



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA

A close-up photograph of railway tracks curving to the right. The tracks are made of metal rails on wooden sleepers, with gravel ballast. The perspective is from a low angle, looking down the tracks.

The bilateral approach

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Historical overview

Free Trade Agreement (trade)

1972

Bilaterals I (economy)

1999

Bilaterals II (politics)

2004

Additional agreements

since from 2004 on



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Historical overview



Bilateral relations since 1972
On the basis of over 100
agreements

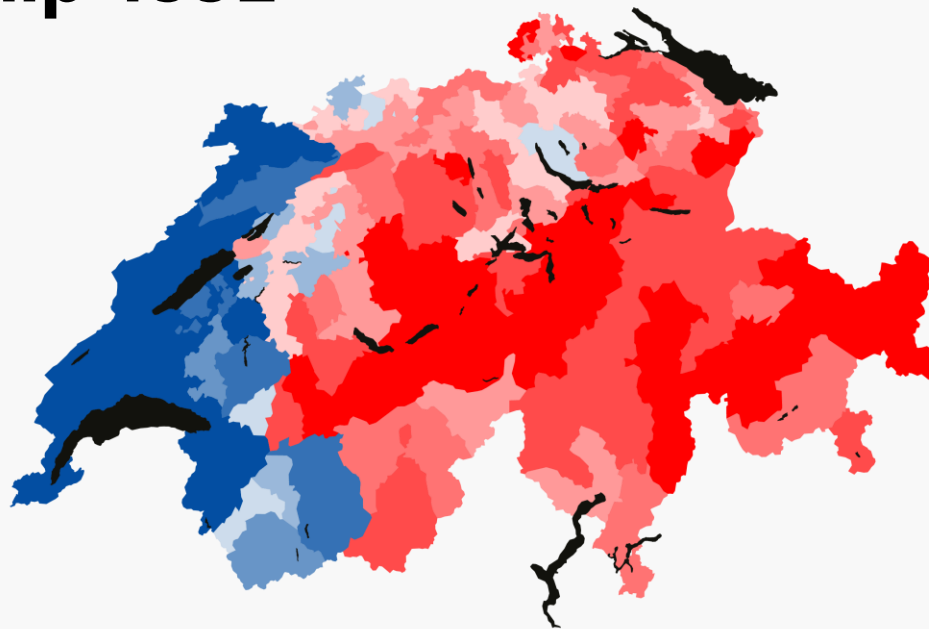
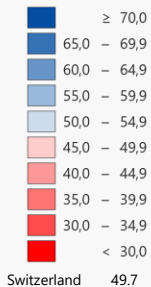




No to EEA membership 1992

Origins of the bilateral approach
on 6 December 1992

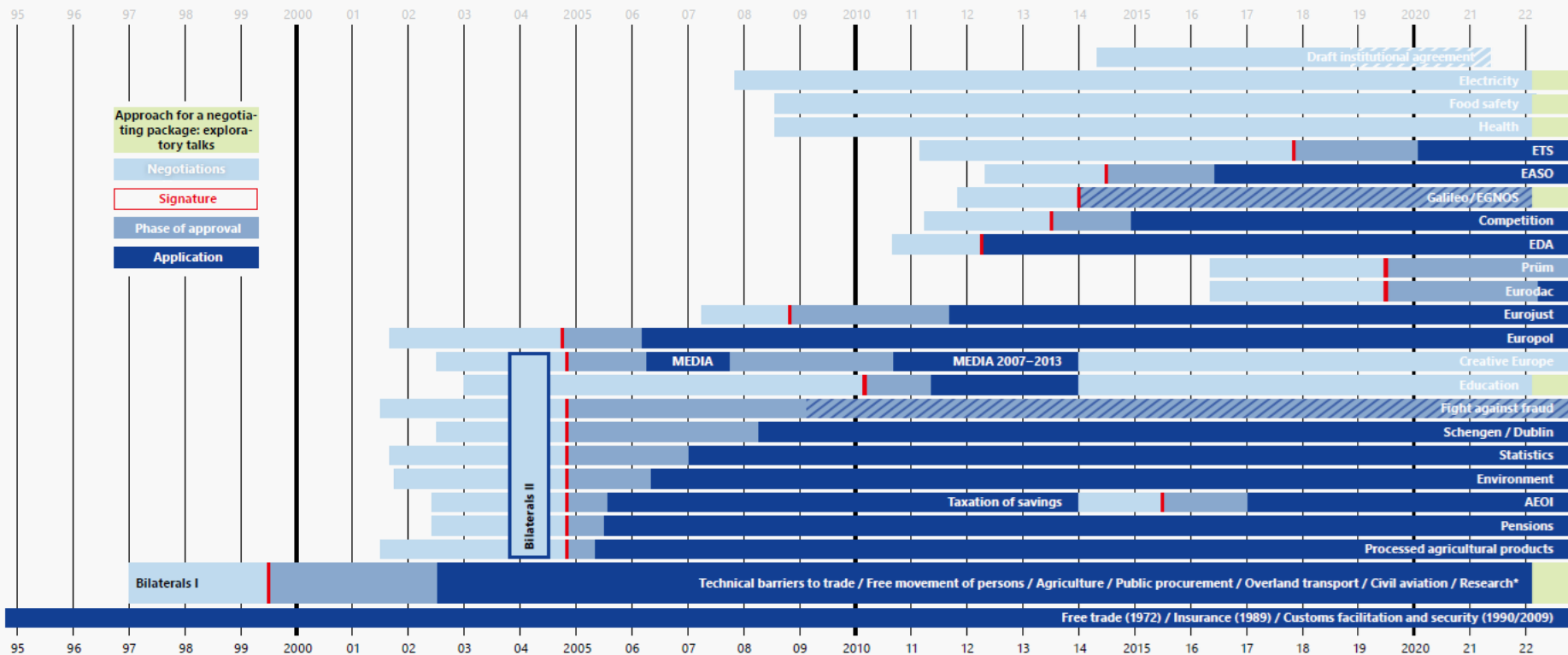
Yes vote percentage





Bilateral agreements Switzerland–EU

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The bilateral approach

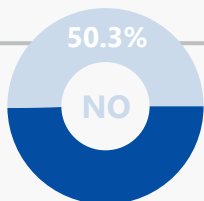
* Research: Due to the limited duration of the EU programmes, the research agreement must be renewed for each programme generation.



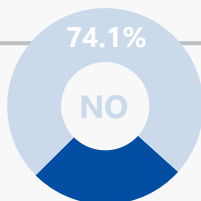
Key referendums

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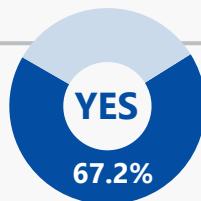
1992 European Economic Area (EEA)



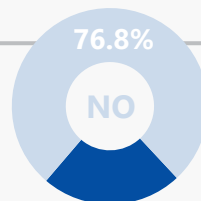
1997 'EU membership negotiations before the people' initiative



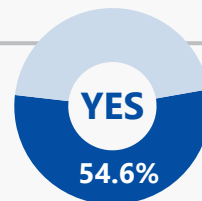
2000 Bilaterals I



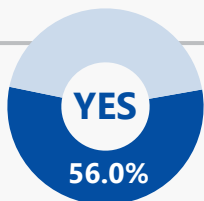
2001 'Yes to Europe!' initiative



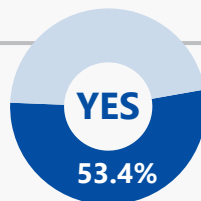
2005 Schengen/Dublin



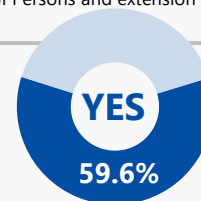
2005 Extension of the Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons



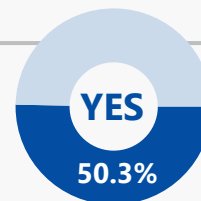
2006 Federal Act on Cooperation with the States of Eastern Europe



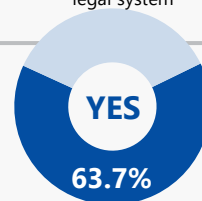
2009 Continuation of the Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons and extension to BG/RO



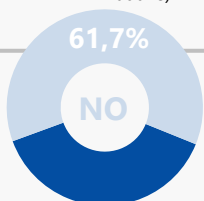
2014 'Stop Mass Immigration' initiative



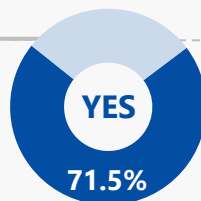
2019 Implementation of the EU firearms directive into the Swiss legal system



2020 'For moderate immigration (Limitation Initiative)'



2022 Frontex





Key elements of the bilateral approach



**Tailor-made
sectoral agreements**



Access to EU single market



A Swiss approach



Cooperation with Europe





Guillotine clause

- **Principle of parallelism:** the seven agreements were negotiated, signed and entered into force as a single package.
- **Bilaterals I:** free movement of persons; technical barriers to trade; public procurement; agriculture; overland transport; civil aviation; research.*
- The agreements were linked in legal terms by a **guillotine clause**. This means that if one of the agreements is terminated, all seven are annulled.

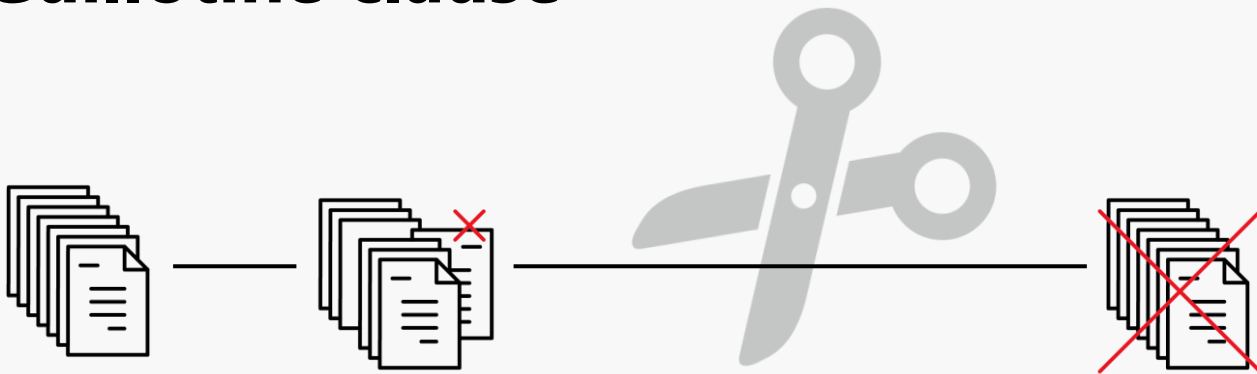
*The 1999 research agreement expired at the end of 2002.

Summary

If the Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons is terminated, all other agreements under Bilaterals I will lapse after a period of six months.



Guillotine clause

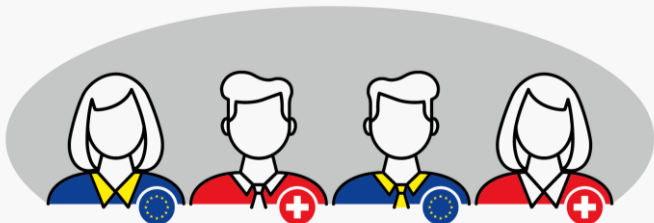


Summary

If the Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons is terminated, all the other agreements under Bilaterals I will lapse after a period of six months.



Joint committee



- 1 agreement = 1 joint committee (excluding automatic exchange of information in tax matters and pensions)
- Governs the implementation of the bilateral agreements:
 - ensures that the arrangements function properly and adapt if necessary;
 - conducts exchanges.
- Comprised of Swiss and EU representatives
- Meet once a year



Stabilisation of the bilateral approach

The Federal Council decided on an approach in which the institutional elements shall be anchored in each individual single market agreement. Their resolution is part of the package approach.

→ Incorporating these elements into the individual single market agreements enables a balancing of interests.

**Adoption of
developments of EU law**

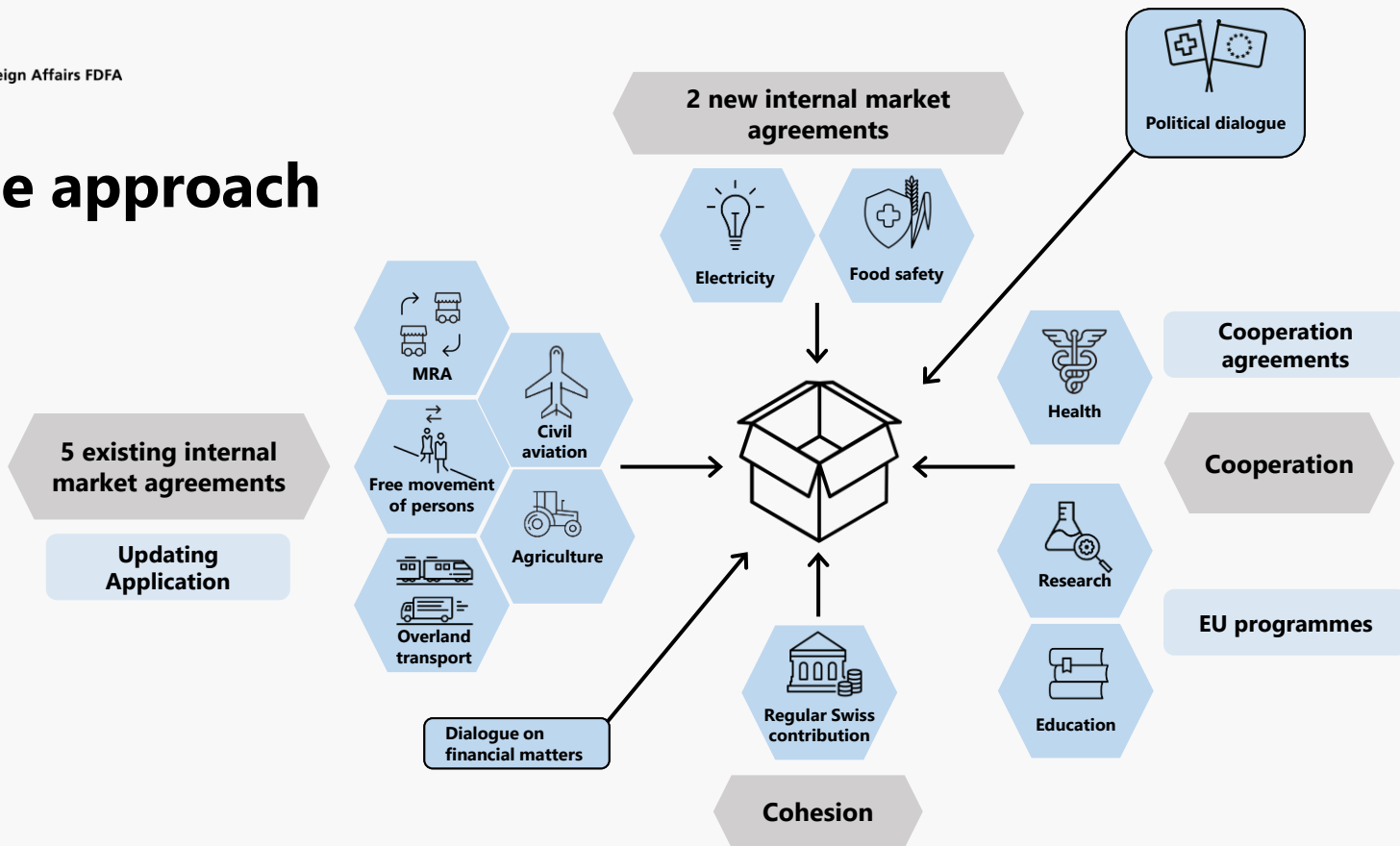
Dispute settlement

Exceptions and safeguard clauses

Level-Playing Field



Package approach





Process since 2021

Federal Council approves draft **negotiation mandate**

8 November 2023

Federal Council decides on the preparation of draft **negotiation mandate**

27 October 2023

Exploratory talks with the EU that began in March 2022 come to an end

23 February 2022

Adoption of guidelines for a **negotiating package** with the EU

What does the package include?

Updating existing & concluding new internal market agreements,
new co-operation agreement,
participation in EU programmes, institutional elements,
state aid, regular CH contribution

26 May 2022

The institutional agreement is not concluded



Consultations / start of negotiations

Mid-February 2024

Consultations on the draft
negotiating mandate are
concluded

- Continuation of domestic policy discussions with stakeholders
- Domestic policy implementation

8 March 2024

The Federal Council
adopts the final
negotiating mandate

12 March 2024

The EU adopts its
**negotiating
mandate**

18 March 2024

Official start of the **negotiations**
(14 negotiation tracks in total)



Switzerland has much in common with the EU and its member states

Besides economic aspects, we share values, languages, culture and geography.



In the international arena, we often advocate for the same goals and values such as peace, human rights and democracy.



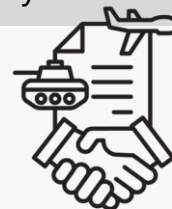


Switzerland–EU: broad cooperation for peace and security in Europe

- Agreement between Switzerland and the **European Defence Agency** (EDA) on armaments cooperation (non-legally binding).
- Opportunities for cooperation with the EU in relation to **the EU's common foreign, security and defence Policy** (e.g. Swiss participation in peacekeeping missions such as EULEX Kosovo and EUFOR Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina).
- EU **sanctions**: Switzerland decides on a case-by-case basis whether it wishes to adopt them and can thereby enhance their effect.
- Switzerland also participates in EU **election observation missions**.



Switzerland's commitment to **peace** and **security** is enshrined in the **Federal Constitution** and is a **priority** of Swiss foreign policy.





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Thank you for your attention

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