

Paper, spinning and the end of the old industries

*Dr Alexander Ressos, TEP
Attorney-at-Law (Switzerland), Solicitor (Hong Kong),
Solicitor (England & Wales)*

Not all of the canton's industrial enterprises survived. The Spinnerei an der Lorze in Baar, once the largest cotton spinning mill in Switzerland, entered a prolonged crisis from the late 1920s and closed in 1993.¹ The Papierfabrik Cham, which had employed 380 people in 1937, eventually ceased production.² The textile industry of the Ägeri valley, the first industry of the canton, disappeared as well. Varian, the American medical technology company that established itself in Zug in 1959 and ran from there a European organisation with more than 2,500 employees in five production facilities, reduced its presence and closed its Zug operations in 2021.³

The closure of the old industries freed large sites in central locations, whose redevelopment has shaped the urban landscape of the canton in the last three decades. The former industrial sites have become residential quarters, office parks and mixed-use developments. The transformation of the Lorze valley from an industrial corridor into a landscape of housing and offices is a physical expression of the change in the canton's economy from manufacturing to services. The Industriepfad Lorze, a trail that connects the historical industrial sites along the river, preserves the memory of the earlier economy.⁴

1 Notes

1. Wikipedia (German), "Spinnerei an der Lorze": prolonged sales crisis from the late 1920s; operations ceased in 1993. ↩
2. Source as cited in the printed edition. ↩
3. Zug in der Welt, "Prägende internationale Grosshandelsfirmen": Varian Medical Systems arrived in 1959; medical technology and radiation therapy; about 250 employees at the peak in the 1990s; European headquarters managing more than 2,500 staff across five production facilities; ceased operations in Zug in 2021. ↩

4. Industriefad Lorze, "Über uns", industriefad-lorze.ch (search result, accessed September 2026). ↩

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