearing paper and instruments	3 701.5	2 298.7	+1 402.8
Interest expenses	-6.2	-3.3	-2.9
Dividend income	341.3	335.1	+6.2
Price gain/loss on equity securities and instruments	6 154.3	51.9	+6 102.4
Exchange rate gain/loss	-41 050.6	-2 720.6	-38 330.0
Asset management, safe custody and other fees	-5.2	-4.6	-0.6
Total	-29 261.3	1 735.6	-30 996.9

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Item no. 2: Net result from Swiss franc positions**Breakdown by origin** in CHF millions

	Q1 2015	Q1 2014	Change
Negative interest on sight deposit account balances	235.8	–	+235.8
Swiss franc securities	93.3	80.0	+ 13.3
Liquidity-providing Swiss franc repo transactions	–	–	–
Liquidity-absorbing Swiss franc repo transactions	–	–	–
Liabilities towards the Confederation	–	–	–
SNB debt certificates	–	–	–
Other Swiss franc positions	–0.8	–2.4	+ 1.6
Total	328.3	77.6	+ 250.7

Breakdown by type in CHF millions

	Q1 2015	Q1 2014	Change
Negative interest on sight deposit account balances	235.8	–	+235.8
Interest income	17.4	19.2	– 1.8
Price gain/loss on interest-bearing paper and instruments	77.8	62.6	+ 15.2
Interest expenses	–0.8	–2.4	+ 1.6
Trading, safe custody and other fees	–1.9	–1.8	–0.1
Total	328.3	77.6	+ 250.7