

Sandoz

Sandoz **Group AG** (**Sandoz** for short) is a pharmaceutical company based in Basel. It has been listed on the Swiss stock exchange since October 4, 2023. ^[4]

Until its spin-off in 2023, Sandoz was a division of the pharmaceutical group Novartis , which was created in 1996 through the merger of Sandoz with Ciba-Geigy. All of the Novartis Group's generics activities were bundled under the Sandoz brand.

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Sandoz AG

SANDOZ

Legal form	Public limited company ^[1]
ISIN	CH1243598427 (https://iw.toolforge.org/isin?language=de&isin=CH1243598427)
Founding	1886
seat	Basel , Switzerland
Line	Richard Saynor (CEO), Francisco Ballester (President International) ^[2]
Number of employees	>20,000 (2023) ^[3]
Sales volume	CHF 9,647 billion (2023) ^[3]
Industry	Chemistry and Pharmaceuticals

Sandoz International GmbH

SANDOZ

Legal form	GmbH
seat	Holzkirchen , Germany
Website	sandoz.com (http://www.sandoz.com/)

Story



Registered share of 250 francs of Sandoz AG dated 2 April 1969

The company was founded in 1886 by Alfred Kern and Edouard Sandoz in Basel (Switzerland) as an aniline factory (= basic material for dye production). The first pharmaceutical substance called *antipyrine* for reducing fever was produced as early as 1895. In 1917, Sandoz entered pharmaceutical research by hiring Arthur Stoll and expanded over the following decades until the end of the 1960s with up to 40 subsidiaries worldwide.

In 1982, the crispbread manufacturer Wasa was taken over. ^[5] In 1986, the Velsicol Chemical Corporation acquired its agrochemical division. ^[6]

In 1995, the specialty chemicals division was spun off as a separate company under the name Clariant, based in Muttenz . ^{[7] [8]} On December 20, 1996, Sandoz merged with Ciba-Geigy . The new group was given the name Novartis. The brand name Sandoz was then only present in the pharmaceutical business for over-the-counter drugs such as Calcium-Sandoz.

In its last financial year as an independent company in 1995, Sandoz had 49,882 employees and generated sales of 15.2 billion Swiss francs. Of this, around 7.1 billion Swiss francs came from the pharmaceuticals sector, 2.3 billion Swiss francs from the industrial and chemicals sector, 2.2 billion Swiss francs from agribusiness and 3.7 billion Swiss francs from nutrition and other areas. ^[9] According to the Novartis Annual Report 2016, the Sandoz division accounted for 21% of Novartis' total sales in 2016, which corresponds to 10.1 billion US dollars. ^[10]

Recent development

The former company name Sandoz was reactivated in May 2003 with the merger of the variously named generics companies of the parent company Novartis under the uniform brand name Sandoz with headquarters in Vienna . In addition to the name, the company logo used before the merger was also retained . In February 2005, Novartis took over Hexal AG and Eon Labs. The integration into Sandoz created the second largest generics group in the world and the largest on the German market with annual sales of 7.6 billion US dollars (2008) and over 23,000 employees in 130 countries. The headquarters have been in Holzkirchen since 2005. Sandoz's Swiss administrative headquarters are in Rotkreuz ZG in the municipality of Risch in the canton of Zug . ^[11]



Sandoz AG location in Basel, 1961

In November 2018, it was announced that Novartis intends to transform Sandoz into an independent unit over the next two years. ^[12] In August 2022, it was announced that Sandoz would be spun off into an independent stock corporation and listed on the stock exchange. ^[13] On September 15, 2023, shareholders voted in favor of this at an extraordinary general meeting. ^{[14] [15] [16]} A new headquarters in Basel is to be moved into by mid-2024. ^[17] The ten-member Board of Directors will include the following people: Gilbert Ghostine (Chairman of the Board of Directors), François-Xavier Roger, Urs Riedener , Karen Huebscher, Remco Steenbergen, Aarti Shah and Shamiram Feinglass. ^{[18] [19]}

In March 2019, it was announced that CEO Richard Francis had resigned for personal reasons and Francesco Balestrieri, Sandoz's European head, had taken over as interim CEO. ^[20] According to its own statements, Sandoz is the market leader in biosimilar treatments in Europe and ranks third worldwide behind Pfizer and Amgen. ^[21]

Sandoz Austria

The Austrian company Sandoz GmbH is based in Kundl in the Tyrolean Lower Inn Valley on the site of the former Kundl Brewery . It was here that *Biochemie GmbH* began producing penicillin in 1946 with six employees .



Sandoz in Kundl

The company was incorporated into the Swiss *Novartis Group* – then still *Sandoz AG* – in 1964. In 2003, Novartis consolidated its generics activities under the reintroduced name Sandoz – Biochemie GmbH became Sandoz GmbH.

Today, the Austrian company Sandoz GmbH develops and produces generic, patent-free drugs as well as a wide range of pharmaceutical and biotechnological active ingredients. The company is one of the largest manufacturers of antibiotics. The active ingredients of the Austrian company Sandoz can be used to treat a billion patients every year against bacterial infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, otitis media or inflammation of the pharyngeal tonsils and bronchi. Around 190 million drug packages leave the Kundl plant every year and are used in over a hundred countries. ^[22] ^[23]

At the end of 2009, Sandoz GmbH employed a total of 2,866 people. In the last eight years alone, the number of employees has increased by around 100 per year. In 2013, there were already 3,657 employees, with over 20 percent of them being academics. ^[24]

More than 610 employees are employed in research and development. Another focus is on the development of generics that are difficult to produce. These special products are based on special formulations such as transdermal patches, implants and sustained-release tablets.

Biotechnological drugs have been developed and produced at the two Tyrolean sites in Kundl and Schaftenau for many decades. They are therefore important competence centers within the Sandoz and Novartis Group. They produce active ingredients not only for their own needs, but also for other pharmaceutical and biotech companies. Decades of experience in the field of biotechnology form the basis for the new business area of biosimilars.

Another location in Austria is EBEWE in Unterach am Attersee in Upper Austria.

Sandoz major fire in Schweizerhalle 1986

→ *Main article : Major fire at Schweizerhalle*

On November 1, 1986 , a major fire broke out in a warehouse containing 1,350 tons of chemicals belonging to the then Sandoz in Schweizerhalle . The thick smoke, the stench and the unknown composition of the combustion gases prompted the authorities in the neighboring communities to alert the population early in the morning with a general siren alarm , and a curfew lasting several hours was imposed. No one suffered any acute injuries, with the exception of three people with pre-existing asthma who required hospitalization. However, the toxic substances entered the Rhine via the fire-fighting water , where they caused a large number of fish to die off.

On 11 November 1986, the analysis of water samples showed that at the same time as the Rhine was being polluted by the contaminated firefighting water from the Sandoz site, 400 kg of atrazine , a herbicide , had been discharged into the Rhine by the neighbouring chemical company Ciba-Geigy .
[25] [26]

The official investigation report concluded (only "on the basis of theoretical considerations") that incorrect handling of a hot air blower during the packaging of pallets of Prussian blue led to a hot spot, which could be considered the cause. However, the subsequent court proceedings did not result in any convictions. [26] The plant now belongs to Clariant.

Sandoz did not completely clear the fire site in Schweizerhalle. It left behind a landfill. This contains pollutants from the fire on November 1, 1986. This landfill still endangers a neighboring drinking water well in the municipality of MuttENZ. More fire pollutants are entering the groundwater than was agreed between Sandoz and the authorities in 1989/90. The pharmaceutical company Novartis , as the legal successor to Sandoz, and the environmental authorities of the canton of Basel-Landschaft accept this (as of 2010). [27]

In memory of the disaster, the sculpture Market Tables by Bettina Eichin is located in the cloister of the Basel Minster .

reception

In November 2005 , Stern magazine reported that the company had used a practice software called *Quincy win* to influence doctors' prescriptions. [28]

According to research by Zeit im Bild in its February 9, 2011 issue, in October 2010 the British pharmaceutical wholesaler Archimedes delivered around 525 grams of the anesthetic thiopental , worth around 27,560 euros, to the United States . The drug was manufactured by Sandoz 's Austrian branch . The buyer of the drug is said to be the Californian state prison San Quentin , where the drug has been used since 2010 to anesthetize death row inmates before the actual execution injection . Immediately after the incident became known, the Austrian Health Minister Alois Stöger called on Sandoz to prevent and rule out any misuse of the drugs produced. Sandoz stated that it could neither

confirm nor rule out the use. Archimedes is not a customer and is solely responsible for compliance with a marketing permit in Great Britain. *Sandoz* markets injectable thiopental, which is classified as an essential drug by the WHO, in 50 countries worldwide, but not in the USA or the UK. ^[29] ^[30]

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Weblinks

 **Commons : Sandoz** (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Sandoz?uselang=de>) – Collection of images, videos and audio files

- Sandoz website (<http://www.sandoz.com/>)
- Walter Dettwiler: *Sandoz*. (<https://hls-dhs-dss.ch/de/articles/041895>) In: *Historical Dictionary of Switzerland* .
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