



Regulation

# Bureaucracy reduction: Confederation and cantons ***required***

25.03.2026

---

## At a glance

- With more efficient and digital government processes, around 30 billion francs in bureaucratic costs could be avoided every year.
- Bureaucracy is also a heavy burden on the cantons. In Geneva alone, the lost economic output amounts to around CHF 2.8 billion per year.
- The Confederation and cantons are called upon to reduce the administrative burden with concrete measures to ease the burden.

In Switzerland, there is an acute need for action to streamline regulation and improve the efficiency of official processes. An analysis by BSS Volkswirtschaftliche Beratung AG and the ifo Institute shows that bureaucratic costs of around CHF 30 billion per year could be avoided if the authorities were to make their processes more efficient and digital. Swiss politicians, on the other hand, are constantly issuing new laws and regulations. These ultimately lead to a continuous increase in the density and complexity of regulation. The same applies to ordinances and their enforcement. The Federal Council and the administration are much more proactive than before. The result of this development is that the administrative burden on companies is becoming ever greater. According to surveys conducted by economiesuisse, more than half of companies now consider the bureaucratic burden to be problematic. Bureaucracy is increasingly becoming a burden on the economy.

## Bureaucracy also a problem in the cantons

The administrative burden is not only a problem at federal level, but also in the cantons. For example, a new company survey conducted by the Geneva Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIG) shows that around 8,200 full-time employees have to be deployed by companies in the canton to deal with the bureaucratic burden. The directly associated wage costs for companies amount to over 700 million francs. At the same time, the cantonal administration also needs more and more staff to check all the forms, data and other requirements that companies have to collect, submit or fulfill. This is not only a burden on cantonal taxpayers, but also ties up human resources. These are not available to the private sector, although they are urgently needed in many places. The lost economic output for the Geneva economy, and thus the cantonal counterpart to the analysis at national level, amounts to a whopping CHF 2.8 billion per year.

## Cantonal differences are large

In addition to analyzing the administrative costs in Geneva, the CCIG also provides a comparison with other cantons such as Zurich, Basel-Stadt and Vaud. The indicators show that there are some major differences between these cantons. For example, Geneva has a significantly higher number of cantonal administrative employees relative to employees in the private sector. Another example: the average processing time for a building permit in Geneva is almost 500 days. This is more than twice as long as in Zurich or Basel-Stadt. And these cantons are by no means known for processing such permits quickly. At the same time, all three cantons are complaining about the housing shortage.

## Relief is needed at all levels

The density of regulation in Switzerland has been increasing for years, both at federal level and in many cantons. Public administration is growing and the administrative burden on companies is increasing. We will no longer be able to afford this in the long term. The aim must be to use as few resources as necessary for administrative activities. Too many regulatory requirements that regulate everything down to the smallest detail run counter to this goal, as do inefficient implementation processes. There is therefore a great need for action, not least because there are currently numerous challenges for companies. Politicians, both at national level and in many cantons, are called upon to take measures to reduce the administrative burden.



**Rudolf Minsch**

Head of General Economic Policy & International Relations, Chief Economist, Deputy Chairman of the Executive Board



**Guido Saurer**

Deputy Head of Economic Policy & Education

