

## **Does Social Partnership Still Have a Place in a Liberal Labor Market?**

Switzerland's liberal labor market is under pressure. A survey of nearly 700 HR managers conducted by gfs-zürich on behalf of swissstaffing has shown that flexible forms of working, flexible working hours and social partnership are key to the Swiss economy. However, half of the workforce already has misgivings about what actually happens in practice. Political initiatives such as cantonal minimum wages, increased protection against dismissal, and restrictions on staff leasing are threatening to permanently weaken the liberal labor market and thus the Swiss economy's ability to compete.

### **Employees' Associations Weaken Social Partnership**

Social partnership is a successful model that has been combining flexibility with social progress in Switzerland for decades. Taking the strategy of a conflictive social partnership, employees' associations seek to establish unrivaled negotiating positions via legal means, and are thus bringing social partnership into question. "We support the CBA on Staff Leasing," confirms Robin Gordon, CEO of the Interiman Group and a swissstaffing negotiator. "However, I am deeply concerned about parallel efforts to create restrictions. Many members ask me whether the CBA is still a real partnership, and why they should continue down this route in the event of statutory industry regulation."

### **The Liberal Labor Market – Ensuring Competitiveness and Inclusion**

An international comparison demonstrates the positive impact of liberal labor markets. The more flexible a labor market's structure, the smaller the black economy and the higher the country scores on the World Economic Forum's World Competitiveness Index. However, as well as the economy itself, this also benefits employees: "Flexible labor markets are particularly important for job seekers," swissstaffing economist Marius Osterfeld explains. "For example, temporary workers who are aged over 50 or are unskilled find permanent positions significantly more quickly if they gain work via a staff leasing company immediately after losing their job."

## **A Growing Need for Flexwork**

50% of employees would like more flexible working, with this figure rising to 60% in Ticino. This was shown by a representative survey of the workforce conducted by gfs-zürich on behalf of swissstaffing. “The number of people interested in flexible working is increasing,” according to swissstaffing director Myra Fischer-Rosinger. “These flexworkers do not feel connected to existing employees’ associations, and their interests are not therefore represented in a social partnership model. This means that in the future, social partners must work together to ensure that all employees’ interests are represented once again.”

The full **white paper “Flexibility and Social Partnership”** can be downloaded at [www.swissstaffing.ch/whitepaper](http://www.swissstaffing.ch/whitepaper).

For more information, please contact:

**Myra Fischer-Rosinger, Director**

Tel.: +41 (0)44 388 95 40

[myra.fischer-rosinger@swissstaffing.ch](mailto:myra.fischer-rosinger@swissstaffing.ch)

**Marius Osterfeld, Economist**

Tel.: +41 (0)44 388 95 70 / +41 (0)79 930 45 25

[marius.osterfeld@swissstaffing.ch](mailto:marius.osterfeld@swissstaffing.ch)

**Blandina Werren, Head of Communications**

Tel.: +41 (0)44 388 95 35

[blandina.werren@swissstaffing.ch](mailto:blandina.werren@swissstaffing.ch)

[www.swissstaffing.ch](http://www.swissstaffing.ch)

[www.die-temporaerarbeit.ch](http://www.die-temporaerarbeit.ch)

**swissstaffing** is a service center and center of excellence for staff leasing companies in Switzerland. As an employers’ association, swissstaffing represents the interests of its 400 members in matters of policy, the economy and society. swissstaffing is a social partner of the CBA on Staff Leasing, the agreement covering more employees in Switzerland than any other.