

# Facts on the bilateral agreements

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## At a glance

The bilateral agreements are coming under increasing pressure. It is therefore necessary to deal with the facts about these agreements.

There are many indications of how difficult it will be for Swiss negotiators in the coming months when they discuss Switzerland's future access to the European single market with EU representatives. At the same time, it is repeatedly claimed within Switzerland that we could live well without the Bilateral Agreements I. The importance of the bilateral agreements should be assessed on the basis of facts rather than assertions. There are numerous advantages that this package of agreements brings to Switzerland and the Swiss people:

- The Bilaterals I have contributed to Swiss exporters selling 30 billion Swiss francs more in the EU countries in 2013 than in 2001.
- GDP per capita in 2012 was over CHF 13,000 (nominal) or CHF 9,000 (real at 2012 prices) higher than in 2002, when the bilateral agreements had yet to take effect.
- The bilateral agreements simplify exports considerably. Many Swiss companies no longer have to have their products certified twice, saving CHF 200 to 500 million per year.
- Swiss industrial companies, such as manufacturers of railroad rolling stock, can take part in tenders in Europe, which bring them orders worth billions.
- For Swiss researchers, the link with Europe via the research agreement is essential and the economy benefits from a more innovative research and ultimately work location.
- Swiss producers exported 51,000 tons of cheese to the EU in 2012; thanks to easier market access, they have been able to increase their total production by 21,000 tons to 181,000 tons since 2003.

**In general:** The Bilaterals I package is worth more than the sum of the individual agreements. It increases investment security in Switzerland. Only this view also takes into account the indirect effects that have resulted from better access to the EU single market. Without the pronounced dynamics of bilateral trade and investment with the EU, Prognos AG experts estimate that Swiss GDP would be a maximum of CHF 200 billion lower per year today. In addition, according to Prognos, up to 700,000 fewer jobs would have been created between 2001 and 2012.

Even if the actual effect of the bilateral agreements on GDP and jobs is likely to be lower, there is no question for economiesuisse that the bilateral approach has given the economy access to the European single market, from which the whole of Switzerland has benefited greatly.

Here you can find the [working paper "Wie die Schweiz von den Bilateralen profitiert" \(pdf\)](#) - a non-exhaustive and continuously updated compilation of facts and figures on the bilateral agreements.