

**DRAFT Resolution Nr. 1 tabled by the Neue Volkspartei / Austria to the EPP Congress,
Rotterdam (The Netherlands), 31st May – 1st June 2022**

“For constructive future cooperation between Switzerland and the European Union”

The EPP, as an inclusive political movement for the whole of Europe, emphasises a clear understanding of Switzerland as an important European state. The EPP also underlines the unique role for the EU of Switzerland’s economy, wealth and opportunities in many fields. Given the strong relationship between the EU and Switzerland, the EPP intends to increase mutual confidence. In the context of current geopolitical developments, including a dirty war on European soil, the EPP more than ever calls for European unity.

After the USA, China and the United Kingdom, Switzerland is the EU's fourth-largest export and import market for goods and covers around 8% of European foreign trade. 69% of Swiss imports come from the EU and 51% of Swiss exports go to the EU. The EU is by far the most important market for the export-oriented Swiss industry. In services, Switzerland is the EU's second-most-important trading partner, with an export share of 11% (2019). 13% of direct foreign investments in the EU come from Switzerland. Around 350,000 cross-border commuters work in Switzerland and contribute to a successful European economy.

1. The EPP demands that everything must be done in order for European-Swiss cooperation to be strengthened. It is in the interests of both parties that the EU's relationship with Switzerland be stabilised and further developed on the basis of robust common rules, especially since the relationship is characterised by a high degree of economic integration and special proximity in almost all political issues.
2. The EPP expects that the political dialogue announced by Switzerland quickly show which specific strategies and concepts, and which specific timetable, can be expedient and that the EU support robust and legally sound solutions for the sake of a strong European internal market.
3. The EPP commends Switzerland for following EU Member States in adopting the same sanctions against Russia after Russia’s attack on Ukraine. The EPP welcomes the consideration of new fields of cooperation, such as PESCO, already underway. The EPP suggests intensifying as well cooperation in security and defence.
4. The EPP notes that both Switzerland and the EU have a great interest in Switzerland’s renewed association with the Horizon Europe, Digital Europe, Euratom, Iter and Erasmus+ programmes. A strong European research and education area should also in the long term include Switzerland while taking into account the general state of EU-Switzerland relations.

5. It is all the more difficult for the EU and Switzerland that the years of talks on an institutional framework agreement did not lead to the conclusion of an accord. The consequence of this is that no new agreements can be concluded and that existing agreements risk erosion. This situation has serious consequences for Switzerland as well as for EU Member States. The EPP is of the opinion that the current situation massively weakens the EU – Swiss relations. The EPP regrets that it was not possible to find mutually acceptable solutions to open questions in order to successfully conclude the institutional framework agreement.
6. The EPP notes with great concern that the failure to reach a consensus on the institutional framework agreement will impair the updating of existing market access agreements in response to new EU legal developments and that legal uncertainty has arisen in this regard for companies both in EU Member States and in Switzerland.
7. The EPP calls for avoiding a deterioration in bilateral relations, as the friendly and close relationships form a strong foundation; an escalation between two parties so closely linked in every respect can have drastic and protracted consequences.