



30.3.2023

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Culture and Education

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs

on EU-Switzerland relations
(2023/XXXX(INI))

Rapporteur for opinion (*): Hannes Heide

(*) Associated committee – Rule 57 of the Rules of Procedure

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Culture and Education calls on the Committee on Foreign Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Observes Switzerland's disassociation from the Erasmus+ programme since 2014, and its unrestricted application of the 1999 agreement on the free movement of persons;
2. Stresses the tie between Switzerland's participation in Erasmus+ and its full acceptance of the fundamental freedoms, as Erasmus+ exchanges depend on the free movement of persons;
3. Notes the Swiss Government's unilateral decision to terminate negotiations on the EU-Swiss institutional framework agreement in 2021;
4. Acknowledges the fact that numerous education stakeholders in Europe are calling for Switzerland to be associated to Erasmus+; underlines the educational benefits of such an association for Switzerland and the European Union;
5. Remains convinced that a more stable, future-oriented partnership will benefit both sides and help Switzerland's association to Erasmus+;
6. Welcomes the exploratory discussions between the Commission and the Swiss chief negotiator held since the end of March 2022; believes that these discussions could provide an acceptable basis for the swift recommendation to start negotiations;
7. Believes that the EU should invite all interested neighbouring and like-minded countries, including Switzerland, to associate to the Erasmus+ programme and thus contribute to European education systems and the strengthening of the European Education Area as a whole;
8. Notes that the participation of teachers and young people in EU programmes for education, training, youth and sport enables a strong and sustainable understanding between Switzerland and the EU;
9. Believes that the EU and Switzerland should stand united to pursue, promote and protect European values, including democracy, academic freedom and the right to education.