



Motion

Proposer: PC3 (decided on: 03/30/2026)

Title: Patching the holes in the EU fabric: a federal Switzerland in a federal Europe

Motion text

1 11 November 2023 (lapsing). Renewed for Federal Committee April 2026 Submitted
2 by Political Commission 3: External Affairs & Global Governance

3 JEF Europe,

4 ● Applauding the federalist, multicultural and multilingual democratic system of
5 Switzerland;

6 ● Welcoming the successful conclusion of negotiations on the Bilaterals III
7 package, signed on 2 March 2026 in Brussels by President Guy Parmelin and the
8 Commission President Ursula von der Leyen;

9 ● Recognising the present absence of popular support to join the EU but noting a
10 clear desire to increase collaboration and recognising increased political
11 willingness on both sides to stabilise and deepen relations, as demonstrated by
12 the Bilaterals III package, which includes participation in key EU programmes;

13 ● Deploring the lack of democratic debates before the Swiss government broke off
14 negotiations in May 2021, which created mistrust between the EU and its Swiss
15 partner;

16 ● Welcoming the signature of the EU Programmes Agreement (EUPA) on 10 November
17 2025, granting Switzerland association to Horizon Europe, Euratom, and Digital
18 Europe retroactively from 1 January 2025, with participation in ITER from 2026,

19 EU4Health (subject to the health agreement), and Erasmus+ from 2027;

20 ● Regretting the slow unravelling of bilateral agreements due to the lack of
21 progress in their update which led, among other things, to the loss of the stock
22 exchange equivalency, and non-renewal of the Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA)
23 provisions on medical devices (aka MedTech), impacting Swiss companies and
24 customers with rising prices and/or less choice of products and services, and
25 acknowledging that the Bilaterals III package addresses these issues through
26 updated agreements on air transport, land transport, free movement of persons,
27 conformity assessment, and agricultural products, complemented by new agreements
28 on food safety, health, and electricity;

29 ● Acknowledging the Swiss semi-direct democracy system which has worked well for
30 Switzerland, and noting that, when Switzerland becomes an EU member, Swiss
31 referenda would become an integral part of the EU decision-making process in all
32 domains where Swiss parliamentary authorities are engaged, exclusively or
33 jointly as part of EU decision-making, but not when competencies are exclusive
34 to the EU, in line with the Swiss federalist logic between municipalities,
35 cantons, and the Confederation;

36 ● Acknowledging the recommendations issued by the Council of Europe's Group of
37 States against Corruption (GRECO) to Switzerland regarding political funding for
38 elections, referenda and initiatives;

39 ● Deploing the structural democratic deficit inherent in the bilateral model,
40 whereby Swiss lawmakers incorporate EU law into Swiss law without having formal
41 representation in EU decision-making institutions, a gap that can only be fully
42 addressed through Swiss EU membership or through new institutional arrangements
43 that have not yet been developed on either side;

44 ● Highlighting the importance of the continuation of cross-border cooperation
45 between Switzerland and its neighbours at the local and regional level,
46 including but not limited to key areas such as public transport, scientific
47 research, education, healthcare, environmental conservation, and economic
48 development;

49 ● Recognising the prevalence of cross-border workers in the Swiss labour force,
50 constituting a significant proportion, who engage in commuting activities from
51 neighbouring countries, thereby rendering them notably susceptible to challenges
52 associated with cross-border work-related impediments;

53 ● Mindful of fears over maintaining high wage levels in Switzerland in the face

54 of EU integration, but aware that the cases of Denmark, Luxembourg and others
55 have shown that maintaining high wages is compatible with EU membership;

56 ● Concerned that EU law may be applied differently in Switzerland and that there
57 may be a lack of an efficient dispute resolution mechanism between Switzerland
58 and the EU; an issue addressed in the Bilaterals III package through provisions
59 for dynamic alignment of legislation and a dispute-settlement mechanism;

60 ● Noting that the safeguard clause on free movement of persons has been
61 modified: Switzerland can maintain the clause but can no longer activate it
62 unilaterally without prior discussion with the EU;

63 ● Welcoming Switzerland's participation in most EU sanctions packages, and
64 noting that the Swiss parliament has approved amendments to the War Materiel Act
65 allowing automatic re-export of weapons to 25 countries that share Swiss values
66 and have comparable export control regimes, subject to a possible referendum and
67 with the government retaining the right to block individual exports on national
68 security grounds, while regretting that this change is not retroactive and
69 therefore does not affect Swiss made weaponry bought by EU states prior to its
70 entry into force, and noting with concern that Ukraine is not included among the
71 benefiting countries;

72 ● Respecting Swiss military neutrality, but also reminding Switzerland that it
73 benefits disproportionately from the EU's security and defence mechanisms
74 without contributing, and that there will be growing expectations from the EU
75 and its Member

76 States for Switzerland to contribute to Europe's future security and defence
77 architecture and to level the playing field in security and defence spending;

78 ● Calling on the EU to remain responsive to Switzerland's security concerns and
79 to engage in genuine partnership, recognising that a stable and mutually
80 beneficial relationship requires efforts from both sides;

81 ● Welcoming Switzerland's commitment under Bilaterals III to a permanent
82 financial contribution to EU cohesion: CHF 130 million annually for 2025-2029,
83 increasing to CHF 350 million annually for 2030-2036;

84 ● Noting the establishment of a high-level dialogue between Switzerland and the
85 EU through a joint declaration, providing for annual meetings to review progress
86 and discuss future cooperation;

87 ● Welcoming the new agreements on electricity, food safety, health, and
88 Switzerland's participation in the EU Agency for the Space Programme (Galileo
89 and EGNOS), which deepen sectoral integration beyond the internal market;

90 ● Welcoming progress toward an EU–Switzerland electricity agreement, recognising
91 Switzerland's strategic importance in European energy security and the shared
92 goal of a carbon-neutral continent;

93 JEF Europe therefore,

94 1. Encourages Switzerland to pursue the process of European integration and to
95 ensure the successful ratification of the Bilaterals III package through its
96 parliamentary and popular consultation processes;

97 2. Suggests that Switzerland join Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway in the EEA
98 in the short term as a possible first step toward EU membership, while
99 acknowledging that the Bilaterals III package already provides access to key EEA
100 programmes including Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, Digital Europe, and Euratom;

101 3. Urges Switzerland to join the EU in order to fill the current democratic gap
102 and enjoy the benefits of EU membership;

103 4. Calls on Switzerland and the EU to conclude as soon as possible a
104 comprehensive package settling essential institutional issues such as dynamic
105 incorporation of evolving EU legislation and an efficient dispute-settlement
106 mechanism; welcoming that the Bilaterals III package, signed on 2 March 2026,
107 achieves these objectives;

108 5. Calls on the EU and Switzerland to conclude an energy agreement as part of a
109 comprehensive package; welcoming that such an agreement on electricity is
110 included in Bilaterals III;

111 6. Invites Switzerland to modernize its interpretation of neutrality and align
112 fully with the foreign policy of the EU in particular as regards sanctions and
113 sanction enforcement against Russia in response to the full-scale invasion of
114 Ukraine, welcomes the Swiss

115 parliament's approval of amendments to the War Materiel Act easing weapons re
116 export restrictions to 25 countries sharing Swiss values, while regretting that
117 Ukraine is not included and that the changes are not retroactive;

- 118 **7. Recommends that special attention be given to potential issues arising from**
119 **Switzerland's high wage and price levels by replacing current "accompanying**
120 **measures" by EU and / or Swiss legislative measures designed to protect local**
121 **wages;**
- 122 **8. Commits itself to support a referendum or a citizen initiative in Switzerland**
123 **aiming at closer integration of Switzerland with the EU;**
- 124 **9. Urges Switzerland to become a participating country of the Erasmus+**
125 **programme, welcoming that participation is confirmed from 2027 under Bilaterals**
126 **III;**
- 127 **10. Strongly calls for full and permanent re-association of Switzerland to EU**
128 **research programmes and Erasmus+ beyond the current Bilaterals III timeline,**
129 **ensuring long-term stability for Swiss and European students, researchers, and**
130 **innovators;**
- 131 **11. Commits itself to support JEF Switzerland in its objectives of improving the**
132 **relationship between Switzerland and the EU and to support Switzerland in**
133 **becoming a full member of a federal European Union.**