

# Global Immigration alert

March 2025

## Switzerland

Proposal to ease residence authorization for qualifying dependents rejected, new consultation to identify potential changes for eligible foreigners

### Executive summary

On 17 March 2025, the Swiss National Council and Council of States rejected an initiative that would have made it easier for Swiss nationals to sponsor their foreign parents to obtain Swiss residence authorization. Additionally, Switzerland recently launched a consultation process to examine the possibility of relaxing the conditions for third-country nationals who are trained in Switzerland and seek to enter the Swiss labor market, and the extension of integration measures for individuals impacted by the armed conflict in Ukraine.

### Key developments

The decision by the National Council and Council of States to reject a parliamentary initiative submitted in 2019, which was aimed at allowing Swiss nationals to benefit from more favorable provisions, means that these individuals remain subject to a family reunification framework that is less favorable than that which applies to nationals of EU and EFTA member states. It remains to be seen whether the authorities reconsider this decision in the future.

The Swiss Federal Council also initiated a consultation procedure on 26 February 2025 that is set to end on 2 June 2025 and is aimed at:

- *Facilitating admission to the Swiss labor market for third-country nationals who are trained in Switzerland.* The consultation is focused specifically on third-country nationals who successfully completed their higher vocational school diploma or postdoctoral degrees in

Switzerland. The consultation will examine whether these individuals would become eligible for an exemption from the requirement to undergo a local labor market test prior to obtaining Swiss work authorization. Currently, only graduates from universities, federal institutes of technology (ETH), universities of applied sciences and pedagogical universities benefitted from such an exemption.

- *Encouraging the integration of S permit holders into the labor market.* The consultation aims to facilitate employment of S permit holders (i.e., individuals who fled Ukraine following the outbreak of the armed conflict there and received temporary protection status in Switzerland), particularly for those receiving social assistance. The proposals being considered as part of the consultation procedure include: (1) the obligation to register these persons with the public employment services; (2) the introduction of a right to change their canton of residence for those performing a gainful activity (which is not automatically permitted as of now); (3) the introduction of a notification obligation in lieu of an obligation to obtain a prior authorization in the case of gainful employment; and (4) the extension of the obligation to participate in integration or professional reintegration programs to S permit holders to limit their dependence on social assistance.

### Impact on employers

Depending on the outcome of the consultation procedure, changes are expected after 2 June 2025, which could result



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in creating a more dynamic labor market, provide Swiss employers access to a wider talent pool and reduce the administrative hurdles in the hiring of non-EU/EFTA candidates.

#### Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.

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EYG no. 002397-25GbI

2101-3682263  
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