Labor Shortage, European Policy & Open Markets

Chaos initiative: *a threat to Switzerland's prosperity and stability*

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At a glance

— A rigid population cap would lead to great uncertainty, as it would exacerbate labour shortages and put additional pressure on our pension provision.

— The initiative ignores the demographic challenges and creates additional bureaucracy, uncertainty and instability.

— Instead of rigid caps, targeted measures are needed to increase productivity and make better use of domestic potential.

At its meeting on December 15, 2025, the Council of States rejected the SVP's initiative "No 10 million Switzerland! (sustainability initiative)" at its meeting on 15 December 2025. This is an important sign. Because what at first glance looks like a solution to immigration issues turns out to be a dangerous boomerang on closer inspection: the initiative poses a massive threat to Switzerland's prosperity, supply and stability. Politicians are therefore right to call it a chaos initiative.

If accepted, chaos is inevitable

The fact that the initiative proposes to permanently limit the population to a maximum of 10 million people is particularly problematic. Even at 9.5 million inhabitants, drastic restrictions are to take effect. With a rigid upper limit, chaos is inevitable. In the coming years, significantly more people will retire than young people will join the workforce. This means that fewer and fewer people in employment will have to pay for more and more retirees. If the immigration of urgently needed workers is stopped, Switzerland will find itself in a vicious circle: in restaurants and hotels, hospitals, at kiosks, at the ETH or in the export industry - there would be a shortage of foreign workers everywhere. The initiative would exacerbate the existing labor shortage and put additional pressure on our pension system. Everyone's quality of life would decline and Switzerland's prosperity would be seriously jeopardized. Without immigration, there is also the threat of a massive slump in the provision and financing of social welfare systems.

No real solution - new problems arise

Instead of constructively tackling the real challenges of immigration, the initiative thus creates numerous new problems. The demographic trend - more and more retirements with a falling birth rate - makes controlled immigration essential. However, this would also take place if Switzerland were to terminate the free movement of persons, as demanded by the initiative. However, instead of employer demand ensuring that immigration takes place in line with the labor market, a quota system would probably be introduced. Switzerland had this before the introduction of the free movement of persons.

Returning to an inefficient quota system increases bureaucracy and makes recruitment more expensive without effectively limiting immigration. It remains unclear which sectors will have to do without urgently needed foreign workers in the future. This would be a major setback, particularly for the future of research, the catering and hotel industry, the healthcare sector and the export industry. Politicians would have to respond with ever stricter restrictions and emergency measures in future, which would lead to further uncertainty and instability.

Conclusion: a boomerang for Switzerland

The Chaos Initiative does not solve a single problem, but creates new risks for prosperity, supply and social stability. Instead of rigid upper limits, targeted measures are needed to increase productivity, make better use of the domestic workforce potential and consistently implement asylum, housing and infrastructure policies. Only in this way will Switzerland remain an attractive and prosperous location in the future. A policy that exacerbates the labor shortage and at the same time jeopardizes relations with the EU endangers the quality of life and prosperity of all people living in Switzerland.

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