

LAW & POLICY GROUP

# GRIST



## SWITZERLAND ADVANCES MEASURES TO REDUCE GENDER PAY GAP

*By Mercer's Eric Grosjean, Fiona Webster and Stephanie Rosseau  
22 May 2019*

Swiss employers with 100 or more employees would be required to carry out periodic gender pay audits under proposed [amendments](#) to the Federal Act on Gender Equality. Adopted by the parliament on 14 Dec 2018, and with no public referendum initiated by the 7 April deadline, the amendments likely will be enacted later in 2019. The Federal Council will publish further details, including the law's effective date and the deadline for completing the first audit (the date could vary depending on an organization's size).

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The amendments exempt:
  - Companies with fewer than 100 employees. Employee headcounts would be taken at the start of each calendar year and would include all employees except apprentices. Companies with fewer than 100 employees could comply voluntarily.
  - Companies that achieve gender pay parity
  - Companies that already must comply with equal pay duties under the public procurement rules or state subsidy schemes
- Audits must be done every four years.
- Audits must be conducted using a “scientific and legally compliant method.” Companies can use the public procurement model or choose another audit type.
- Audits must be done independently — the Federal Council will publish details about the minimum requirements for auditors.
- Auditors must prepare an analysis of pay information, and employers must submit the gender pay report to their employees or employee representatives — both reports must be done within one year of

the auditing date. Companies listed on the stock exchange must publish this information in their annual report.

- The audit mandate expires in 2030. An assessment of the mandate's impact will be submitted to parliament in 2027.

## RELATED RESOURCES

- [Proposed Revision of Federal Law on Equality](#) (French) (1 Dec 2019)
- [Background Information on Proposed Gender Equal Pay Duty](#) (French, German and Italian)

*Note: Mercer is not engaged in the practice of law, accounting or medicine. Any commentary in this article does not constitute and is not a substitute for legal, tax or medical advice. Readers of this article should consult a legal, tax or medical expert for advice on those matters.*