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The city of Geneva has unveiled plans for a bid to host the 2018 Winter Olympic Games

But the Swiss Olympic Association does not share the same enthusiasm about Switzerland hosting the Winter Games, after recently declaring it was not ready to organise such an event.

Officials in Geneva told a news conference they had formed an exploratory bid committee for their "ambitious" Olympic project, which also includes cantons Vaud and Valais, where many of the alpine and Nordic ski events would be held.

Switzerland has hosted the Winter Olympics twice – in St Moritz in 1928 and 1948. But it has not always been successful: The city of Sion in canton Valais failed in its bids for the 1976, 2002 and 2006 Games.

The road to a successful nomination is long. The organisers have to build interest, put the decision to a local vote in 2009, and convince the Swiss Olympic Association,

before registering the bid the same year with the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

In 2010 the Lausanne-based IOC will select its shortlist of cities, before naming the host city in 2011.

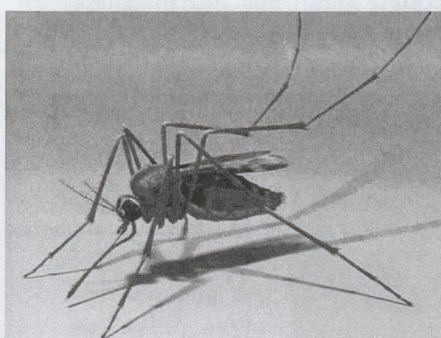
At this stage, opposition already comes from the Swiss Olympic Association, which has the final decision at the national level. The organisation said it was sceptical the country could mount a successful bid for 2018, but remained open if private investors took the financial lead.

At this stage, the list of other possible venues for the Games is still uncertain. Munich, Germany, and Pyeongchang, South Korea have both announced that they will make a bid and a handful of others are known to be interested, including Grenoble, France, Denver, United States, and Tromsø, Norway.

from swissinfo

Nasty Bite: Mosquitoes cross the Alps

The Asian tiger mosquito, which can carry potentially fatal viral diseases such as dengue fever or chikungunya, a rheumatic viral

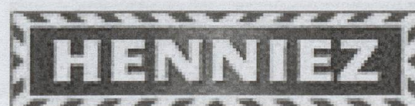


fever, has been discovered in Switzerland north of the Alps for the first time. It was originally native to southeastern Asia, but has been found in the southern United States since 1985. In 2007 the species was present in New Zealand, Eastern Canada and twelve European countries.

from swissinfo

Nestle swallows Swiss water firm Henniez

Henniez mineral water originates from the Broye Valley in canton Vaud. The source was first discovered by the Romans around 50 BC. The first bottling plant was set up in 1905 under the name Henniez Lithinee. In 1930 a local veterinary surgeon bought the rights to a neighbouring water source and founded the company Henniez

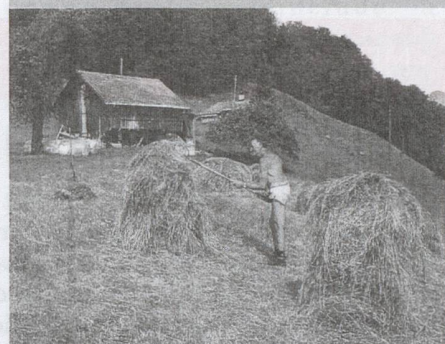


Sante. From 1978 on, the two companies united under the name of Sources Minerales d'Henniez, run by the Rouge family. The company employs over 270 people at three sites in Vaud and Valais and sells Henniez and Cristalp branded bottled water. Henniez had sales of SFr 152 million in 2006.

from swissinfo

Farming – the traditional way

Ruedi Beeler might have been one of the last farmers in his region to work his farm with almost no machinery – but he too has given up by the end of last year. He has reached AHV age. He'll stay in his home but lease out his land. Ever since his parents died more than 20 years ago he has lived by himself in the family home which was built, as is carved in a beam, in 1707.



Ruedi taking the hay off the Heinzen after a rainy period

Almost half of his land was mowed by hand, by scythe, and when rain was announced, he used to put the half dry hay on Heinzen. When the hay was finally dry he carried it home on his back.

There are rumours that he might use his freedom now for a big trip to New Zealand, to visit friends who farm here. I wonder whether he will wish to have come here, too, forty years ago... *tb*

Dr Veronika Isler
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