Factsheet, 13.06.2025

Swiss contribution

Overview

With the Swiss contribution, Switzerland has been contributing to the reduction of economic and social disparities within the EU and to manage migration flows since 2007. The contribution also strengthens Switzerland's relations with selected countries within Europe.

To date, Switzerland has made two financial contributions – each in the amount of CHF 1.3 billion – known as the enlargement contribution (from 2007) and the second Swiss contribution (from 2019). The funds have been used to implement programmes and projects in the economically weaker EU member states.

Negotiations were conducted to agree on a new mechanism for regularising the Swiss contribution. In addition, an additional one-time financial commitment should duly reflect Switzerland's cooperation with the EU in the period between the end of 2024 and the date on which the new mechanism takes effect.

Key elements

The contribution agreement creates a legally binding mechanism for a regular Swiss contribution intended to reduce economic and social disparities in the EU. The contribution is divided into seven-year periods, with the first period running from 2030–36. The specific terms applying to each contribution period, including the amount and key areas of cooperation, will subsequently be laid down in a non-legally binding Memorandum of Understanding with the EU. Alongside the main pillar of cohesion, aimed at the economically and socially weakest regions, important common challenges, such as migration, will continue to be addressed.

The funds will not flow into the EU budget, but rather will be used directly in partner countries for jointly agreed programmes and projects. As in the past, Switzerland will conclude bilateral implementation agreements with its partner countries for each future contribution.

In the event that corruption occurs during implementation of the contribution or if shared values, e.g. the rule of law, are violated, Switzerland may initiate effective measures, for instance a suspension of payments.

CHF 350 million will be paid annually for the first contribution in the 2030–36 period.

Switzerland and the EU have also agreed to a one-time additional financial commitment covering the interim period between the end of 2024 and the start of the new mechanism. This amounts to CHF 130 million annually until the package enters into force. Once the package enters into force, the commitment will match the initial contribution level of CHF 350 million annually until 2030. This reflects the fact that Swiss–EU cooperation will be strengthened considerably from this point on.

The funds from the first contribution and the additional financial commitment will only be disbursed and implemented once the Swiss–EU package enters into force and over the 2030–39 period.

Implementation in Switzerland

A new legal basis for a regular Swiss contribution needs to be established in Switzerland. The Federal Act on Cooperation with the States of Eastern Europe, which had previously served as the legal basis for the enlargement contribution and the cohesion element of the second

Swiss contribution, was a temporary enactment that expired at the end of 2024. Switzerland's contribution will now be based on the contribution agreement with the EU. A new Cohesion Contribution Act should therefore complement the contribution agreement and solely govern the internal matters required in order to implement the contribution. Separate legislation should continue to govern contributions to address other important common challenges, e.g. the Asylum Act in relation to migration matters.

Importance for Switzerland

The Swiss contribution has been an important part of the bilateral approach since 2007, allowing Switzerland to invest in stability and cohesion in Europe. These are essential prerequisites for a well-functioning EU internal market to which Switzerland has access on a sector-by-sector basis.

The Swiss contribution deepens bilateral relations with partner states. It strengthens Switzerland's presence and visibility, enhancing its reputation as an innovative and reliable partner that demonstrates solidarity. Partner countries will be the direct beneficiaries of the funds, which allows Switzerland to determine its own thematic priorities, ensure that resources are deployed effectively, and involve Swiss partners in projects.

This cooperation promotes new partnerships and enhances the sharing of experience and transfer of knowledge. The Swiss economy also benefits from more attractive markets and investment opportunities created by improved economic performance in partner countries. Addressing common challenges, such as migration, also directly serves Switzerland's interests.

The agreement creates a clear, predictable framework for future Swiss contributions, creating greater legal certainty for Switzerland and allowing for better financial planning.

Specifically

- **Projects with clear added value:** the Swiss contribution improves stability and security in Europe. Switzerland defines specific projects it will support in consultation with partner countries. It ensures that any project selected delivers clear added value, with Switzerland able to contribute its expertise and experience. Examples from the current Swiss contribution show how this works:
    - **Joint research:** the Swiss–Polish innovation programme promotes joint projects between Swiss and Polish companies and supports researchers undertaking applied research. The objective is to boost Poland's capacity for innovation and build new networks between stakeholders. This also benefits Swiss companies, as it allows them to gain a stronger foothold in the Polish market. *Innosuisse*, the Swiss Innovation Agency, assists with implementation and networking.
    - **Vocational education and training:** the vocational education programme in Lithuania aims to achieve better alignment between the skills taught and the needs of the job market. A quality assurance model is being developed, for example, which focuses specifically on the acquisition of practical skills outside of conventional classroom environments. Drawing on Switzerland's experience with its dual vocational education and training system, the programme is creating new opportunities and prospects for local people.
    - **Environment:** Switzerland supports an environmental programme in the Czech Republic that seeks to preserve ecosystems in national parks and protected natural areas along with animal and plant habitats. Specific measures focus on sustainable tourism and protecting biodiversity, including managing visitor flows and restoring waterways. Another objective of the programme is fostering partnerships with Switzerland, where the Swiss Parks Network facilitates contacts with partners in Switzerland.

- **Migration:** with regard to migration, Switzerland provides support for projects such as 'Emergency Accommodation Facilities (EAF), Phases I and II', on the Greek mainland. These facilities provide immediate accommodation and assistance for unaccompanied underage migrants living in difficult circumstances. Efficient structures and local integration opportunities help ensure that people stay where they are instead of moving on to other countries – something that is also in Switzerland's interests. Specialists have also been able to share expertise and discuss best practices.