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The word of the Presidency - January 2021

- News - General news -



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The roots of Objectif Sciences International go back to 1992 when Thomas Egli, a serial entrepreneur, founded "Les Sciences Actives" almost 30 years ago. Fabulous! And Thomas is still part of our team, now called "Objectif Sciences International".

Since then, what incredible developments have taken place: a large number of subjects have been dealt with and about 1'000 children and young people leave every year to do science, to contribute to solving the problems of our planet and its inhabitants, during their vacations. And these problems, as we all know, are numerous and complex.

If the logo of the time of the foundation represented curiosity in the form of a "Tintin" rocket circling the globe, today's activities focus more on the problematic themes of the earth or on aspects that are little or poorly covered by academic research. And always with an ideal in mind, the "problem solving", "Citizen Science" or "FabLabs" are the modalities of the activities that OSI carries out today with its participants. A classic initiation camp, where one learns how to use test tubes, a Bunsen burner and a microscope, is already so rich, it is easy to imagine the level of demand that teams show for such projects, which are both promising and motivating!

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And all these years of activity have enabled OSI to achieve outstanding performance and professionalism at all operational levels and in many disciplines. An initiative born on the French-Swiss border but which has developed essentially in France and which we have not yet succeeded in making the other European countries benefit from while Local Groups are developing elsewhere in the World (essentially Africa and America). As far as I know, there is nothing equivalent in Germany, Italy, Austria, nor in the other countries of the European Union.

There is therefore an opportunity to be seized, there is even an urgency, because our contribution would be much better heard if it were brought to the European level.

While France has always been a country with an exceptional capacity for innovation, its modest ability to sell its ideas poses an obstacle. And we are in good company to see this: at the industrial level, those who wanted a high-tech Europe had to bow their heads in the face of the difficulty posed by cultural differences. For the European aerospace industry, for example, it was not technical and scientific skills that were lacking in the different countries. It was the abyss between cultures, French, German and English above all, that required 30 years of consulting services to make collaborations fertile. Being German by birth, having lived my adolescence in French-speaking Switzerland, I saw this up close!

How to do it?

The industrialists of the 19th and early 20th century already knew this; therefore, they sought to settle in polyglot regions. Belgium and Switzerland benefited from this, as did Alsace and Lorraine, but we have not overcome the poor understanding of each other's languages. If the scholars of the late Middle Ages all knew enough colloquial

Latin to be able to speak to each other, we now have English as our lingua franca. But it must be learned. And at OSI, we have made a great effort to acquire the language of Shakespeare, the results are remarkable, but not yet sufficient, we must go much further.

Taking on board the lessons of our forefathers, what we need now and now is a real population of German-speaking and English-speaking operational staff, nevertheless sufficiently competent in French to be able to take on board all the wonders that OSI has created in terms of programs, instructions, regulations, and all that we learn in ST1 and ST2. Will we find in bilingual regions, in Europe, but also in Africa, people interested in what we do?

These bilingual regions are key regions, and for the year 2021, I am going to focus my attention on this subject. I ask you to let the COMEX know who you think would be good candidates, as well as the opportunities that would allow us to move forward. As you have understood, dear reader, between you and the COMEX, we need to develop collaboration and communication. Above all, we need a frequent flow of mutual information to convey ideas, opportunities and opinions!

See you soon!

Dr Christa Muth, prof. HES

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