International Market Access

Free Trade with Mercosur: Parliament Sends ***an Important Signal for Switzerland as a Business Hub***

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At a glance

- economiesuisse welcomes the ratification of the free trade agreement with Mercosur by both chambers of Parliament.
- The agreement is of great importance to the Swiss export sector in these geopolitically turbulent times.
- Switzerland must quickly eliminate its competitive disadvantages relative to EU competitors and ensure access to diversified markets.

With today’s resolution of differences by the Council of States, both chambers of Parliament have come out in favor of the free trade agreement between the EFTA states and the Mercosur states. Yesterday, the National Council approved a compromise drafted by the smaller chamber. The final vote is still pending.

economiesuisse expressly welcomes this important signal from Parliament and expects both chambers to confirm their decision at the end of the current session. Following the regrettable rejection by the National Council during the first reading in June, Parliament is now clearly committing to open markets, competitiveness, and reliable trade relations.

Securing Market Access, Strengthening Resilience

The Mercosur Agreement opens up better opportunities for Swiss companies in a growing market with over 270 million consumers. Tariffs on over 97 percent of Swiss exports will be gradually reduced or completely eliminated. This could result in annual tariff savings of up to 155 million francs.

In addition, the agreement improves legal certainty, investment conditions, and intellectual property protection. Overall, the agreement strengthens the diversification and resilience of the Swiss economy in an increasingly uncertain international environment.

But the agreement represents a clear improvement not only for the economy: It also contains binding commitments on climate, forest, marine, and biodiversity protection, as well as on labor rights. With this agreement, Switzerland will be able to make a greater contribution to improving conditions on the ground in the future. Switzerland thereby strengthens its role as a bridge-builder and constructive dialogue partner.

The clock is ticking – swift implementation is key

The priority now is to bring the Mercosur agreement into force as quickly as possible. The European Union has already been provisionally applying its own Mercosur agreement since May 1, 2026. As a result, EU companies are already benefiting from better market access conditions, while Swiss suppliers are coming under pressure both in terms of pricing and strategy. Switzerland must therefore act quickly to catch up. Further delays must be avoided.

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