

AGREEMENTS



European policy is a high priority of Swiss foreign policy. This is not surprising given Switzerland's geopolitical position in the middle of Europe. Our EU neighbours are our most important partners – and not only from a political point of view. They are also important for Switzerland from an economic perspective because we earn every third franc through our economic relations with the European Union. The legal basis of this close cooperation is formed by bilateral agreements.

Switzerland pursues its interests with respect to the EU via the so-called “bilateral path”. The two partners negotiate contractual agreements in selected sectors of mutual interest. On the one hand, these improve reciprocal market access for companies or regulate related aspects of product safety, employee protection and health. On the other hand, they enable closer cooperation in areas such as research, security, asylum, the environment, education and culture. Switzerland also contributes towards the

development of Europe through various commitments. Examples are the enlargement contributions to reducing social and economic disparities in Europe, Switzerland's involvement in peace missions in south-east Europe, and its participation in the Council of Europe's efforts to promote respect for human rights.

Relations between Switzerland and the EU have developed over decades. The bilateral agreements have been extended step by step. Important stages of this European policy have been assessed and approved by the people in referendums. This pragmatic approach has made it possible to find tailor-made solutions in a number of areas.

This brochure gives an overview of the respective bilateral agreements. We wish you enjoyable reading.



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