  

Regulation

Regulation and bureaucracy: ***Ambition level still far too low***

15.12.2025

At a glance

- Increasing regulation and bureaucracy are causing considerable additional burdens for companies in Switzerland.
- The level of ambition of the relief measures adopted by the Federal Council remains too low in the view of the business community.
- In order to achieve effective relief, systematic reviews by sectoral studies and expert groups are needed, as well as the consistent implementation of additional measures at all levels.

Regulation and bureaucracy are a massive burden for companies in Switzerland. economiesuisse has already highlighted the problem on several occasions, most recently at a joint media conference of the four business umbrella organizations. There needs to be a noticeable reduction in the regulatory burden and the bureaucratic burden on companies. So far, the trend has only gone in the opposite direction: the density of regulation and thus the administrative burden on business and administration has increased continuously over the last few years.

Politicians at least seem to have recognized the need for action

The Federal Council and parts of parliament now seem willing to introduce measures to ease the burden. The Federal Council wants to improve the general framework conditions for all companies and is focusing on regulatory relief. In November, it adopted an initial package for the competitiveness of the Swiss economy. Parliament, for its part, is discussing various initiatives to strengthen competitiveness as part of an extraordinary session. These are the first hesitant steps in the right direction.

Federal Council's "package": the level of ambition is clearly too low

In the first package, the Federal Council has adopted a total of 60 specific measures. economiesuisse welcomes the Federal Council's efforts. However, a closer look at the measures reveals that the government's level of ambition is clearly too low in view of the massive burden on companies. From the point of view of the economy, only around 20 measures will provide any additional relief at all. For other measures, it is unclear whether there will be any relief because the Federal Council has only decided on a review for the time being. In addition, many of the measures listed are not new at all. The Federal Council merely refers to work that is already underway. Although most of these efforts are to be welcomed, the number of ordinances, directives, circulars and information sheets is now so immense that a further package with new and noticeable relief measures can easily be put together. The business community therefore expects the Federal Council and the departments to take additional measures.

Sector studies and expert group to streamline regulation

The challenge in the whole story lies in the complexity and scope of current regulation. The growing density of regulation has not only massively increased the burden on the economy, it also makes it more difficult to find effective relief measures. Because the devil is often in the detail. And finding these details in the jungle of laws and ordinances is a Sisyphean task. The instrument of sector studies, which the Federal Council also uses, is therefore a sensible approach. Selected areas of regulation, such as pharmaceutical regulation at present, are specifically examined for potential relief. In addition, the business community is calling for the appointment of a group of experts to systematically review existing regulation in all areas. Similar to the procedure for the 27 relief package, this should result in a package of proposals to really reduce and simplify regulations.

Switzerland as a business location now needs measures at all levels, from laws and ordinances to implementation by the administration. One thing is clear: in order for companies to be noticeably and effectively relieved, these measures must be implemented consistently and, where necessary, supported by parliament.

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