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Switzerland and the EU

Switzerland, not an EU member, surrounded on all sides by EU countries, retains full sovereignty over its affairs¹. The people of Switzerland, via referenda, choose the areas in which they wish to cooperate with the EU. The Swiss-EU relationship is conducted via sixteen sector-specific (or sectoral) bi-lateral FTAs². None involves the transfer of legislative authority to a supranational body; all can be cancelled at any time. They are managed by joint Swiss-EU committees in which each side has a veto. Switzerland (unlike EU members) can thus never be outvoted.

Switzerland remains OUTSIDE the CAP, the CFP, the CFSP, EMU and the EU Customs Union, and (unlike EU members) sits and votes in its own right at the WTO (World Trade Organisation). In practice, without surrendering an iota of sovereignty, it participates fully in the EU Internal Market.

1 With one minor exception: for competition law in civil aviation

2 Covering, for example, technical barriers to trade, overland transport, agriculture, taxation and savings

Source: Global Britain Briefing Note No 36, *Cherry-Picking*, 26.11.04, www.globalbritain.org