

Sébastien Guex, Malik Mazbouri
(University of Lausanne)

**Relations between the Swiss Bankers Association and the other collective organisations,
in particular the organisations of bank employees (from 1912 to today)**

Abstract

The configuration that has governed relations between bank employers and employees for almost a century was established at the end of World War I. During the war, the bank employees' economic situation deteriorated substantially, which prompted them to become more radical and organised. This fervour reached its peak in a two-day strike of the Zurich bank employees, which the workers' movement joined. This worrying development forced the banking sector's main employers' organisation, the Swiss Bankers Association (SBA), to take into consideration whether it should – along with its other tasks – also act as the employers' association towards the bank employees' organisations. After quite a harsh in-house debate, the SBA decided not to take on this function and to let the banking employers' local organisations negotiate working conditions. From then on, a very decentralised and flexible organisation mode of relations between bank employers and staff was established. The Swiss association of bank employees' orientation, which became more and more corporatist, also fostered this mode. From the point of view of bank directors, in particular of big banks, this type of organisation mode had the advantage of limiting concessions made to their employees.