

EU–Switzerland broad package of agreements to consolidate, deepen and expand their bilateral relations

2025/0162(NLE) - 13/06/2025 - Preparatory document

PURPOSE: to adopt a broad package of agreement that aim to strengthen and expand the relationship between the EU and Switzerland.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

BACKGROUND: the Union and Switzerland are tied together by multiple bilateral agreements. Through agreements on the free movement of persons, land transport, air transport, trade in agricultural products and mutual recognition in relation to conformity assessment, Switzerland takes part in the Union's internal market.

On 20 December 2023, the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen and the President of the Swiss Confederation Viola Amherd confirmed the completion of negotiations on a broad package of agreements that aim to deepen and expand the EU-Switzerland relationship. The negotiations were launched on 18 March 2024 and the agreements were initialled by the chief negotiators on 21 May 2025.

CONTENT: the Commission is submitting proposals to the Council to authorise the signature and conclusion of a comprehensive package of agreements, marking an important milestone towards the ratification of a modernised framework for cooperation.

At the core of the package is the modernisation of five agreements originally signed in 1999, which grant Switzerland access to the EU internal market in the following areas:

- free movement of persons;
- air transport;
- the carriage of goods and passengers by rail and road;
- mutual recognition in relation to conformity assessment;
- trade in agricultural products.

Updating these agreements will bring them in line with current EU legislation, ensure Switzerland's dynamic alignment with EU law, and establish clear dispute resolution mechanisms. State aid rules will apply to both the air and land transport agreements. These updates aim to ensure that citizens and businesses on both sides can fully benefit from their rights, while promoting fair competition.

Moreover, this package also introduces several **new and cross-cutting agreements** to further enhance bilateral cooperation. These include:

- a **food safety** agreement will establish a Common Food Safety Area, covering all aspects of the food chain and ensuring dynamic alignment with EU standards;
- a **health agreement** will strengthen joint responses to serious cross-border health threats and enable Swiss participation in key EU bodies, including the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and the Early Warning and Response System;
- a new **electricity agreement** will grant Switzerland access to the EU internal electricity market, with dynamic alignment and the application of State aid disciplines;
- a new agreement on Switzerland's permanent and fair **financial contribution** to economic and social cohesion within the Union, reflecting the level of partnership and cooperation between the parties;
- a new agreement that will allow Switzerland to participate in several **Union programmes** open to association of third countries: Horizon Europe, Euratom Research and Training, ITER/F4E (Fusion for Energy), Digital Europe, Erasmus+, as well as EU4Health. The Commission will ensure transitional arrangements are in place from 1 January 2025 so that Swiss entities are able to participate in calls from that date;
- a separate agreement will cover Switzerland's participation in the **EU Space Agency**, for activities related to the Galileo and EGNOS components of the Union Space programme.

In addition to the elements listed above, the broad package also includes a separate protocol on **parliamentary cooperation**.

Furthermore, the agreement on Switzerland's participation in Union programmes includes a **sunset clause**, which provides that the provisional application of the agreement will cease if Switzerland does not complete its procedures necessary for the entry into force of the package by the end of 2028. The Commission proposal on the signing of the agreement on Switzerland's participation in Union programmes therefore provides that it will be concluded as part of the broad package of agreements that were the subject of the negotiations conducted in 2024.

Budgetary implications

The agreement on Switzerland's participation in Union programmes will have an impact on the Union budget through the association of Switzerland to Horizon Europe, Euratom Research and Training Programme, the activities of the European Joint Undertaking for ITER and the Development of Fusion Energy, Digital Europe, Erasmus+ and EU4Health programmes. This agreement sets out fair and balanced conditions concerning the financial contribution of Switzerland to Union programmes in which it would participate and provides for the administrative costs for managing those programmes. The agreement includes a reciprocity clause, ensuring that legal entities established in the Union have, as far as possible, access to participate in Switzerland's equivalent research and innovation programmes, in accordance with the conditions laid down in the domestic legislation of Switzerland.