



## Bilateral Package: An opportunity for Switzerland

economiesuisse welcomes the fact that the Swiss government today adopted the draft mandate for negotiations with the European Union (EU). Swiss business supports the Federal Council in its endeavours to secure and further develop the bilateral approach. Regulated relations and legal certainty in relations with the EU are essential for Switzerland as a business location. The 3rd Bilateral Package is therefore the right way forward. We must now move ahead quickly and, after consulting the foreign policy committees of the Swiss parliament and the cantons, begin negotiations with the EU.

At its meeting today, the Federal Council adopted the draft negotiating mandate for a third package of agreements with the EU. The 3rd Bilateral Package includes, among other things, the updating of the five existing and the conclusion of two new agreements with the EU allowing Switzerland the participation in specific areas of the Single Market as well as cooperation in research, education and healthcare.

"economiesuisse welcomes the adoption of the draft mandate and supports an early start to negotiations with the EU," says Christoph Mäder, President of economiesuisse, adding: "From economiesuisse's perspective, the 3rd Bilateral Package can achieve the objectives of Swiss business. These include, in particular, securing Switzerland's long-term participation in the EU internal market, strengthening security of supply by concluding an electricity agreement and participating in the European research programme Horizon Europe."

In a next step, the draft mandate will be referred to the Foreign Affairs Committees of the Federal Assembly (FAC) and the Conference of Cantonal

Governments (CCG) for consultation. Negotiations should then begin as quickly as possible in view of the European elections in summer 2024 to avoid unnecessary delays.