

Communications

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Zurich, 26 April 2018

Interim results of the Swiss National Bank as at 31 March 2018

The Swiss National Bank (SNB) reports a loss of CHF 6.8 billion for the first quarter of 2018.

A valuation loss of CHF 0.2 billion was recorded on gold holdings. The loss on foreign currency positions amounted to CHF 7.0 billion.

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 loss on foreign currency positions amounted to CHF 7.0 billion.

Interest and dividend income totalled CHF 2.4 billion and CHF 0.6 billion respectively. This current income was offset by valuation losses: a loss of CHF 3.9 billion was recorded on interest-bearing paper and instruments. Furthermore, the negative stock market environment led to a loss of CHF 3.3 billion on equity securities and instruments. Exchange rate-related losses totalled CHF 2.8 billion.

Valuation loss on gold holdings

A valuation loss of CHF 0.2 billion was registered on gold holdings, which remained unchanged in volume terms. Gold was trading at CHF 40,643 per kilogram at end-March 2018 (end-2017: CHF 40,859).

Press release

Profit on Swiss franc positions

The profit on Swiss franc positions, which totalled CHF 0.5 billion, largely resulted from negative interest charged on sight deposit account balances.

Provisions for currency reserves

As at end-March 2018, the SNB recorded a loss of CHF 6.8 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 2018 will be determined at the end of the year.

Press release

Income statement, 1 January–31 March 2018¹

In CHF millions

	Item no. in Notes	Q1 2018	Q1 2017	Change
Net result from gold		-224.6	2 247.3	-2 471.9
Net result from foreign currency positions	1	-7 005.9	5 266.2	-12 272.1
Net result from Swiss franc positions	2	480.8	469.8	+11.0
Net result, other		-7.2	2.5	-9.7
Gross income		-6 757.0	7 985.8	-14 742.8
Banknote expenses		-8.9	-7.6	-1.3
Personnel expenses		-43.9	-43.1	-0.8
General overheads		-30.9	-31.2	+0.3
Depreciation on tangible assets		-6.7	-7.5	+0.8
Interim result		-6 847.4	7 896.4	-14 743.8

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

Press release

Balance sheet as at 31 March 2018¹**Assets**

In CHF millions

	31.03.2018	31.12.2017	Change
Gold holdings	42 269.4	42 494.0	-224.6
Foreign currency investments ²	768 362.9	790 124.8	-21 761.9
Reserve position in the IMF	841.7	871.3	-29.6
International payment instruments	4 552.2	4 495.5	+56.7
Monetary assistance loans	203.1	210.3	-7.2
Claims from Swiss franc repo transactions	-	-	-
Swiss franc securities	3 895.9	3 956.2	-60.3
Tangible assets	395.1	396.3	-1.2
Participations	158.1	156.9	+1.2
Other assets	578.8	601.1	-22.3
Total assets	821 257.2	843 306.4	-22 049.2

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

2 Includes, as at end-March 2018, cash received from repo transactions relating to the management of foreign currency investments amounting to CHF 30.8 billion (end-2017: CHF 45.9 billion). The associated liabilities are included in the balance sheet under foreign currency liabilities and result in an increase in the balance sheet total.

Press release

Liabilities

In CHF millions

	31.03.2018	31.12.2017	Change
Banknotes in circulation	79 566.8	81 638.9	-2 072.1
Sight deposits of domestic banks	466 174.7	470 439.4	-4 264.7
Liabilities towards the Confederation	15 280.6	14 754.8	+ 525.8
Sight deposits of foreign banks and institutions	57 484.9	54 085.6	+ 3 399.3
Other sight liabilities	36 858.5	34 398.8	+ 2 459.7
Liabilities from Swiss franc repo transactions	-	-	-
SNB debt certificates	-	-	-
Foreign currency liabilities	30 769.5	45 933.6	-15 164.1
Counterpart of SDRs allocated by the IMF	4 566.1	4 572.7	-6.6
Other liabilities	235.6	314.8	-79.2
Total liabilities	821 257.2	843 306.4	-22 049.2
Provisions for currency reserves ^{1, 2}	62 771.2	62 771.2	-
Share capital	25.0	25.0	-
Distribution reserve ^{1, 3}	20 000.0	20 000.0	-
Annual result 2017	54 371.6	54 371.6	-
Interim result	-6 847.4		-6 847.4
Total equity	130 320.4	137 167.8	-6 847.4

1 Before appropriation of profit (cf. *Annual Report 2017*, p. 168).

2 The allocation to the provisions for currency reserves forms part of the profit appropriation, which is performed after the General Meeting of Shareholders on 27 April 2018. For 2017, it amounts to CHF 5.0 billion.

3 The distribution reserve only changes once a year, as part of the profit appropriation. After the profit appropriation for 2017, it will amount to CHF 67.3 billion.

Press release

Condensed changes in equity

In CHF millions

	Q1 2018	Q1 2017
Equity at beginning of period¹	137 167.8	84 527.4
Distribution of dividends to shareholders ²	–	–
Profit distribution to Confederation and cantons ²	–	–
Interim result	–6 847.4	7 896.4
Equity at end of period	130 320.4	92 423.8

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

2 Dividend and profit distribution take place in the second quarter.

Valuation rates

	Year under review			Previous year		
	31.03.2018 CHF	31.12.2017 CHF	Change In percent	31.03.2017 CHF	30.12.2016 CHF	Change In percent
1 EUR	1.1774	1.1711	+0.5	1.0691	1.0723	–0.3
1 USD	0.9553	0.9765	–2.2	1.0005	1.0164	–1.6
100 JPY	0.8984	0.8678	+3.5	0.8960	0.8707	+2.9
1 GBP	1.3432	1.3205	+1.7	1.2477	1.2587	–0.9
1 CAD	0.7398	0.7775	–4.8	0.7523	0.7564	–0.5
1 kilogram of gold	40 643.31	40 859.28	–0.5	40 045.44	37 884.60	+5.7

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Appendix

Accounting and valuation principles

The SNB is a special-statute joint-stock company with head offices in Berne and Zurich. These interim results have been drawn up in accordance with the provisions of the NBA and the Swiss Code of Obligations (CO) as well as the accounting principles detailed in the notes to the annual financial statements as at 31 December 2017. These results present a true and fair view of the financial position and the results of operations of the SNB. Unless otherwise stated, the accounting principles are based on the Swiss GAAP FER standards (Accounting and Reporting Recommendations). Departures from Swiss GAAP FER occur only if an accounting principle runs counter to the provisions of the NBA or if the special nature of the SNB needs to be taken into account. In a departure from Swiss GAAP FER, no cash flow statement has been prepared. 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 2017, there were no changes to the accounting and valuation principles.

The SNB interim results as at 31 March 2018 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.

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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 2018	Q1 2017	Change
Foreign currency investments	-7 006.8	5 274.5	-12 281.3
Reserve position in the IMF	0.4	-7.7	+8.1
International payment instruments	1.6	0.6	+1.0
Monetary assistance loans	-1.1	-1.2	+0.1
Total	-7 005.9	5 266.2	-12 272.1

Breakdown by type in CHF millions

	Q1 2018	Q1 2017	Change
Interest income	2 380.5	2 081.8	+298.7
Price gain/loss on interest-bearing paper and instruments	-3 905.9	-1 586.8	-2 319.1
Interest expenses	18.5	42.9	-24.4
Dividend income	618.7	607.7	+11.0
Price gain/loss on equity securities and instruments	-3 269.4	6 309.3	-9 578.7
Exchange rate gain/loss	-2 835.7	-2 180.4	-655.3
Asset management, safe custody and other fees	-12.5	-8.3	-4.2
Total	-7 005.9	5 266.2	-12 272.1

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

	Q1 2018	Q1 2017	Change
Negative interest on sight deposit account balances	517.6	466.4	+ 51.2
Swiss franc securities	- 36.4	3.9	- 40.3
Liquidity-providing Swiss franc repo transactions	-	-	-
Liquidity-absorbing Swiss franc repo transactions	-	-	-
Liabilities towards the Confederation	-	-	-
SNB debt certificates	-	-	-
Other Swiss franc positions	- 0.5	- 0.5	-
Total	480.8	469.8	+ 11.0

Breakdown by type in CHF millions

	Q1 2018	Q1 2017	Change
Negative interest on sight deposit account balances	517.6	466.4	+ 51.2
Interest income	12.9	14.1	- 1.2
Price gain/loss on interest-bearing paper and instruments	- 46.8	- 7.7	- 39.1
Interest expenses	- 0.5	- 0.5	-
Trading, safe custody and other fees	- 2.5	- 2.5	-
Total	480.8	469.8	+ 11.0