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**Abstract**

This article presents the results of a public opinion survey of the so-called higher institutes in Switzerland, specifically, of two kinds of higher education institutions, the cantonal universities and the Federal polytechnic schools. Conducted in 2000, this survey was the first national survey of its kind to be undertaken in Switzerland. As could be expected given the diversity of Switzerland, there were variations in the results according to linguistic region, the German-speaking population favouring a Humboldtian conception of the University, the French- and Italian-speaking population, a more Napoleonic, service-oriented orientation. There were variations as to education, those not having studied in a higher education institution of the kind being surveyed being more critical than those who had studied in one. All in all, the Swiss have a very utilitarian view of their higher institutes. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)