Fiscal Policy, Pension Scheme

AHV Reform 2030: ***Solve the problem*** instead of postponing it

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At a glance

- Higher taxes and contributions to cover the structural deficits of the AHV are unreasonable for businesses and the public.
- A sustainable solution to the problem is needed—given the demographic situation, discussions about the retirement age are imperative.
- Structural measures must be part of an intervention mechanism to ensure the financial stability of the AHV.

Longer life expectancy and the impending retirement of the baby boomers are posing financial challenges for the AHV. These challenges are exacerbated by the payment of the 13th AHV pension starting in 2026. This will be only partially funded by the additional VAT revenue to be put to a vote in November. Consequently, the demands on the AHV2030 reform—which the Federal Council submitted for public consultation in May 2026—are correspondingly higher.

Structural measures instead of higher taxes on businesses and the public

The 2030 reform must focus on ensuring the financial stability of the AHV for current and future generations. economiesuisse firmly rejects the Federal Council's proposed increases in the value-added tax or payroll contributions. It is unreasonable to place an ever-greater burden on the population and the economy. Rather, structural adjustments are needed. The Federal Council should therefore include measures in the bill to gradually raise the retirement age (reference age).

Intervention Mechanism Involving an Increase in the Retirement Age

The Federal Council is also proposing a "financial" intervention mechanism ("AHV debt brake") should the AHV fund fall below 90 percent of annual expenditures within three years. The Federal Council would then be required to submit restructuring measures to Parliament within one year. However, since the term "financial" intervention mechanism is used, this likely refers, once again, to additional revenue, according to the Federal Council's understanding.

economiesuisse considers an intervention mechanism, as a supplement to structural measures, to be fundamentally sensible. However, the mechanism must not focus solely on generating additional revenue; rather, it must include a significant structural balancing element—specifically, a gradual increase in the retirement age. A combination with higher payroll tax contributions is categorically rejected.

Proposal for a Dividend Tax Rejected: No Backdoor Tax for SMEs

In the consultation document, the Federal Council also proposes that dividends be partially subject to AHV contributions under certain conditions. This would apply to dividends received by individuals who are employed by a corporation and simultaneously hold at least a 10 percent stake in that corporation.
The measure is justified by the assertion that companies pay out dividends instead of wages to circumvent the obligation to pay contributions. However, according to a recent report by the Federal Council, there is no evidence of widespread conversion of wages into dividends. Furthermore, effective corrective measures already exist for individual cases of obvious disparities between wages and dividends. economiesuisse therefore clearly rejects such a partial contribution obligation. The legal basis is clear: earned income is subject to social security contributions; capital income is not. A dividend clearly constitutes capital income. Ultimately, the proposed measure would amount to a backdoor tax on SMEs. Therefore, subjecting it to AHV obligations must be ruled out.

You can find the consultation response here (available in German). In addition, regarding social policy issues, we refer you to statement from the Swiss Employers' Association.

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