

What the canton can do

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The Canton of Ticino has no power to negotiate with the European Union or with Italy. Foreign policy and the law of financial markets are federal matters. The canton can nonetheless influence the federal position in three ways. It takes part in the consultation procedures on international agreements, which for the package ran in 2025. It can raise the interests of its financial centre in the regular dialogue between the Confederation and Italy, where the cross-border workers agreement of 2020 and the removal of Switzerland from the Italian blacklist showed that progress on one dossier can be linked to another.¹ It can also act through its members of the Federal Assembly, whose parliamentary interventions led to the Federal Council's report of 2021 on market access to Italy, cited in Chapter E.IV.

The canton's own instruments lie elsewhere. It controls cantonal taxation, economic promotion and the conditions for the establishment of firms and families. It can support the training of financial professionals, as it does through SUPSI and USI. It can also cooperate with Lombardy within the Regio Insubrica and in cross-border projects. None of these instruments changes the law of market access. They can, however, strengthen the factors that make Lugano attractive once a client has chosen to come, whether as a resident or as the owner of a Swiss account.

Essentials. The Switzerland–EU package was materially concluded on 20 December 2024, initialled on 21 May 2025 and signed on 2 March 2026. The Federal Council adopted its dispatch on 13 March 2026. Parliament is debating whether a majority of the cantons is required. A final decision is not expected before 2027. The package updates five agreements, adds agreements on electricity, food safety and health and introduces dynamic adoption and dispute settlement. It contains no agreement on financial services, so that Swiss banks keep only passive access to Italian and other EU private clients.

1 Notes

1. See Chapter H.I on the agreement of 23 December 2020 and Chapter E.V on the removal of Switzerland from the Italian list; the decree of 20 July 2023 was adopted under the law ratifying the cross-border workers agreement (Marvulli, above). ↩

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