Federal Council recommends to reject popular initiative "No to a 10-million Switzerland"

The Federal Council proposed that Parliament submit the popular initiative “No to a 10-Million Switzerland! (Sustainability Initiative)” to a public vote without a direct or indirect counterproposal and recommended its rejection. The government considers the initiative a threat to Switzerland’s prosperity, security, and sustainable economic development, as well as to the bilateral path with the European Union. If approved, the initiative would require Switzerland to withdraw from the Agreement on the Free Movement of Persons (AFMP) with the EU once the country’s population exceeded 10 million, unless new safeguard clauses could be negotiated. This would likely lead to the termination of all Bilateral Agreements like jeopardizing Switzerland’s privileged access to the EU single market and threatening jobs and economic stability. The Council also warned that ending the AFMP could undermine Switzerland’s participation in the Schengen and Dublin systems, increasing irregular migration, asylum requests, and security risks due to the loss of access to EU information databases. While rejecting the initiative, the government acknowledged challenges linked to immigration and demographic growth. It outlined measures to better use the existing domestic workforce, including integrating older job seekers and family reunification migrants into the labor market. Nonetheless, Switzerland will continue to rely on foreign workers, particularly in healthcare, agriculture, tourism, and hospitality, to maintain competitiveness and long-term prosperity. To address housing shortages, the Federal Council announced additional measures and noted that a new safeguard clause negotiated with the EU could allow temporary protective measures or limited restrictions on EU immigration without endangering the AFMP or bilateral relations. Finally, the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) is developing new measures with cantons, cities, and municipalities to reduce unfounded asylum claims and prevent abuses in the asylum system.

Source(s)

- Federal Council | Der Bundesrat | Conseil fédéral | Consiglio federale (21 March, 2025), Le Conseil fédéral entend préserver la prospérité et la sécurité de la Suisse [Federal Council wants to safeguard Switzerland's prosperity and security], https://www.news.admin.ch/fr/nsb?id=104599

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