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## Political dialogue

### What is it about?

Consider the bilateral approach as a house. The package approach not only renovates, extends and breathes life into this house, but also provides for a meeting of the joint property owners i.e. a political dialogue. The aim of these meetings is to jointly analyse the house's condition, address neighbourhood issues and discuss potential options for expansion.

This is necessary as there is no other platform where the bilateral agreements between Switzerland and the EU are discussed comprehensively. The high-level political dialogue encompasses all areas of the package and should take place on a regular basis. A separate political dialogue, already in place for foreign and security policy, will be stepped up.

### Outcome of exploratory talks and outlook for negotiations

In the exploratory talks, the political dialogue was discussed as a strategic steering instrument. This high-level dialogue is intended to comprehensively monitor developments in the bilateral agreements and to jointly address ideas and challenges. The dialogue is not a substitute for the joint sectoral committees. These technical committees, each focused solely on a specific topic, will continue to operate within their remit. However, they will be supplemented by incorporating a comprehensive political perspective. In preparation for the political dialogue, an overview of the work of the various joint committees will be drawn up.

### Difference to the institutional agreement

The previous approach of a separate institutional framework agreement did not address the issue of a political dialogue. Only a horizontal joint committee was planned. However, the political dialogue now envisaged allows for a broader *political* exchange. Therefore, it is not an overarching technical joint committee. The substantive coordination and monitoring tasks remain with the joint committees.

### Context

Relationships, both private and diplomatic, must be nurtured. Switzerland and the EU maintain a close and multifaceted partnership. The establishment of a political dialogue is designed to consider the comprehensive and interconnected nature of these relations. The dialogue is therefore a crucial element in the stabilisation and further development of the bilateral approach. By also stepping up the existing foreign and security policy dialogue, Switzerland is positioning itself as a reliable partner in important pan-European issues. It will be better able to represent and protect its European and foreign policy interests within the framework of this strengthened political dialogue.