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CHURCHILL & PARTNERS  
INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL SERVICES

## SWISS GROWTH FORECASTS RISE



The forecast for Swiss economic growth for 2010 has almost doubled since previous predictions of between 0.5 & 1% back in Dec, to 1.5 % reported the central Swiss National Bank earlier this month.

'Economic recovery has stabilised' said the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs in a statement, the 2010

outlook for the Swiss economy is looking 'friendlier than a few months ago.' This coupled with uncertainty from investors regarding the euro has resulted in the Swiss Franc reaching it's strongest level since October 2008 against the Euro. Investor sentiment is strong for the Alpine country's currency, however there are now concerns that this may cause issues with exports into the euro zone, as this is a very important region for many companies in Switzerland. Strength for the Swiss Franc means a weakening for the Euro in comparison, putting strains on export relationships. However, The Swiss Central Bank has stated that it would 'act decisively' to prevent the Swiss currency from appreciating further. They have also stated that although the forecast for growth has risen, recovery is still 'fragile and is associated with uncertainties.' Switzerland's SMI index is up 4% year to date, outshining a 1% gain for the Pan-European Index, with other indexes in Europe either in flat or negative territory. Switzerland's economy has recovered quicker than expected and faster than its European neighbours, having managed to skilfully avoid much of the continent's disaster period. For more market news go to [www.churchillandpartners.com/market-news.asp](http://www.churchillandpartners.com/market-news.asp)

## INVEST NOW IN SOFT COMMODITIES

It comes down to the fundamental rule of economics: supply & demand. 'Soft Commodities', or 'Agricultural Commodities', are in increasing demand, to which supply is struggling to fulfil, driving their value higher.

For smart investors this presents a great opportunity to cash in on currently low prices, that will inevitably rise due to a number of contributing factors. Soft commodities refers to goods that are farmed rather than mined, such as wheat, soya beans, cotton, coffee, sugar and cocoa. Their production is therefore subject to factors like the availability of land, (which due to urbanisation is swiftly decreasing) weather patterns and longer term effects



like climate change. This, coupled with increasing demand from the emerging markets and forecasts of global population growth, all point towards demand outweighing supply in the medium to long term. The global population is expected to increase by a further 3 billion people by 2050 (Source: United Nations) and with the farmland dwindling, it is going to be increasingly difficult to grow enough crops to feed them. Soft commodities are also appealing to some governments now as an ethical alternative in the form of biofuels, further increasing demand. The idea is to invest now why prices are still relatively low in comparison to long term predictions. Perhaps rather than a majority holding, soft commodities should be deemed as a way of successfully diversifying your asset allocations in your investment portfolio. Here at Churchill and Partners we work closely with a number of fund managers offering investment options into this sector. For more information or to arrange an investment please contact your IFA or go to [www.churchillandpartners.com/funds.asp](http://www.churchillandpartners.com/funds.asp)

## EDUCATION FUNDING: HAVE YOU SPARED A THOUGHT FOR YOUR CHILD'S FUTURE?

As a parent it is only natural to want the very best start in life for your child. In today's highly competitive labour market, a good quality education is the best chance you can provide them with to succeed.

The benefits of a high quality education can repay itself many times over, providing your child with not only a solid foundation in life, but also contributing to their personal growth and development. Education funding is the most valuable gift you can offer in helping to secure your offspring's professional future. And, although you can't put a price on your child's future, the cost of education is increasingly expensive, rising by more than double the rate of inflation every year. Which makes it all the more important to plan now. Investing for education funding is no longer an alternative but more of a necessity, to be able to maximise the support your children deserve. If you lead an international lifestyle,



boarding school offers a stable, uninterrupted environment for your child's learning, but can cost a five figure sum per annum! Not to mention the further costs of university and college fees required to achieve their career aspirations. Education funding is a gift every parent would like to offer their kids, but without the correct planning it is not always achievable. Churchill and Partners can help you to achieve this goal with little effort from you, but great reward for you and your children. Saving and investing wisely now, will make funding your child's education less of a burden and far more enjoyable, without the worry of trying to finance tuition fees and living expenses from your own income. We work closely with a number of institutions that can provide tax efficient, easily accessible and flexible savings plans, specifically designed for education funding in mind. The products we recommend can offer real growth potential for your money, and we can provide on going advice on your fund investments to ensure you make the most of your savings. For more information or to arrange an investment please contact your IFA or email us [enquiries@churchillandpartners.com](mailto:enquiries@churchillandpartners.com)

For more information or to arrange an appointment with one of our independent financial advisors contacts us on:

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### MARKETS UPDATE- Close 24/03/10

	Current	Previous (25-02-10)	Move-ment %
FTSE 	5,677.88	5,278.23	+7.572
DOW 	10,836.50	10,321.03	+4.994
CAC 	3,949.81	3,640.77	+8.488
SMI 	6,879.95	6,643.96	+3.552
DAX 	6,039.00	5,532.33	+9.158
NIKKEI 	10,815.00	10,270.00	+5.307

For the very latest market info

[www.churchillandpartners.com/market-news.asp](http://www.churchillandpartners.com/market-news.asp)

### CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATES- 25/03/10

CHF- USD\$: 0.93388	CHF- GBPE: 0.62647
CHF-EUR: 0.70036	EUR- USD\$: 1.33342
USD\$-GBPE: 0.67082	EUR- GBPE: 0.89449

[www.churchillandpartners.com/currency-converter.asp](http://www.churchillandpartners.com/currency-converter.asp)

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Written & designed by Rosie Clow

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