

Our history

1841



Johannes Riggenschach-Huber founds a company referred to as a "mercantile business", concerned with the business of trading and forwarding, as well as with financial transactions. The company approves credit for the State of the Swiss Confederation, even before it has formally been set up.

1872

J. Riggenschach is, among other banks, involved in founding the former Swiss Bank Corporation in Basel.

1876

Messrs. Riggenschach & Co. are securities dealers at the Basel Stock Exchange. The licence for trading in securities after the nationalisation of the Basel Stock Exchange is dated 1897.

1893

Alfred Sarasin-Iselin (1865-1953) takes over the management of the company.

1900

The company is named as A. Sarasin & Co. as from 1st January.

Until today, our company has been closely connected to the Swiss electric power industry, whose tremendous development Alfred Sarasin anticipated and supported in a pioneering manner. In this way, Alfred Sarasin, open-minded towards all new developments in industry and technology but conservative and careful in all aspects of investment management, represented the best of the circumspect Swiss private banker.

1912

The company becomes a member of the newly founded Swiss Bankers Association.

1973

A. Sarasin & Co. takes over the Zurich-based "Orelli im Thalhof" which traces its roots back to the silk business of "Frey & Pestalozzi", founded in 1759. The "Thalhof" is the location of our Zurich seat until 1995.

1978

Blankart & Co., owned by Somary & Co., Bankiers, Zurich, merges with A. Sarasin & Co., Banquiers, Basel. This enables the bank to obtain a seat on the Zurich Stock Exchange and entitles it to call itself the oldest member of the Zurich Stock Exchange Association. In 1864, Carl Wilhelm Schläpfer founded a bank in Zurich which in 1902 traded as Schläpfer, Blankart & Co. and was a driving force behind the extension of the Zurich Stock Exchange. Its subsequent owner, Dr. Felix Somary, is reputedly one of the leading personalities among Swiss private bankers during the first third of the 20th century.

1980

The representative office in London is founded.

1981

Sarasin International Securities Ltd., a securities trading company, is founded.

1984

The representative office in London becomes an independent portfolio management company and is named Sarasin Investment Management Ltd. Both London companies move to Sarasin House, 37/39 St Andrew's Hill. Sarasin (Isle of Man) Ltd. is founded.

1987

A. Sarasin & Co. changes its corporate structure to a limited commercial partnership, maintaining the unlimited personal liability of its partners while having listed shares on the stock exchange. The company is now called Bank Sarasin & Co.

1989

Takeover of Banque Jenni & Cie S.A. in Basel.

1990

Sarasin (Guernsey) Ltd. is founded.

1992

Sarasin Deutschland GmbH is founded in Hamburg, Germany, and the investment funds company Sarasin Investment SICAV is founded in Luxembourg.

1993

In May, Bank Sarasin & Co. moves into the new building at Elisabethenstrasse/Wallstrasse in Basel. On May 10, the bank opens its doors at the new site.

1994

Sarasin Asset Management Ltd. is founded in London.

1995

In March, the Zurich office moves into the new premises at Löwenstrasse 11. The opening for clients takes place on March 11.

1997

After four years of successful development of the investment fund business, the fund management company, Sarasin Investmentfonds AG was detached in respect of premises and staff from Bank Sarasin & Cie for considerations of fund law. The investment management company, Sarasin Genève SA, is founded.

1998

The branch, Banque Sarasin & Cie, opens in Geneva.

1999

The office in Lugano opens.

2000

The companies in Geneva are united in one company Banque Sarasin & Cie.

2002

The annual general meeting of 4 June 2002 approved a resolution for the Bank to convert into a limited company, Bank Sarasin & Co. Ltd. At the same time it granted the Dutch Rabobank Group a 28% stake in its expanded equity capital, together with a call option over a period of seven years to purchase the class A shares owned by Eichbaum Holding. As a part of the deal, Rabo's international private banking units in Geneva, Guernsey, Hongkong, Luxembourg, Singapore and Zurich will be integrated into the Sarasin Group.

2003

In January we took over Direkt Anlage Bank (Schweiz) AG and integrated the business into Bank Sarasin & Co. Ltd. In March we took over the Paris-based asset management company Expertise and reorganised it as a new location for the Sarasin Group.

2004

Since the start of the year all of Bank Sarasin's Swiss offices have been using the Avaloq banking system. We substantially expanded our activities in the City of London financial centre by taking over the asset management company Chiswell Associates Limited. In autumn 2004 we initiated a close collaboration with Colombo Gestioni Patrimoniali SA in Lugano and moved into new premises in Via Clemente Maraini in November 2004. In the middle of the year we sold our subsidiary Banque Jenni & Cie SA.

2005

We formed a new joint venture in Dubai, the asset management company Sarasin-Alpen (ME) Ltd., thus establishing a foothold in one of the world's most up-and-coming financial centres. Sarasin was one of the first banks to be granted a licence to do business in the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC). In Germany, the Sarasin Group expanded its existing Munich-based distribution company for marketing investment funds into a securities trading bank in the summer. This has enabled us to expand our business activities in Germany to include the servicing of private and institutional clients. For the first time, the 2005 financial statements for the Sarasin Group have been prepared in conformity with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), thereby significantly increasing the transparency and comparability of our annual results.

2006

In February 2006, Joachim H. Straehle was appointed new CEO of the Bank, taking over this office in September 2006 from Peter E. Merian, who at the same time switched to the Board of Directors. Against the background of the growth strategy, the cross-border business with customers in the international growth markets is of increasing importance. Account was taken of this orientation in 2006 through the organisational integration of the international locations into a new business sector. In addition, important steps were taken at various locations: In June 2006 in Luxembourg, activities were adapted to the changed conditions of competition and the subsidiary Bank Sarasin Europe S.A. redimensioned. In December, a new, highly qualified management team was won for the two locations in Hong Kong and Singapore.

At the end of 2006, Rabobank decided to exercise its option to purchase all the shares in Eichbaum Holding Ltd. - a holding company which owned the majority interest in Bank Sarasin. All in all, Rabobank thus holds 46.06% of the equity capital and 68.63% of the votes, and consequently possesses the majority vote in Bank Sarasin. Bank Sarasin is retaining its operational independence as a leading Swiss private bank and remains quoted on the Swiss Stock Exchange SWX.