

# Rigid population cap ***exacerbates the problems*** of Switzerland

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## At a glance

- A new study commissioned by the federal government estimates that the costs of a fixed population cap would significantly exceed the benefits.
- A fixed upper limit would further exacerbate the existing challenges in terms of labor shortages, healthcare and AHV.
- *economiesuisse* clearly rejects the rigid population cap. Instead, targeted solutions are needed in the housing market, infrastructure and asylum system.

On June 14, we will vote on a rigid population cap. Now an external [study](#) commissioned by the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM), which was carried out as part of two parliamentary initiatives, shows the potential effects: Limiting Switzerland's permanent resident population to 10 million people would have far-reaching consequences for the economy, social insurance and bilateral relations with the EU.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="162 255 588 279" data-label="Section-Header">
<h2>Costs massively exceed relief</h2>
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<div data-bbox="162 292 908 417" data-label="Text">
<p>The study shows that limiting the population to 10 million would entail considerable economic and socio-political costs overall. According to the study, a cap would also have a positive impact, particularly on the housing market, infrastructure and the environment, as well as on individual means-tested social benefits such as supplementary benefits and social welfare. However, the magnitude of these benefits is significantly lower than the estimated costs.</p>
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<div data-bbox="162 446 849 494" data-label="Section-Header">
<h2>Exacerbating the challenges of labor shortages, health and AHV</h2>
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<div data-bbox="162 509 909 634" data-label="Text">
<p>The fiscal costs of a cap would be substantial: according to the study, the AHV contribution result would deteriorate by several billion francs per year over decades, while tax revenues would fall more sharply than expenditure, for example on supplementary benefits and social welfare. At the same time, the share of healthcare costs in national income would increase more than without a cap.</p>
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<p>The labor market would be particularly affected. According to the study, there would be a shortage of several hundred thousand workers by 2050. Sectors that are already suffering from labor shortages today, such as the hospitality industry, industry and the health and care sector, would be affected disproportionately. In the care sector in particular, the increasing demand of an ageing population would be met by a smaller supply of workers.</p>
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<p>The AHV would also come under additional pressure: the study assumes that the funding gap would widen significantly. In order to close this gap, additional sources of funding would be required in the long term, such as higher salary contributions, tax increases or benefit corrections. At the same time, higher</p>
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healthcare costs would be spread across fewer people in employment, which could further increase the per capita burden.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="162 163 845 212" data-label="Section-Header">
<h2>Rural regions and security of supply particularly affected</h2>
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<p>The effects of a rigid limit would vary from region to region. According to the study, rural and peripheral regions in particular, which are already more affected by ageing, would face additional challenges. These include risks to basic medical care, increasing labor shortages, accelerated emigration and possible school closures due to falling pupil numbers.</p>
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<div data-bbox="162 358 880 410" data-label="Section-Header">
<h2>The advantages of labor immigration outweigh the disadvantages</h2>
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<div data-bbox="162 421 901 505" data-label="Text">
<p>The overall conclusion of the study is clear: permanently limiting immigration exacerbates the very problems that Switzerland is already struggling with today: demographic ageing, labor shortages and rising healthcare costs. At the same time, it restricts the scope for political action.</p>
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<p>From economiesuisse's perspective, the study confirms that the benefits of labor immigration for prosperity, social welfare and security of supply outweigh the disadvantages overall. A rigid population cap, on the other hand, is not a sensible instrument for an ageing Switzerland. economiesuisse therefore clearly rejects the Chaos Initiative. Instead, the existing challenges in exploiting the domestic workforce potential, in the housing market, in infrastructure and in the asylum system must be tackled consistently. You can find more information on this in the last chapter of our <a href="#">dossier policy</a>.</p>
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<div data-bbox="183 733 313 750" data-label="Section-Header">
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