



European Policy & Open Markets

Chaos initiative: *No to a dangerous boomerang* for Switzerland

08.06.2026

At a glance

- The initiative jeopardizes the bilateral path with our most important economic and security partner, the EU, much sooner than many assume.
- Less immigration in an ageing society means more sacrifice, poorer care and additional pressure on the working population.
- A rigid population cap will not solve the challenges in transport, the housing market and asylum - but will create new, far greater problems.

Next Sunday, Switzerland will vote on whether we want to be the first country in the world to enshrine a fixed population cap in our constitution. According to the latest polls, it will be close. So every single vote counts.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="162 182 908 285" data-label="Text">
<p>The SVP's Chaos Initiative addresses real concerns about population growth and presents a supposedly simple solution in the form of a fixed population cap. Added to this are a seemingly long time horizon, trivializing statements on implementation and an initiative title that conceals the drastic consequences behind the concept of sustainability.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="162 303 900 344" data-label="Text">
<p>This is precisely where the danger lies. The initiative is not a "liberating blow" for Switzerland, but a dangerous boomerang that will fall back on us.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="162 373 843 423" data-label="Section-Header">
<h2>The initiative massively jeopardizes the bilateral approach at an early stage</h2></div>
<div data-bbox="162 436 908 561" data-label="Text">
<p>The consequences are closer than many people think: serious consequences are not only looming in the decade after next, but probably in just a few years' time. As soon as Switzerland has to restrict family reunification as demanded by the initiative, there would be a direct confrontation with the EU. As this would be a serious violation of the Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons, it would acutely jeopardize the bilateral approach.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="162 580 880 706" data-label="Text">
<p>A break with Europe would have drastic consequences. Cooperation in key areas would be blocked for years. The initiative would therefore directly jeopardize prosperity and security in Switzerland, as the EU is by far our most important trade and security partner. Especially at a time of growing geopolitical uncertainty and increasing trade conflicts, it would be short-sighted to jeopardize our relationship with the EU.</p></div>
<div data-bbox="162 734 908 785" data-label="Section-Header">
<h2>The initiative exacerbates demographic change - we all pay the price</h2></div>
<div data-bbox="162 797 909 880" data-label="Text">
<p>Whoever talks about immigration should not ignore the demographic reality: Switzerland is ageing. There are more and more pensioners compared to fewer and fewer people in employment. This growing imbalance is a major challenge for the labor market, pension provision and prosperity.</p></div>
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A rigid population cap would further exacerbate the consequences of demographic change. If the rejuvenating effect of labor migration ceases, there will not only be a shortage of workers to care for, build, repair, plan and serve. The AHV would also come under greater pressure and the burden on the workforce would increase further.

The recently published study on the impact of the population cap commissioned by the federal government puts a concrete price tag on the initiative. Unsurprisingly, the costs massively exceed the benefits.</p

The initiative means sacrifice for all of us

If you want to drastically limit immigration, you also have to say who should do without workers in future. The regional hospital, which is already working at its limit? The SME in the village that is desperately looking for employees? Public transport, which is already short of staff? Or research and innovation, which are dependent on international talent?

The reality is that many professions that are central to the functioning of our country are now supported by foreign workers. At the same time, as a center of innovation, Switzerland is heavily reliant on international talent. Without this workforce, there is a risk of poorer supply, longer waiting times, less innovation and a loss of quality of life.</p

The initiative does not solve our problems, but creates many new ones</p

The proponents of the initiative give the impression that a rigid population cap would be a simple and quick solution to Switzerland's key challenges. This impression is false.


A good example is road traffic: Switzerland's population has roughly doubled since 1960, while the number of cars has increased ninefold. Population growth is one factor, but other factors such as the development of prosperity set the tone. If Switzerland continues to rest on an infrastructure that often dates back to the 1970s, traffic jams will not get a minute shorter even after a Yes to the initiative.

Further examples include the area of asylum and security: here, too, the initiative does not solve the existing problems. On the contrary: if the Schengen/Dublin agreements with the EU were to be abolished, Switzerland would no longer be able to return asylum seekers to EU countries and anyone who was rejected in an EU country would be allowed to submit a second asylum application in Switzerland. In addition, the fight against crime would be made much more difficult without access to the search databases of the Schengen Information System.

Vote now: NO to the Chaos Initiative on June 14!

The Chaos Initiative is counterproductive. It jeopardizes the bilateral path with the EU, exacerbates the demographic challenges and leads to renunciation. At the same time, it does not solve existing problems, but creates numerous new ones.</p></div>


The idea that you can only send a political signal by agreeing to a rigid population cap is dangerous. The Chaos Initiative is not a symbol, but a new constitutional provision with real consequences. Anyone who wants to send out a signal for a sustainable Switzerland on June 14 should therefore clearly vote NO to the Chaos Initiative.</p></div>

A small portrait photograph of Pascal Wüthrich, a man with short dark hair, wearing a dark suit jacket, a light blue shirt, and a blue tie. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera.

Pascal Wüthrich

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