

# Commission of the Council decides on improving early childhood education



On March 29, the members of the Commission of the Council of States in the WBK-S will decide on the Palv of the WBK-N "Transfer of the initial financing into a contemporary solution" (21.403). This aims to improve early childhood education.

**There is consensus: the education and care of children is systemically relevant for society and the economy, and the educational quality, especially in day-care centers, is crucial for the positive development of the children in care.**

We have been campaigning for better early childhood policy for years and consider this Palv a great opportunity to deepen the discussions at national level and to find a contemporary solution. In this way, a clear delimitation and definition of federal competencies in the areas of coordination, quality assurance, basic services and financing can finally be established. There is also great untapped potential in early childhood politics for Switzerland in terms of return on education, equal opportunities, the reconciliation of family and work, and the promotion of the domestic workforce.

The argument that the federal government's hands are tied on the issue due to its subsidiary role persists. The topic was therefore analyzed by renowned constitutional lawyer Prof. Pascal Mahon.

The report comes to the conclusion that the federal government does have opportunities to take measures in the area of early support and childcare structures. The constitutional foundations are in place and the existing order of competencies and federalism are guaranteed.

The study by BAK Economics from last September on the economic benefits of a qualitative expansion of day-care centers and day-care families highlights four economically positive effects that additional investments in the expansion of early-morning facilities entail. She comes to the conclusion that targeted investments in support offers for children between 0 and 4 years of age pay off after a good ten years. In the long term, Switzerland's GDP can be increased by around 0.5 percent - which corresponds to around CHF 3.4 billion in today's values.

We are convinced that a national strategy, or at least targeted national measures, is urgently needed to achieve a better and more comprehensive policy for early childhood. The present Palv represents a great opportunity for this.

**It is obvious: Parental contributions must fall because parents are urgently needed in the labor market. At the same time, the quality of early childhood education and care must be improved - primarily through trained specialists - because no investment in the educational biography is as effective as in the early stage.**

The proposal of the Parl. Initiative takes up these two important aspects and thus lays the foundation for tackling the long overdue need for action in a sustainable manner.