

Eidgenössisches Departement für
auswärtige Angelegenheiten
Didier Burkhalter
Bundeshaus West
3003 Bern

Bern, 10th April 2014

Appeal www.not-without-switzerland.org

Dear President of the Swiss Confederation

After the people of Switzerland accepted the referendum on mass immigration on the 9th of February 2014, the European Commission suspended the negotiations for the participation of Switzerland in the European mobility programme Erasmus+ and in Horizon 2020, a programme for research and innovation. This suspension endangers the European Higher Education Area. As the scientific community of Switzerland we cannot accept this devastating consequence and therefore launched the appeal of the Swiss and European academic community for an open European Higher Education Area: www.not-without-switzerland.org.

Since its publication on the 4th of March 2014, the appeal has been signed by more than 30'000 individuals in Switzerland and all over the world. Furthermore, the appeal is supported by several organisations and representatives of Higher Education: the League of European Research Universities ([LERU](#)), the Council of Rectors of Francophone Universities in Belgium ([CREF](#)), the German Rectors' Conference ([HRK](#)), Universities Austria ([uniko](#)), the French Conference of University Presidents ([CPU](#)) and the European University Association ([EUA](#)).

Everybody agrees on one fact: The Swiss People adopted a referendum, which is complicating the relations between Switzerland and the European Union, because it could be limiting the free movement of persons. Nevertheless, education and research should not be subject to these uncertainties but, to the contrary, be fostered by cooperation and exchange between the countries of Europe. The construction and development of the European Higher Education Area is only possible with the participation of everyone. To exclude Switzerland from the Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020 programmes is not only counterproductive. It is also harmful for the quality and excellence of a Europe of knowledge.

The European Area of Science owes very much to the exchange and cooperation of personalities from numerous countries. In this platform of knowledge, Switzerland is acting as a country of innovation and has initiated countless projects, which have contributed to the good reputation of previous research programmes – such as the Human Brain Project, which started in the framework of the 7th European Research Programme. The EU and Switzerland need to collaborate to bring Europe to the top of education, research and innovation.

Today, we are officially submitting our appeal to the Swiss and European decision-makers to emphasize our demand: The initiators and the 30'905 signatories are officially asking you to take steps to ensure the ongoing participation of Switzerland in Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020 and to look for solutions in order to safeguard an open European and international Higher Education Area.



Mélanie Glayre
Head Office VSS



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