

THE SWISS CONFEDERATION A BRIEF GUIDE

2012



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Chancellery FCh

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Cover picture:

Every year in mid-March thousands of people are magically drawn to the brightly lit façades of many of Bern's museums and galleries. During Bern's 'museum night' the Federal Palace is also open to the public out of hours, drawing crowds of all ages.

Content

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The Swiss Confederation a brief guide

Dear Reader

On 23 October 2011 the Swiss elected a new parliament, and on 14 December 2011 elections were held for all the seats on the Federal Council. Unlike in previous elections, the political forces of the centre made considerable gains, not because the traditional parties attracted more votes, but thanks to the increased popularity of new parties. When electing the Federal Council, the Federal Assembly went for continuity and confirmed the existing federal councillors in their seats. In Switzerland, continuity means that, a new parliament is elected every four years, after which elections to the Federal Council are also held. Continuity means that we have a calendar in which the date of elections and votes is set many years in advance. Continuity means that the Federal Council and parliament decide on the new legislative programme following an election. This marks the beginning of the new four-year legislative period, in which there are always considerable challenges to be faced.

The financial crisis and high levels of debt in some countries are slowing down the world economy and therefore affecting our national economy as well. Rather than acting in the short-term in these difficult times, we should set ourselves long-term goals and pursue them with a consistent approach. One of the first tasks of government and parliament is therefore to discuss and approve the new legislative programme on the basis of the Outlook 2025 report, which was drawn up in conjunction with external experts. One of the great strengths of the Swiss political system is that we identify at an early stage the medium and long-term challenges facing our country and introduce timely measures in the interests of the nation.



This is possible thanks to Switzerland's unique political system, a system based on achieving both continuity and stability. Continuity means stability. State institutions are set up in such a way that parliamentary elections and changes in the legislature do not have a radical impact. The system of direct democracy, in which regular votes and referendums are held every three months, guarantees that the voters are closely involved in the political process. This will be particularly noticeable in 2012, when there will be about a dozen issues on which the Swiss electorate will be invited to vote.

I find the Swiss political system incredibly exciting. We are continually faced with new challenges to overcome. But in order to find politics exciting you have to have some idea of how the political system operates. This brochure provides you with a good basis for understanding the system in Switzerland. It explains our system of government, gives a short historical overview and presents the three powers (judiciary, legislature and executive). It also shows which political parties and persons represent the people's interests and how the government and federal administration are organised.

I hope that this brochure will answer your questions about our system of government. If we are well informed and understand what is happening in this country and throughout the world, taking part in animated discussions about issues that affect our society is simply more enjoyable.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Corina Casanova". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Federal Chancellor Corina Casanova

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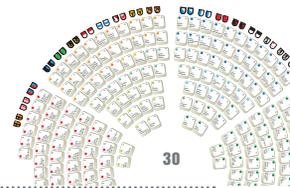


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The Judiciary

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'The Swiss Confederation: a brief guide' online

The site provides additional material in the form of documents, charts, photos and videos and you can even test your civic knowledge using our interactive quiz. Why not try it out at www.ch.ch.



You are the first representative of a fringe party to be elected President of the Swiss Confederation. What does this mean for you – does it make things difficult?

No. A large majority of the United Federal Assembly elected me president in December. This shows that other parties besides my own supported me, and I am confident that they will continue to do so in the coming year. I am delighted at their trust in me and will take office as president in this spirit of confidence and optimism. I will endeavour to live up to the expectations placed on me, just as I have over the past four years.

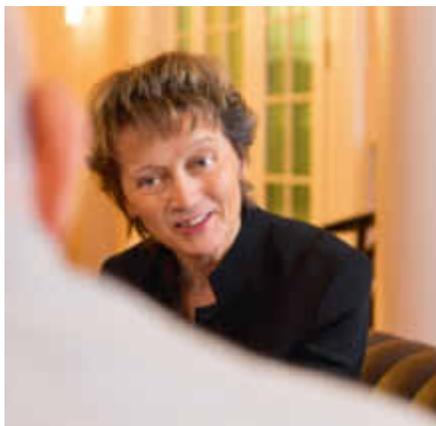
“The current economic problems are no reason to be disheartened”

Twenty-eight years before you, your father was President of the Swiss Confederation. Have you sought his advice for your year as president?

I haven't discussed this with my father. But I don't generally discuss my work as Federal Councillor with my father. I have a very good relationship with my parents but even when I was in Graubünden I deliberately forged my own political style and refrained from identifying myself as “the daughter of Federal Councillor Schlumpf”. And besides, the challenges facing me today as President of the Swiss Confederation are different to those my father faced 28 years ago.

But your father is no doubt proud of you?

Of course. He was very pleased by the election result. Just as in 2007, when I was voted onto the Federal Council. Admittedly, my parents, particularly my mother, had mixed feelings: they were pleased, yet they also wanted me to return home.



What are your priorities in your year as president? What do you want to focus on?

I would like to show that, even in these difficult times, there are many opportunities and prospects open to us in Switzerland. And to show that the current economic problems are no reason to be disheartened. It is especially important right now to show the younger generation where their opportunities lie - so that they know our country can give them a solid foundation on which to build their future. I would like to do my part by visiting and having contact with the different parts of the country.

And what will the key issues be?

Apart from my departmental business, the focus will be on topics handled by the Federal Council as a collective body, such as healthcare and the social security system, areas in which we have to set the course for the future. Or on environmental issues relating to the Energy Strategy 2050, where other departments are involved along with the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications (DETEC) which has the lead. The same applies for issues relating to the financial markets. One reason for continuing to promote Switzerland as a financial centre is to safeguard jobs. Our position in Europe will be an important issue in our relations with other countries. How can we position ourselves as a non-EU-member country? We also need to establish clear relations with the USA. Moreover, it is important for Switzerland to retain its seat on the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund.

Federal Council proposals for government reform are currently before parliament. How urgent do you consider the need for reform to be?

Government reform remains a priority. What I have in mind in particular is the need to simplify processes and support for the Federal Council from the state secretaries. I also believe we need to strengthen the Federal Chancellery in its role as the staff office of the Federal Council. The aim is to ensure that the Federal Council is once again perceived to a greater extent as being a body which speaks with a single voice. We have already taken a step in this direction by increasingly communicating business adopted by the Federal Council via the Federal Council Spokesman, rather than via the heads of the federal departments. The aim here is to convey clearly that such business has been decided by the Federal Council as a collective body.

“We will not emerge from the crisis unscathed”



For almost five years now global affairs have been shaped by the financial and debt crises. Will Switzerland continue to weather the storm relatively unscathed?

We will not emerge from the crisis unscathed. Switzerland will also experience repercussions. According to the latest economic forecasts, we may be heading for recession. In the event of large-scale economic difficulties, it is important that we consider carefully the countermeasures available to us. Which specific economic or stabilising measures can we introduce to support our economy? We must not make the mistake of implementing support measures indiscriminately and inflicting damage long-term when we are no longer able to finance the system. Such an approach has led to sovereign debt crises elsewhere in the world. On the positive side, our economy has succeeded in reducing its dependence on the EU area somewhat by developing new export markets. Our industrial sector remains very strong.



“The problems won’t solve themselves”

And what is the outlook for the financial centre from your perspective as finance minister? Will it be able to maintain its international position?

It is important that we succeed in implementing the white money strategy we have launched. I am convinced that the Swiss financial centre will be able to maintain or even strengthen its position, even after the issues currently pending have been clarified. The strength of this sector lies not only in the services it provides, but also in its stability and reliability. And this is why it is essential that we clear up present uncertainties as soon as possible. The problems won't solve themselves. We are currently in the process of amending double taxation agreements. We have signed final withholding tax agreements with Germany and the UK and are now working on the situation with the USA. We are making a huge effort and hope that our partner states also have an interest in clarifying these relationships.

How is cooperation with the banks? There is talk of hostility towards you on the part of the financial sector.

In my view, the working relationship with the banks is good. I assume that the representatives of the banks agree. Of course, due to the nature of our work it is inevitable that we will not always see eye-to-eye. I represent the public sector. Not everyone was happy about the 'too big to fail' bill, for example, but the Swiss Bankers Association supported us in this matter. They also endorsed the improvements to the double taxation agreements. I am in regular contact with bank representatives.



What ultimately remains of banking secrecy? Does the distinction between tax fraud and tax evasion also apply within Switzerland?

This matter is now being discussed in connection with the Tax Administrative Assistance Act, which will be debated in parliament in the coming months. The cantonal finance directors are asking themselves why they are not permitted to use information that is forwarded abroad under administrative assistance provisions. We need to discuss whether or not we want to continue to distinguish between tax fraud and gross incidents of tax evasion. I'm not talking about minor cases where someone makes an omission due to carelessness when completing their tax return. What I'm referring to is a situation in which taxpayers evade the payment of substantial sums of money, deliberately and with criminal intent, over an extended period of time.

What are the priorities in tax legislation?

We will consult on family taxation in accordance with the Federal Council's mandate. The aim is to abolish any remaining disparities in tax law. We are also working with the cantonal finance directors to try to resolve the conflict with the EU over cantonal taxation of mobile corporations. This is also part of the third series of corporate tax reform; a second part concerns the abolition of the issuing tax on equity capital. And incentive instruments are being examined under the Energy Policy 2050 as a means to promote the efficient use of energy. Last November, the Federal Council assigned my department and DETEC the task of thoroughly investigating the feasibility of tax reforms along environmental lines and possible alternatives.



You are known as a meticulous worker. The office of president involves an additional workload. Will you have any time left to spend with your family and to relax?

I make sure that I have some time out. During my years in Graubünden, it was easier to schedule family time on a regular basis. Now we have to plan ahead a bit more. But we've managed to do this successfully over the last four years. We don't see each other every weekend, but I see my grandchild, my children, and my husband on a regular basis, usually every week.

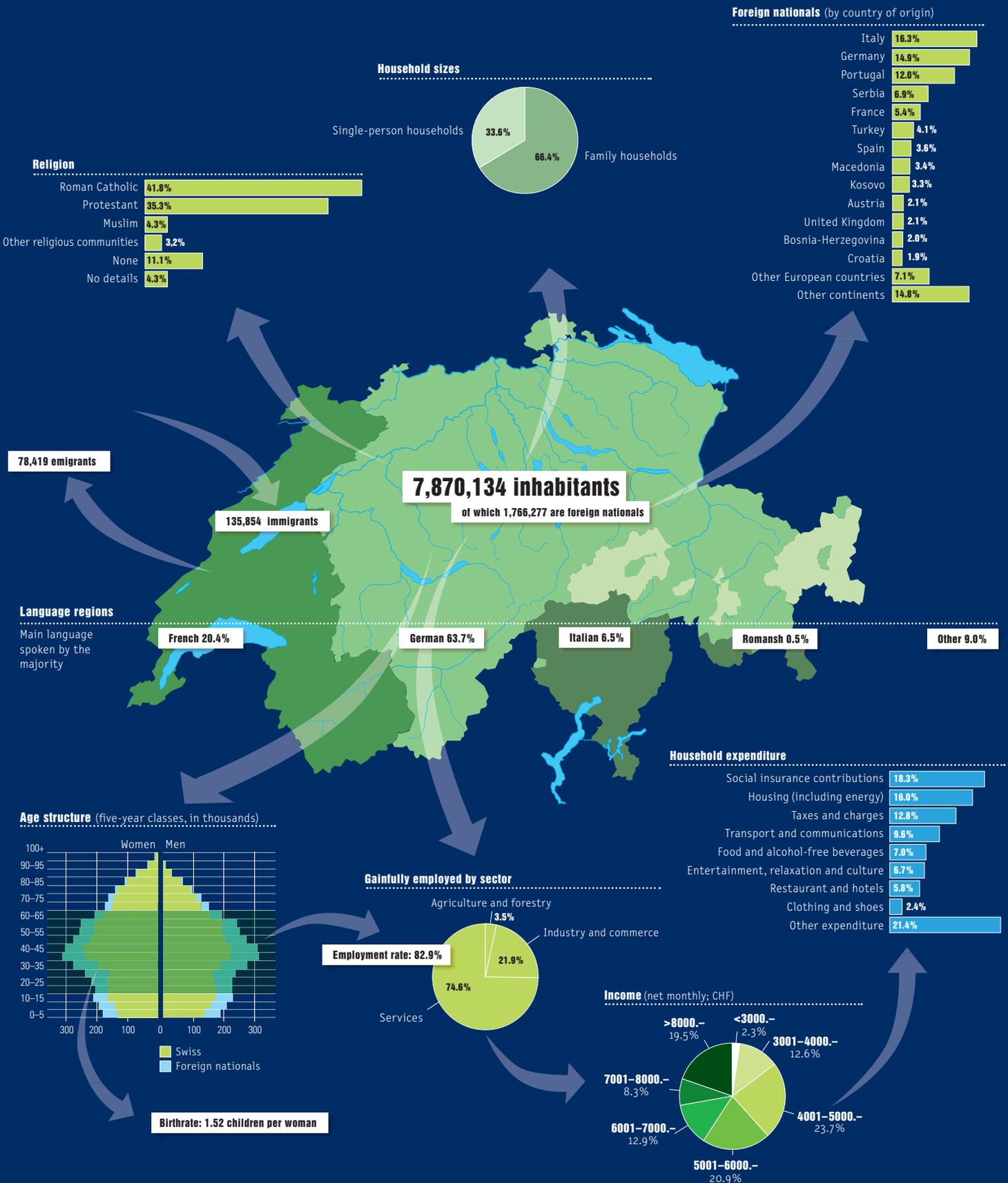
How do you keep fit? Do you exercise?

I do weight training every Sunday morning with my husband. It's a welcome opportunity to clear my head. In the winter I also enjoy snowshoeing.

.....
President Eveline Widmer Schlumpf was interviewed by Balz Bruppacher, freelance journalist and editor-in-chief of Associated Press (AP) Switzerland until 2011

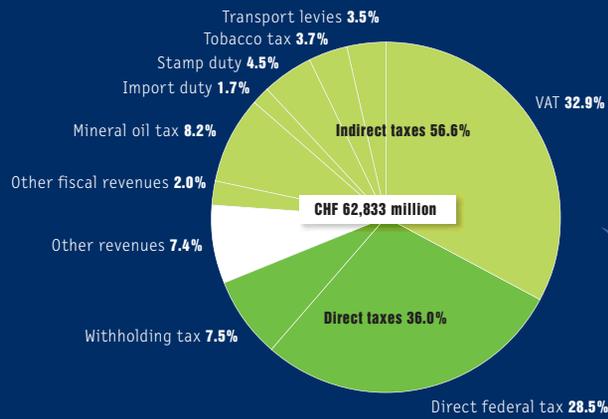
“Whether or not we should distinguish between tax fraud and tax evasion is a subject for discussion”

Population

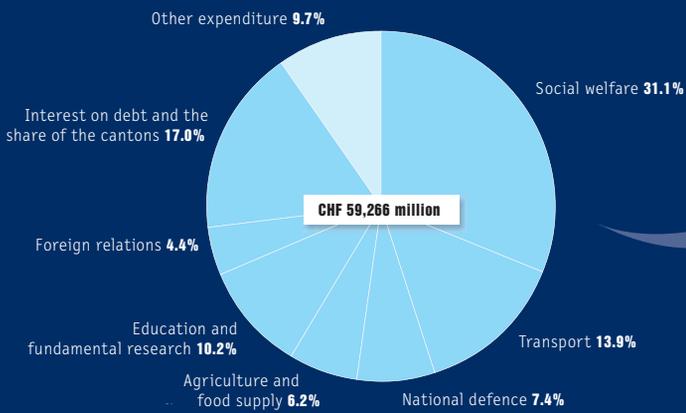


Finances

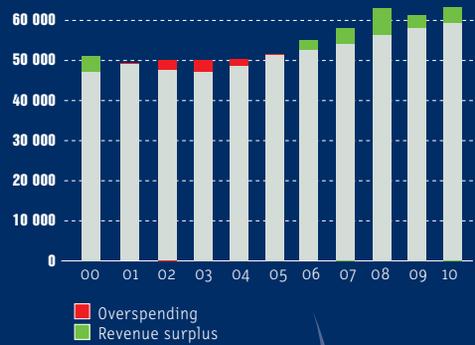
Federal revenue 2010



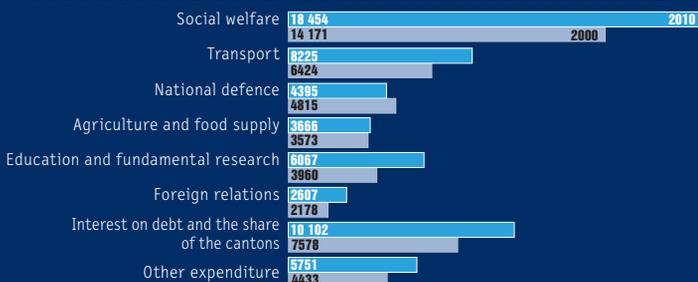
Federal expenditure 2010



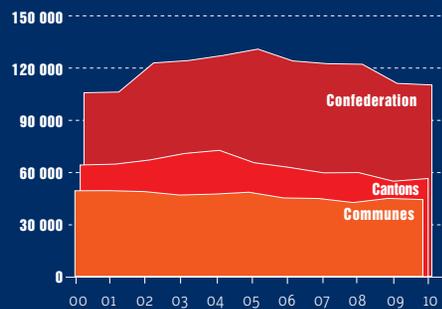
Developments in revenue (CHF million)



Developments in expenditure (CHF million)



Developments in debt (CHF million)



How long has there been a Switzerland?

According to traditional lore, Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden renew their alliance to defend peace in their territories at the beginning of August **1291**. In the course of the following centuries further towns and rural areas join this ‘Confederation’ or are conquered or ‘acquired’ by it. This frequently involves violent conflict and internal strife.

The members of the Confederation defend their growing power and independence for two hundred years against a variety of opponents. Following the Swabian War in **1499** against Habsburg Austria and the Swabian League, they can largely conduct their affairs independently of the Holy Roman Empire.

When the Reformation spreads first to Zurich in **1525** with Zwingli, then to other areas and finally to Geneva in **1541** under Calvin, the country becomes divided along religious lines. Catholic and Protestant areas increasingly grow apart and go to war against each other time and again up until the early 18th century.

In **1648** the Peace of Westphalia formally recognises Switzerland’s independence from the Holy Roman Empire.

‘Liberty, Equality, Fraternity’, the cry of the French Revolution of **1789** spreads to Switzerland leading to unrest in several areas.

A French army conquers Switzerland in **1798**. The old Confederation collapses, making way for the creation of the Helvetic Republic, which had a unitary centralist constitution imposed by the French. In **1803** Napoleon Bonaparte dictates the Act of Mediation to Switzerland. Six new cantons with equal rights are formed from former subject territories and ‘affiliated regions’.

After France’s defeat by the monarchist great European powers, the old Confederation is ‘restored’ in **1815**; the centralist government loses some authority to the cantons, where in some cases the old elites once again assume power.

After **1830**, during the period known as the ‘Regeneration’, about half of the cantons adopt liberal constitutions which guarantee their citizens economic and political freedoms. This leads to disagreement between liberal and conservative cantons as to how the Confederation should be shaped.

These tensions lead to the creation of a special alliance (‘Sonderbund’) among the conservative catholic cantons, culminating in the Sonderbund War in **1847**. After a brief military campaign by federal troops, the seven cantons of the special alliance surrender.

In **1848** the majority of cantons accept the federal constitution and the modern federal state is founded. Numerous areas which were previously the responsibility of the cantons, such as military service and customs, postal services and coinage, are centralised and unified. Switzerland becomes a single judicial and economic area.

For many, the general franchise introduced for men in 1848 does not go far enough– they campaign for direct democratic rights and in **1874** achieve the introduction of the right to referendum in the revised Federal Constitution and in **1891** the introduction of the popular initiative.

Towards the turn of the century the various political movements organise themselves as parties. The Social Democratic Party (SP) is founded in **1888**, the Radical Free Democratic Party (FDP) in **1894** and

the Catholic-Conservative People’s Party, which is today’s Christian Democratic People’s Party (CVP), in **1912**.

Switzerland is spared from involvement in the First World War (1914–1918), but the difficult social conditions in many sections of society as a result of the war lead to a general strike in **1918**. The strikers are unsuccessful in pushing through many of their demands, such as the 48-hour working week and the introduction of old-age insurance. The following year, however, the National Council is elected by proportional representation for the first time and the working class is now fairly represented. This brings the dominance of the Radical Free Democratic Party in parliament to an end.

In **1920** Switzerland accedes to the League of Nations founded the previous year, on condition that it will not be required to participate in any military campaigns.

With the election of Rudolf Minger to the Federal Council in **1929** the Farmers’, Trade and Citizens’ Party founded in 1918 (renamed the Swiss People’s Party SVP in 1971) is represented in government for the first time.

The global economic crisis of 1929 leads to increased unemployment and to the devaluation of the Swiss franc in **1936**.

The agreement of **1937** in the machine and metalworking industry to ensure industrial peace, the recognition of Romansh as the fourth national language in **1938**, the development of the Alps from **1940** onwards into Switzerland’s military stronghold, and ultimately the first Social Democratic member of the Federal Council in **1943** contribute to Swiss cohesion in difficult times. Switzerland is able to avoid involvement in the Second World War (1939–1945).



With the emergence of the fascist threat in the 1930s the Social Democratic Party also came out in favour of national defence and the armed defence of Switzerland's borders by the armed forces; Poster from 1943

Although it had acceded to the League of Nations a quarter of a century earlier, Switzerland does not initially join the United Nations when it is created in **1945** on the grounds of neutrality. However, it does join the UN's subsidiary organisations, many of which are headquartered in Geneva.

The federal Old Age and Survivors' Insurance (AHV) is introduced in **1947**.

With the election of a second Social Democrat to the Federal Council in **1959**, the composition of the government is for the first time largely proportional to the larger parties' share of the popular vote. This is the origin of what is known as the

'magic formula', which ensures a fair representation of the most important political groups in the Federal Council.

After an unsuccessful initial attempt in 1959, the electorate and the cantons grant women the right to vote and participate in elections at federal level in **1971**. In a number of cantons, women have already enjoyed equal political rights for quite some time.

Following a series of popular votes, firstly in canton Bern and then in particular in its French-speaking districts, as well as ultimately at federal level, the canton of Jura is created in **1979** becoming the country's 26th canton.

In **1984**, Elisabeth Kopp (FDP) is elected to the Federal Council, the woman first in government in Switzerland's history.

In **1989**, voters reject the popular initiative to disband the armed forces.

In **1992** voters reject membership of the European Economic Area (EEA).

In **1999** the people and the cantons approve the totally revised Federal Constitution, which enters into force in 2000.

Switzerland becomes a full member of the United Nations in **2002**. In the same year, the first bilateral agreements with the European Union enter into force. A series of agreements in other areas ensures the continuation of the bilateral path.

In **2003**, for the first time since 1872, a member of the Federal Council is not re-elected. CVP Federal Councillor Ruth Metzler has to relinquish her seat to the SVP representative Christoph Blocher.

Four years later, in **2007**, Christoph Blocher experiences a similar turn of events

when the Federal Assembly elects his party colleague Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf to the Federal Council. She and her cantonal party of Graubünden are subsequently expelled from the national SVP in **2008**, and she joins the newly founded Conservative Democratic Party (BDP).

Following the resignation of Federal Councillors Moritz Leuenberger (SP) and Hans-Rudolf Merz (FDP) in **2010**, the Federal Assembly elects Simonetta Sommaruga and Johann N. Schneider-Ammann as members of the federal government. For the first time in Swiss history there are more women than men in the Federal Council.

On 14 December **2011** the Social Democrat, Alain Berset, is elected to take the seat of his party colleague, Micheline Calmy-Rey in the Federal Council.



A UNIQUE POLITICAL SYSTEM OR

Swiss democracy



In all democratic countries parliamentary elections take place on a regular basis – and, at least as a matter of form, even in most dictatorships. In almost all cases turnout is very high, certainly higher than the barely fifty per cent in this country.

But the reason why only about half of the Swiss electorate exercises its right to vote is not due to

a lack of interest in politics, but to our system of direct democracy. Under this system, parliament and government have less power than in most other countries. The electorate can have a say in a great many matters and even reverse decisions made by the politicians it has elected.

The political rights enjoyed by the Swiss at fed-

eral level are explained in detail on pages 16 and 17. And after all, life is not just about politics. The electorate is often interested in something completely different to the person campaigning for a seat in parliament – however charming their smile may be.

2495 plus 26 equals 1

Switzerland is a nation established by the will of the People and composed of several ethnic groups with a variety of languages and religions. It has been a federal state since 1848. There are 23 federal states worldwide; Switzerland is the second oldest after the United States of America and is organised in three political levels: the communes, the cantons and the Confederation.



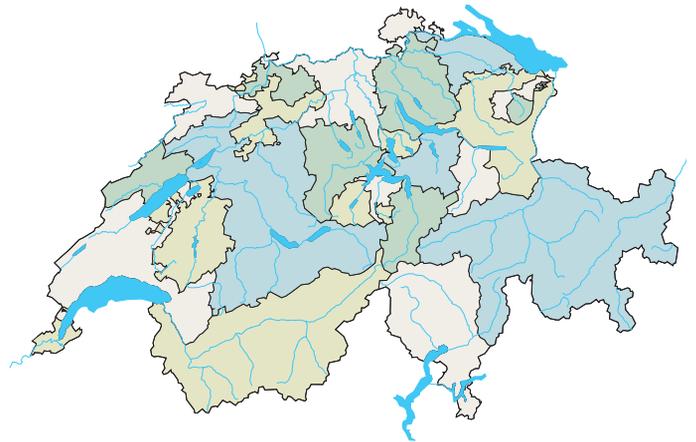
2495 communes Communes are the smallest political units in Switzerland. There are currently 2495 communes, but their number is in decline as smaller communes are tending to merge together in order to carry out their tasks more efficiently. Roughly one fifth of the communes have their own parliament, especially the communes that are towns or cities. Four fifths of the communes, however, still make direct democratic decisions at the communal assembly, where all inhabitants who are entitled to vote may participate. In other words, the People are not represented by councillors, but make decisions themselves and elect the communal council (executive).

In addition to the tasks that are allocated to them by the Confederation and their canton, such as managing the registry of residents or organising civil defence, the communes also have their own responsibilities, including those relating to schools, social services, energy supplies, road construction, local planning, taxes, etc. The communes regulate these matters to a large extent independently.

The communes' level of autonomy is determined by the individual cantons, and can therefore vary considerably from place to place.



Over 3100 flags bearing the emblems of all the Swiss communes were suspended over the main boulevard of the Swiss national exhibition in 1939. A quarter of a century later, at Expo 64 in Lausanne, there were several dozen fewer flags adorning the purpose-built pyramids. And since then several hundred more communes, the smallest political unit in Switzerland, have disappeared in a process that is far from over.



26 cantons The next largest political units are the states, which are known as cantons. They are the states that originally united in 1848 to form the Confederation, each relinquishing part of their sovereignty to the Confederation. Canton Jura is an exception. It is the only canton that was created in the 20th century. On 1 January 1979, it separated from Canton Bern to become a canton in its own right.

Under the Federal Constitution, all cantons have equal rights, and in comparison with the situation in other countries, they have a high degree of independence. Health care, education and culture are among the policy areas where they enjoy a large degree of latitude.

Each canton has its own constitution, and its own parliament, government and courts.

The size of the parliament varies between 58 and 180 members, who are all elected by the people, in most cantons by a system of proportional representation.

The 5 or 7-member governments are also all elected by the people; in 24 cantons by a simple majority system, while in Zug and Ticino the cantonal council is elected by proportional representation.

Direct democracy in the form of a People's Assembly still exists only in Appenzell Innerrhoden and Glarus. In all the other cantons, the People vote exclusively at the ballot box.



The canton of Graubünden bears the name of the most important of the three alliances from which it was formed – the Oberer or Grauer Bund (Upper or Grey League), which joined with the Gotteshausbund (House of God League) and Zehngerichtebund (League of Ten Jurisdictions) in the late middle ages to form an independent state with a shared constitution. From 1497 the Three Leagues were allied to, and thus an equal partner of, the Swiss Confederacy. In 1803 the area joined with the commune of Tarasp, which until then had been part of Austria, to become a canton of Switzerland. The Graubünden coat of arms combines the split black and white emblem of the Grey League, the blue and yellow quartered cross of the League of Ten Jurisdictions and the ibex, emblem of the House of God League.

The separation of powers

In Switzerland, the legislature, the executive and the judiciary are separate in terms of their personnel, but are only divided in terms of their function. This means that no-one may belong to more than one of the three federal authorities (parliament, government and the Supreme Court) at the same time; however, for practical purposes, each of the three authorities also carries out duties which, strictly speaking, fall within the competence of another power.



1 Confederation

is the name given to the Swiss state. CH is the abbreviation of Switzerland’s official Latin name ‘Confoederatio Helvetica’. *Confoederatio* means ‘confederation’ and *Helvetica* refers to the Helvetii, an ancient Celtic people who settled in the region of present-day Switzerland roughly 2000 years ago.

Switzerland has evolved over the course of more than seven hundred years from the alliance of the original three cantons, Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden, to today’s federal state that unites the various interests of the individual cantons with the collective interests of the country.

The Confederation has responsibilities in those areas where it is granted powers by the Constitution – for example in foreign and security policy, in customs and financial matters, in enacting legislation that applies throughout the country, and in defence.

Tasks that are not expressly designated federal matters are the responsibility of the next lower political unit, i.e. the cantons.



The Swiss white cross on a red background, so familiar and ubiquitous, has not always been the official symbol of our country. The Bernese and their allies used white crosses to recognise each other during the Battle of Laupen as far back as 1339, but the first flag used for Switzerland as a whole was a tricolour based on the French example. It was the national flag of the Helvetic Republic, which existed from 1798 to 1803. Its red and yellow represented the founding cantons of Schwyz and Uri, whilst green – rarely used at the time – stood for freedom following the breakup of the old confederacy. This colour was incorporated in the coats of arms St. Gallen, Thurgau and Vaud when they were founded in 1803, and is also present in that of Neuchâtel, which became part of Switzerland in 1815.

Who elects who?

In Switzerland, the People are the supreme political authority

Under the Federal Constitution, the People are the supreme political authority. The People comprises all adult men and women who hold Swiss citizenship, some 5.12 million citizens, and corresponds to almost two thirds of the resident population. People under the age of 18 and foreign nationals have no political rights at federal level.

The People elect ...

... the members of parliament: the legislature

The Swiss parliament, which is the legislative branch of the state, has two chambers: The National Council represents the Swiss population as a whole, and the Council of States represents the 26 cantons; together, they constitute the United Federal Assembly. > pages 22–39

Parliament elects ...

... the government: the executive

The Swiss government comprises the seven members of the Federal Council as well as the Federal Chancellor, who are each elected by the United Federal Assembly for a four-year term of office. > pages 40–75

... the Supreme Court: the judiciary

The supreme judicial authorities are the Federal Supreme Court in Lausanne and in Lucerne, together with its three courts of first instance: the Federal Criminal Court in Bellinzona, the Federal Administrative Court and the Federal Patent Court, both in St. Gallen. > pages 76–81

... the Attorney General

The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) is responsible for investigating and prosecuting criminal offences that are directed against or substantially affect the interests of the Swiss Confederation. Examples of offences which come under federal jurisdiction are espionage, crimes involving explosives or radioactive material and abuse of office by federal employees. The OAG is also responsible for cases involving organised crime and terrorism, money laundering and corruption, as well as white-collar crime with international implications.

One People, many rights

Switzerland is virtually the only country in the world where the people have such extensive decision-making powers. The longstanding democratic tradition, but also the comparatively small size of the population and the country, as well as a high literacy rate and broad range of media services are crucial to the proper functioning of this particular system of government. Swiss nationals have the following political rights at federal level:

Elections or *accumulating votes, vote splitting and striking off names* Every four years, the People elect the 200 members of the National Council. All Swiss citizens over the age of 18 may take part in elections, both actively and passively. In other words, they may cast their votes and stand for election themselves. Federal civil servants are required to choose between their profession and elected office should they be elected.

In the cantons with more than one seat in the National Council, eligible voters have a number of options to nominate their favourite candidates:

They may indicate the names of their preferred candidates in a *blank list*.

They may use a *preprinted list* of candidates provided by a specific party, with or without making any changes to the list.

The lists may be modified in three different ways, which may be combined:

Firstly, names can be *struck off the list*. Secondly, votes can be *split*, which means that votes are cast for members of different parties; in other words, a voter can take a name from one list and enter it on another list.

Thirdly, candidates may be *accumulated*, in other words, they can be entered twice on a list. Parties themselves may also list candidates twice (but no more than twice), thus accumulating votes in advance to enhance their election prospects.

The elections to the Council of States are not regulated at federal level, but all the cantons have settled for popular elections, so that all 246 federal members of parliament are elected directly by Swiss citizens.

Voting or *if you feel strongly about something* Those who are entitled to take part in parliamentary elections may also cast their vote in popular ballots, i.e. all Swiss citizens who have turned 18 and are not incapacitated on grounds of mental illness or debility.

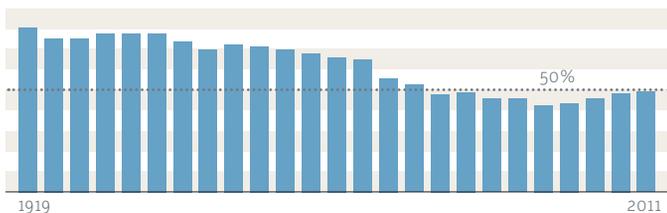
Eligible voters are generally called on four times a year to vote on federal proposals. On average these votes involve three to four proposals that may be adopted or rejected; although in exceptional cases, there may be more than twice that many. Votes are held on people's initiatives and referendums:

The *mandatory referendum* applies to all amendments to the Constitution and proposals for membership of specific international organisations. This means that a popular vote *must* be held. The acceptance of such proposals needs what is known as the *double majority* – the proposal must be accepted firstly by the popular majority, i.e. the majority of the valid votes cast in the whole country, and secondly by the cantonal majority, i.e. voters must accept the proposal in a majority of the cantons.

- Amendments to the constitution
- > **mandatory referendum**
- Amendments to legislation
- > **optional referendum**

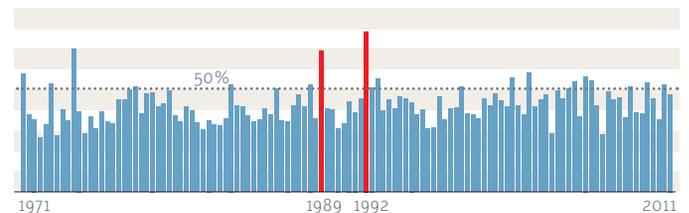
New laws and amendments to existing laws and similar parliamentary decisions, along with certain international treaties are only put to the vote if required by an *optional referendum*. A popular majority is sufficient for such a proposal to be accepted.

Voter turnout in National Council elections since 1919



Voter turnout has fallen significantly since the first National Council elections using the system of proportional representation were held in 1919. The two main reasons for the comparatively low voter turnout in Switzerland are firstly that voters have frequent opportunities to express their views at the ballot box, not only in elections, but also in votes at communal, cantonal and federal levels. Secondly, elections are not that decisive in this country because power-sharing understandings between the main parties preclude any change of government. Since the introduction of postal voting in 1994, there has been a slight increase in voter participation.

Voter turnout in federal votes since 1971



Voter turnout in recent years has averaged slightly over 40 per cent. Some proposals have drawn far more voters to the polling stations, such as the people's initiative for Switzerland without an Army (1989), which brought a 69% turnout and membership of the European Economic Area EEA (1992), which saw 78% of the electorate vote. Because Swiss citizens regularly have the opportunity to take part in decision making on political matters and other important issues, votes are more important in Switzerland than elections. Parliament in Switzerland has less influence than parliaments in countries that do not have direct democratic instruments.

Petition

Everyone is entitled to address written requests, suggestions and complaints to the authorities – not just those eligible to vote.

The authorities in turn are required to take due note of such petitions, and although there is no law to say a response must be given, in practice every petition is considered and does receive a reply. The petition may relate to any activity of the State.

Popular initiatives or **Making law the Swiss way** Citizens may request that the People decide on an amendment they want to make to the Constitution. At federal level, unlike at cantonal level, it is impossible to request a new law or a new amendment.

For such an initiative to come about, the signatures of 100 000 voters who support the proposal must be collected within 18 months.

A popular initiative may be formulated as a general proposal or – much more often – be presented as a precisely formulated text whose wording can no longer be altered by parliament or the government.

Initiative:
 Maximum time for collecting signatures
> 18 months
 Required number of signatures
> 100 000

The authorities sometimes respond to an initiative with a direct *counter-proposal* (generally less far-reaching) in the hope that a majority of the People and cantons will support that instead. Since 1987, the possibility of a *double* ‘yes’ vote has existed in ballots on popular initiatives: voters may approve both the initiative and the counter-proposal. A deciding question determines which of the two texts will enter into force if both secure a popular majority and a majority of the cantons.

Popular initiatives do not originate from parliament or government, but from the People. They are regarded as the *driving force* behind direct democracy.

Referendums or **Voicing disagreement** The People are entitled to have their say on parliamentary decisions.

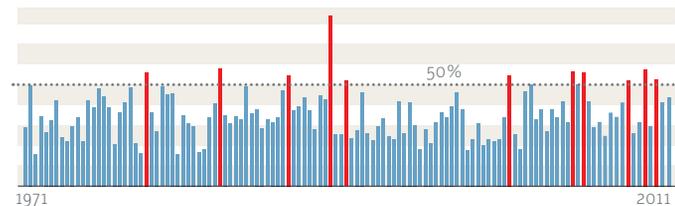
Federal legislation, decisions of parliament and certain international treaties are subject to an *optional referendum*: in this case, a popular ballot is held if 50 000 citizens so request. The signatures must be collected within 100 days of publication of the new legislation. The referendum is similar to a veto and has

the effect of delaying and safeguarding the political process by blocking amendments adopted by parliament or the government or delaying their effect – the referendum is therefore often described as a *brake* applied by the People.

Referendums also contribute to *political agreement* because they prompt parliament to include as many interested parties as possible in the debate on new laws or legislative amendments and thereby allow a compromise to be reached that is supported by a majority, and which is unlikely to fall victim to an optional referendum later on.

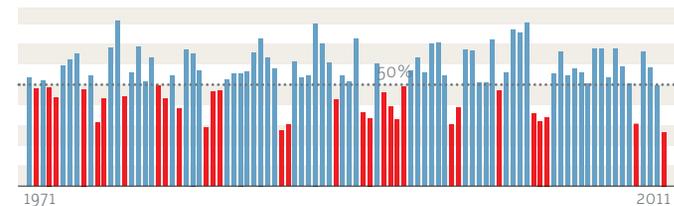
Referendum:
 Maximum amount of time for collecting signatures
> 100 days
 Required number of signatures
> 50 000

Popular initiatives adopted and rejected since 1971



Of a total of 122 popular initiatives that were voted on in recent decades, only eleven were successful at the ballot box – i.e. not even one out of ten. The vast majority of initiatives achieved less than 50% of votes in favour and were rejected. Most of these initiatives are not, however, entirely ineffective. The concerns they address often give rise to broad debate and are eventually translated, at least partially, into new laws.

Optional referendums since 1971



Since 1971, referendum committees have been successful on 94 occasions. They have forced popular ballots on federal acts and decrees approved by parliament that they did not agree with, and have won the day 30 times at the ballot box, which amounts to an almost one in three level of success. The chart shows the percentage in favour at each of the different votes: less than 50% implies that the disputed legislation was rejected.

The four strongest political parties...

Political parties are groupings of like-minded people that have their own philosophies of life – in other words, particular views on political, social and economic issues, etc. They act as a link between the people and state institutions and are essential in a functioning democracy. The party landscape in Switzerland is as varied as the country itself. Normally the four strongest parties constitute the government. However, due to the split within the SVP following the election of Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf in 2008, the largest party in parliament currently has only one member in the Federal Council. All eleven parties give a



SVP

Swiss People's Party



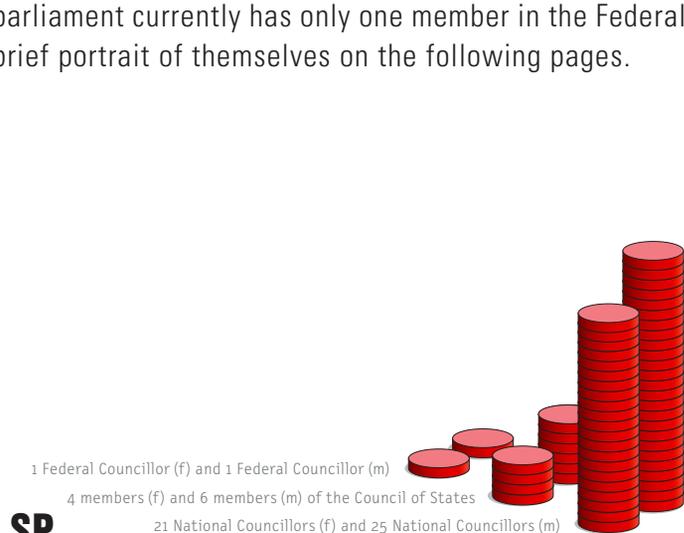
Party President: National Councillor **Toni Brunner** 90 000 members
Founded in 1917 www.svp.ch

The Swiss People's Party emerged in 1971 from the Farmers, Trade and Citizens Party. It is the largest party in Switzerland with a 26.6% share of the vote and represents 648 675 voters.

The SVP is committed to an independent and neutral Switzerland and is firmly against membership of the EU by stealth. The debt and financial crisis in Europe shows just how important a streamlined state with healthy finances, low taxes and a high degree of legal certainty is if Switzerland is to remain a strong business location with safe jobs. Migration into our country can no longer be managed independently. In various branches of the economy Swiss workers are being pushed aside by immigrants from the EU and other third countries. The burden on our social system is greater as a result. In addition, crime by foreigners and asylum abuse are now commonplace. The SVP calls for improved public safety through the deportation of convicted foreign nationals and the tightening of the Criminal Code.

With this clear policy based on conservative values the SVP wants to safeguard our country's prosperity, jobs and future.

While parliament re-elected SVP Federal Councillor Ueli Maurer at the Federal Council elections of 14 December 2011, it did not respect the SVP's justified claim to two seats in the government and thereby installed a centre-left coalition. It was a missed opportunity to establish long term political stability.



SP

Swiss Social Democratic Party



Party President: National Councillor **Christian Levrat** 35 000 members
Founded in 1888 www.spschweiz.ch

The SP wants the economy to work for the people and not vice versa. It is not only management that contributes to a company's success. We are convinced that we would be better served if people considered others and not just themselves.

Switzerland has a solid social net and good public infrastructure. The SP has made a large contribution in that respect. Without the SP there would be no old age pension, no maternity insurance and no votes for women. But that is not enough.

We are convinced that Switzerland can be a fairer, more innovative and progressive society. Environmental pollution and climate change threaten our world and our country. If we make a decisive move towards renewable energies we can protect our environment and create sustainable and innovative jobs. If we place emphasis on education and integration we can provide strong prospects and prevent unemployment.

Our constitution states that "the strength of a people is measured by the well-being of its weakest members". The SP stands by this. We are committed to a society in which individuals are free to shape their lives, but in which a social net is in place to catch those at risk of falling. In short, the SP pursues policies for the good of all, not just the few.



FDP
FDP.The Liberals

	Party President:	120 000 members	www.fdp.ch
	National Councillor Fulvio Pelli	Founded in 1894, merged in 2009	

FDP.The Liberals stands for freedom and personal responsibility. Citizens should be able to shape their own lives. The State should provide a secure framework for citizens, outstanding schools and modern infrastructure. The liberal movement is represented in the Federal Council by Didier Burkhalter and Johann Schneider-Ammann.

We want:

- *Secure jobs.* Our competitiveness is jeopardised by the high value of the Swiss franc, markets for Swiss exports in Europe and the USA are collapsing. The country is facing an economic crisis. That is why the FDP believes Switzerland needs to shape up to ensure its appeal as a business location and enable Switzerland to lower production costs and boost exports without cutting wages. Measures include a flat rate of VAT, defence of the bilateral path with the EU and free trade agreements with Asia and Latin America.
- *Sound social services.* Mountains of debt have already been accumulated due to invalidity and unemployment insurance. The old age pension fund awaits a similar fate in the not too distant future. We must put a stop to this! Reforms are needed across all social institutions and pension funds so that future pensions can be safeguarded.
- *Less red tape.* Absurd red tape and a flood of regulations restrict our freedom and cost SMEs billions each year. Personal initiative and entrepreneurship are constrained. We liberals want simple rules and swift procedures.



CVP
Christian Democrat People's Party

	Party President:	100 000 members	www.cvp.ch
	National Councillor Christophe Darbellay	Founded in 1912	

The CVP focuses on families and middle income groups. As a business-oriented party with a liberal-social outlook it seeks a balance between individuals and society, personal responsibility and solidarity. Its approach to coexistence is based on a Christian view of humanity and society. The party is committed to the internal and external security of the country. The CVP is represented in the Federal Council by Doris Leuthard, who holds the important environment, transport, energy and communications portfolio.

Main themes:

- *Families:* These form the backbone of our society and therefore need a strong framework, which includes a good work-life balance, low taxes and strong purchasing power.
- *Economy:* New, secure jobs and prosperity are generated through innovation. In order to promote the Swiss financial centre and the country's appeal as a location for business, the CVP strives for attractive levels of taxation, outstanding infrastructure and education.
- *Social security:* The CVP believes that the sustainable financing and preservation of social institutions is the greatest challenge in the coming years. This can only be accomplished through targeted reforms and by avoiding unrealistic expansion or cut-backs.
- *Environment policy:* The CVP has long been committed to preserving the planet and pursuing a sustainable climate and environment policy. The approach combines ecology and economy.

...as well as the seven other political parties in parliament

The Greens Swiss Green Party

2 members (m) of the Council of States
6 National Councillors (f)
and 9 National Councillors (m)



Party President: National Councillor **Ueli Leuenbergerr** (until 30.4.2012) 7500 members
Founded in 1983 www.gruene.ch

The Swiss Green Party is the largest party not to have a seat in the government. The party has sections in 24 of the 26 cantons. The Greens hold seats in the executives of seven cantons and numerous communes. It is committed at all levels to protecting the environment and the planet's natural resources. Its goals for the 2011–2015 legislative period are: phasing out of nuclear power and the resulting shift in energy policy, reorganisation of the economy along more environmental lines, effective climate legislation, secure financing of public transport, an active peace policy, no new military jets, an affordable healthcare system and fair pay for all.

BDP Conservative Democratic Party

1 Federal Councillor (f)
1 member (m) of the Council of States
2 National Councillors (f) and 7 National Councillors (m)

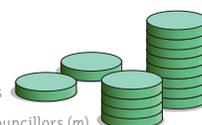


Party President: National Councillor **Hans Grunder** 6500 members
Founded in 2008 www.bdp.info

Founded on 1 November 2008, the BDP is the youngest Federal Council party. By March 2009, it had already gained enough members to achieve parliamentary group status in the Federal Assembly. The BDP advocates conservative policies with no taboos, fear of confrontation or personality cults. Its approach is unblinkered and solution-oriented. The BDP supports the bilateral path with the EU, a credible security policy and an economic policy compatible with environmental considerations. The party is represented in the Federal Council by Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf.

glp Swiss Green Liberal Party

1 member (f) and 1 member (m) of the Council of States
4 National Councillors (f) and 8 National Councillors (m)



Party President: National Councillor **Martin Bäümle** 3650 members
Founded in 2004 www.grunliberale.ch

A well-preserved environment is the very basis for our existence. We want to preserve a thriving world free of contaminated land so that future generations can also enjoy life. This includes healthy state finances and social institutions. The State should not accumulate debt but instead concentrate on its core activities. Sensible conditions allow the market to function effectively. Personal initiative, entrepreneurship, a sense of responsibility and solidarity are the cornerstones of a liberal society and should be encouraged, as should a high quality education system.

EVP Swiss Evangelical People's Party

2 National Councillors (f)



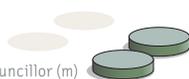
Party President: **Heiner Studer** 4700 members
Founded in 1919 www.evppew.ch

The EVP is an independent, unprejudiced and dependable political force which is committed to a Switzerland worth living in. Based on Christian values such as honesty, solidarity, justice and perseverance, the EVP's moderate policies are in the middle of the political spectrum. The party has about 50 representatives in the cantonal parliaments and its youth wing, the jevp, has been active since 2004. The EVP wants to support families, preserve God's creation, reduce debt, use resources and manpower fairly, care for the poor and needy, secure social services and protect life.

Lega

Lega dei Ticinesi

1 National Councillor (f) and 1 National Councillor (m)



Party President:
Giuliano Bignasca 1500 members
Founded in 1991 www.legaticinesi.ch

Independence: economic and political globalisation is weakening Switzerland. Switzerland can however hold its own in a fragmented Europe if it safeguards its independence and its freedom.

Public services: the federal government must maintain its public services and ensure equal conditions for all people throughout the country. Privatisations should be avoided whenever possible.

Mobility: Ticino needs better connections to the rest of the country. The Gotthard route is stretched to capacity. Natural hazards and structural problems are jeopardising unrestricted use of this route.

CSP Obwalden

Christian Social Party Obwalden

1 National Councillor (m)



Party President:
Walter Wyrsch 250 members
Founded in 1956 www.csp-ow.ch

The CSP Obwalden is only active at cantonal level. It has no affiliations at the national level and has been represented in the cantonal government since it was founded. The party is represented in most communal councils in Obwalden and the mayor of Sarnen is also a member of the CSP. With 8 seats, the CSP Obwalden forms its own parliamentary group in the cantonal parliament. It is represented in all cantonal courts. Its policies are in line with the principles of Christian social ethics and it places importance on a strong economy, genuine solidarity with the weakest in society and the preservation of the environment.

MCG

Geneva Citizens' Movement

1 National Councillor (m)



Party President:
Eric Stauffer 1500 members
Founded in 2005 www.mcge.ch

We are neither right wing nor left wing, but are instead committed to social policies, a strong economy and exemplary public safety.

We are in favour of a single medical insurance fund and seek a review of the bilateral agreements with the EU. We are against European competition and the wave of cross-border commuters from neighbouring EU countries and seek to defend the national workforce.

We want an independent, sovereign Switzerland. It is for that reason that we founded the Citizen's Movement of French-speaking Switzerland and the umbrella organisation, the Federation of Citizen's Movements of the Alpine Region.



THE LEGISLATURE: NATIONAL COUNCIL AND COUNCIL OF STATES OR

The Swiss parliament



In the National Council chamber the president sits facing the members, with the left-wing parties on the left, the right-wingers on the right and members of the centre parties in the middle. This seating order dates back to the French Revolution; in the National Assembly of 1789, which drew up the constitution, the delegates sat for the first time according to their political affiliation and no

longer according to the whether they were members of the nobility, clergy or third estate, the bourgeoisie and farmers.

The members of the Federal Assembly may have vastly different ideologies and opinions on specific issues, and at times debate is very heated, yet the people's representatives on each side of the political divide consider their colleagues to be their

political opponents, never their personal enemies. Most members of parliament are on first-name terms and many get on well privately.

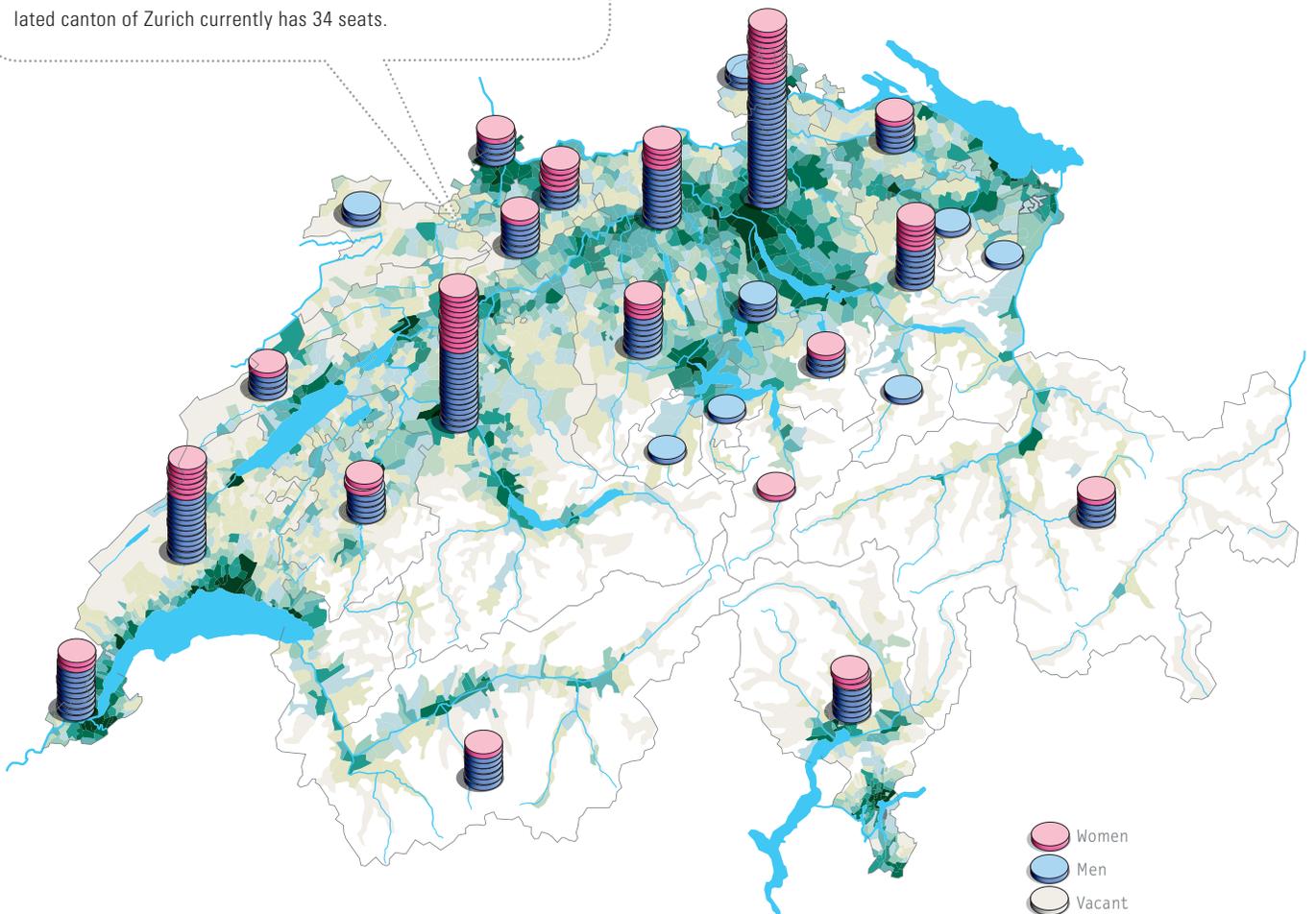
So when the chamber begins to fill up at the beginning of each session, members often warmly greet and converse with their colleagues from the other parties.

The two ways into parliament

Switzerland has a bicameral parliament: the Federal Chambers, which together constitute the United Federal Assembly. The National Council represents the overall population and the Council of States, the member states of the Confederation, i.e. the cantons. This system reflects the two principles on which the structure of the State is founded: the democratic principle, according to which every vote carries the same weight and the federalist principle, by which all cantons are treated equally. Both chambers are elected directly by the People: the National Council according to standard federal rules, the Council of States according to regulations which vary from canton to canton. In both instances, it is the cantons that are the electoral constituencies.

The People are represented in the National Council

The *large chamber* has 200 seats. The number of deputies from a canton depends on its population as recorded in the last census: for every 39 000 inhabitants or so, there is one member on the National Council. However, because the Federal Constitution guarantees one seat per canton, Appenzell Innerrhoden, which has just 16 000 inhabitants, also sends a People's representative to the Federal Palace. Similarly, the neighbouring canton of Appenzell Ausserrhoden and the cantons of Obwalden and Nidwalden, Uri and Glarus only send one National Council member each, whereas the highly populated canton of Zurich currently has 34 seats.



Proportional representation or majority vote

Seats in the *National Council* are allocated according to the system of *proportional representation*. It is called this because seats are allocated in proportion to the share of votes cast.

In National Council elections, the votes for each party are counted first, as they determine the number of seats that are allocated to a party. Then the candidates with the most votes within the parties are elected.

Of course an election by proportional representation only works if there is more than one seat to be allocated. In cantons with only one seat on the National Council there is a *majority vote (first-past-the-post)*: the person with the most votes is elected.

With the exception of the cantons of Jura and Neuchâtel, elections to the *Council of States* are also held according to the first-past-the-post system. This procedure naturally favours large parties or leading figures with a high public profile. Minority parties go away empty-handed.

The cantons are represented in the Council of States

The *small chamber* has 46 seats. Irrespective of its population, each canton sends two representatives to the Council, with the exception of the six former half-cantons, which only have one deputy each.

The Council of States members represent their cantons but are not bound by any instructions from them, whether from the cantonal governments or parliaments.



Representing Switzerland's 7.8m inhabitants

ZH		Max Binder SVP 1947 1991	1	ZH		Ruedi Noser FDP 1961 2003	26	BE		Ursula Haller Vannini BDP 1948 1999	51	OW		Karl Vogler CSPO 1956 2011	76
ZH		Christoph Blocher SVP 1940 1979–2003, 11	2	ZH		Bastien Girod GPS 1980 2007	27	BE		Lorenz Hess BDP 1961 2011	52	NW		Peter Keller SVP 1971 2011	77
ZH		Toni Bortoluzzi SVP 1947 1991	3	ZH		Balthasar Glättli GPS 1972 2011	28	BE		Regula Rytz GPS 1962 2011	53	GL		Martin Landolt BDP 1968 2009	78
ZH		Hans Egloff SVP 1959 2011	4	ZH		Daniel Vischer GPS 1950 2003	29	BE		Franziska Teuscher GPS 1958 1995	54	ZG		Thomas Aeschi SVP 1979 2011	79
ZH		Hans Fehr SVP 1947 1995	5	ZH		Rosmarie Quadranti BDP 1957 2011	30	BE		Alec von Grafenried GPS 1962 2007	55	ZG		Bruno Pezzatti FDP 1951 2011	80
ZH		Alfred Heer SVP 1961 2007	6	ZH		Lothar Ziörjen BDP 1955 2011	31	BE		Kathrin Bertschy GLP 1979 2011	56	ZG		Gerhard Pfister CVP 1962 2003	81
ZH		Hans Kaufmann SVP 1948 1999	7	ZH		Kathy Riklin CVP 1952 1999	32	BE		Jürg Grossen GLP 1969 2011	57	FR		Christian Levrat SP 1970 2003	82
ZH		Christoph Mörgeli SVP 1960 1999	8	ZH		Barbara Schmid-Federer CVP 1965 2007	33	BE		Christa Markwalder FDP 1975 2003	58	FR		Valérie Piller Carrard SP 1978 2011	83
ZH		Natalie Rickli SVP 1976 2007	9	ZH		Maja Ingold LVP 1948 2010	34	BE		Christian Wasserfallen FDP 1981 2007	59	FR		Jean-François Steiert SP 1961 2007	84
ZH		Jürg Stahl SVP 1968 1999	10	BE		Andreas Aebi SVP 1958 2007	35	BE		Marianne Streiff-Feller LVP 1957 2010	60	FR		Dominique de Buman CVP 1956 2003	85
ZH		Bruno Zuppiger SVP 1952 1999	11	BE		Adrian Amstutz SVP 1953 2003	36	LU		Ida Glanzmann-Hunkeler CVP 1958 2006	61	FR		Christine Bulliard-Marbach CVP 1959 2011	86
ZH		Jacqueline Badran SP 1961 2011	12	BE		Andrea Martina Geissbühler SVP 1976 2007	37	LU		Ruedi Lustenberger CVP 1950 1999	62	FR		Jacques Bourgeois FDP 1958 2007	87
ZH		Jacqueline Fehr SP 1963 1998	13	BE		Rudolf Joder SVP 1950 1999	38	LU		Leo Müller CVP 1958 2011	63	FR		Jean-François Rime SVP 1950 2003	88
ZH		Chantal Galladé SP 1972 2003	14	BE		Nadja Pieren SVP 1980 2011	39	LU		Yvette Estermann SVP 1967 2007	64	SO		Roland F. Borer SVP 1951 1991	89
ZH		Andreas Gross SP 1952 1991	15	BE		Albert Röstli SVP 1967 2011	40	LU		Felix Müri SVP 1958 2003	65	SO		Walter Wobmann SVP 1957 2003	90
ZH		Thomas Hardegger SP 1956 2011	16	BE		Erich von Siebenthal SVP 1958 2007	41	LU		Otto Ineichen FDP 1941 2003	66	SO		Philipp Nadorn SP 1967 2011	91
ZH		Daniel Jositsch SP 1965 2007	17	BE		Hansruedi Wandfluh SVP 1952 1999	42	LU		Alberto Vitali FDP 1955 2011	67	SO		Bea Heim SP 1946 2003	92
ZH		Martin Naef SP 1970 2011	18	BE		Matthias Aebischer SP 1967 2011	43	LU		Prisca Birrer-Heimo SP 1959 2010	68	SO		Stefan Müller-Allermatt CVP 1976 2011	93
ZH		Martin Bäumlé GLP 1964 2003	19	BE		Evi Allemann SP 1978 2003	44	LU		Roland Fischer GLP 1965 2011	69	SO		Urs Schläfli CVP 1963 2011	94
ZH		Thomas Maier GLP 1975 2011	20	BE		Margret Kiener Nellen SP 1953 2003	45	LU		Louis Schelbert GPS 1952 2006	70	SO		Kurt Fluri FDP 1955 2003	95
ZH		Tiana Angelina Moser GLP 1979 2007	21	BE		Corrado Pardini SP 1965 2011	46	UR		Gabi Huber FDP 1956 2003	71	BS		Beat Jans SP 1964 2010	96
ZH		Thomas Weibel GLP 1954 2007	22	BE		Alexander Tschäppät SP 1952 1991–2003, 11	47	SZ		Alois Gmür CVP 1955 2011	72	BS		Silvia Schenker SP 1954 2003	97
ZH		Doris Fiala FDP 1957 2007	23	BE		Ursula Wyss SP 1973 1999	48	SZ		Petra Gössi FDP 1976 2011	73	BS		Sebastian Frehner SVP 1973 2010	98
ZH		Markus Hutter FDP 1957 2003	24	BE		Urs Gasche BDP 1955 2011	49	SZ		Primin Schwander SVP 1961 2003	74	BS		Markus Lehmann CVP 1955 2011	99
ZH		Filippo Leutenegger FDP 1952 2003	25	BE		Hans Grunder BDP 1956 2007	50	SZ		Andy Tschümperlin SP 1962 2007	75	BS		Peter Malama FDP 1960 2007	100

The captions below the names refer to (from left to right) political party affiliation, the year of birth and the year of election to the Council. The numbering of members of the National

Council from 1 to 200, and of the Council of States from 1 to 46 (see over) is intended as an aid: It can also be found on the pages showing the chamber seating plan (29–31).

BL		Caspar Baader SVP 1953 1998	101
BL		Thomas de Courten SVP 1966 2011	102
BL		Susanne Leutenegger Oberholzer SP 1948 1987–1991, 99	103
BL		Eric Nussbaumer SP 1960 2007	104
BL		Maya Graf GPS 1962 2001	105
BL		Daniela Schneeberger FDP 1967 2011	106
BL		Elisabeth Schneider-Schneiter CVP 1964 2010	107
SH		Hans-Jürg Fehr SP 1948 1999	108
SH		Thomas Hurter SVP 1963 2007	109
AR		Andrea Caroni FDP 1980 2011	110
AI		Daniel Fässler CVP 1960 2011	111
SG		Toni Brunner SVP 1974 1995	112
SG		Roland Rino Büchel SVP 1965 2010	113
SG		Thomas Müller SVP 1952 2006	114
SG		Lukas Reimann SVP 1982 2007	115
SG		Jakob Büchler CVP 1952 2003	116
SG		Lucrezia Meier-Schatz CVP 1952 1999	117
SG		Markus Ritter CVP 1967 2011	118
SG		Hildegard Fässler-Osterwalder SP 1951 1997	119
SG		Barbara Gysi SP 1964 2011	120
SG		Yvonne Gilli GPS 1957 2007	121
SG		Margrit Kessler GLP 1948 2011	122
SG		Walter Müller FDP 1948 2003	123
GR		Heinz Brand SVP 1955 2011	124
GR		Martin Candinas CVP 1980 2011	125

GR		Josias F. Gasser GLP 1952 2011	126
GR		Hansjörg Hassler BDP 1953 1999	127
GR		Silva Semadeni SP 1952 1995–99, 2011	128
AG		Sylvia Flückiger-Bäni SVP 1952 2007	129
AG		Ulrich Giezendanner SVP 1953 1991	130
AG		Hans Killer SVP 1948 2007	131
AG		Hansjörg Knecht SVP 1960 2011	132
AG		Maximilian Reimann SVP 1942 1987–1995, 11	133
AG		Luzi Stamm SVP 1952 1991	134
AG		Max Chopard-Acklin SP 1966 2009	135
AG		Yvonne Feri SP 1966 2011	136
AG		Cédric Wermuth SP 1986 2011	137
AG		Corina Eichenberger-Walther FDP 1954 2007	138
AG		Philipp Müller FDP 1952 2003	139
AG		Geri Müller GPS 1960 2003	140
AG		Beat Flach GLP 1965 2011	141
AG		Bernhard Gühl BDP 1972 2011	142
AG		Ruth Humbel CVP 1957 2003	143
TG		Markus Hausammann SVP 1964 2011	144
TG		Peter Spuhler SVP 1959 1999	145
TG		Hansjörg Walter SVP 1951 1999	146
TG		Thomas Böhni GLP 1964 2011	147
TG		Edith Graf-Litscher SP 1964 2005	148
TG		Christian Lohr CVP 1962 2011	149
TI		Ignazio Cassis FDP 1961 2007	150

TI		Fulvio Pelli FDP 1951 1995	151
TI		Fabio Regazzi CVP 1962 2011	152
TI		Marco Romano CVP 1982 2011	153
TI		Lorenzo Quadri Lega 1974 2011	154
TI		Roberta Pantani Lega 1965 2011	155
TI		Marina Carobbio Guscetti SP 1966 2007	156
TI		Pierre Rusconi SVP 1949 2011	157
VD		Cesla Virginia Amarelle SP 1973 2011	158
VD		Josiane Aubert SP 1949 2007	159
VD		Ada Marra SP 1973 2007	160
VD		Roger Nordmann SP 1973 2004	161
VD		Jean Christophe Schwaab SP 1979 2011	162
VD		Eric Voruz SP 1945 2007	163
VD		André Bugnon SVP 1947 1999	164
VD		Jean-Pierre Grin SVP 1947 2007	165
VD		Guy Parmelin SVP 1959 2003	166
VD		Pierre-François Veillon SVP 1950 2003	167
VD		Fathi Derder FDP 1970 2011	168
VD		Olivier Feller FDP 1974 2011	169
VD		Olivier François FDP 1955 2007	170
VD		Isabelle Moret GPS 1970 2006	171
VD		Adèle Thorens Goumaz GPS 1971 2007	172
VD		Christian van Singer GPS 1950 2007	173
VD		Isabelle Chevalley GLP 1972 2011	174
VD		Jacques Neiryneck CVP 1931 1999–2003, 07	175

VS		Viola Amherd CVP 1962 2005	176
VS		Yannick Buttet CVP 1977 2011	177
VS		Christophe Darbellay CVP 1971 2003	178
VS		Mathias Reynard SP 1987 2011	179
VS		Stéphane Rossini SP 1963 1999	180
VS		Oskar Freysinger SVP 1960 2003	181
VS		Jean-René Germanier FDP 1958 2003	182
NE		Laurent Favre FDP 1972 2007	183
NE		Alain Ribaux FDP 1962 2011	184
NE		Francine John-Calame GPS 1954 2005	185
NE		Jacques-André Maire SP 1957 2009	186
NE		Yvan Perrin SVP 1966 2003	187
GE		Maria Roth-Bernasconi SP 1955 1995–99, 2003	188
GE		Carlo Sommaruga SP 1959 2003	189
GE		Manuel Tornare SP 1951 2011	190
GE		Céline Amaudruz SVP 1979 2011	191
GE		Yves Nidegger SVP 1957 2007	192
GE		Hugues Hiltipolt FDP 1969 2007	193
GE		Christian Lüscher FDP 1963 2007	194
GE		Antonio Hodgers GPS 1976 2007	195
GE		Ueli Leuenberger GPS 1952 2003	196
GE		Luc Barthassat CVP 1960 2005	197
GE		Mauro Poggia MCG 1959 2011	198
JU		Pierre-Alain Fridez SP 1957 2011	199
JU		Jean-Paul Gschwind CVP 1952 2011	200

Representing the 26 cantons

Why some cantons only have one seat on the Council of States

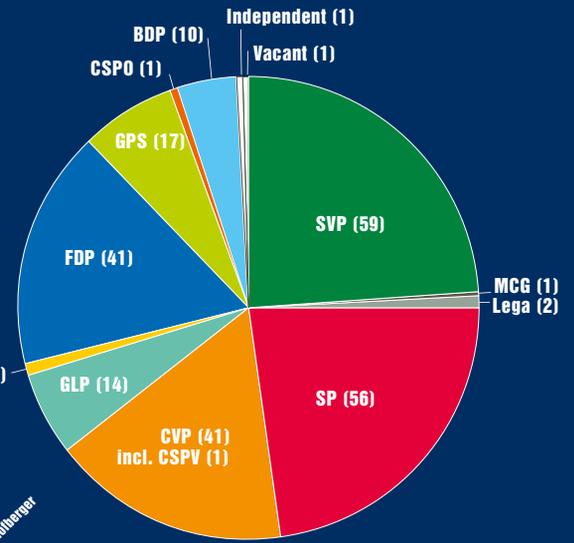
Six cantons which once formed three entities and then subsequently divided used to be considered half-cantons.

These are Obwalden and Nidwalden, which divided well before the founding of the Swiss Confederation in 1291, Appenzell, which divided in 1597 on religious grounds into catholic Innerrhoden and protestant Ausserrhoden, and Basel, which suffered a violent split in 1833: the rebellious Basel-Landschaft broke away from the once dominant Basel-Stadt.

This is why these cantons only have one seat in the Council of States and only half a cantonal vote in votes on amendments to the Swiss Constitution.

ZH		Verena Diener Lenz	1	GL		Pankraz Freitag	13	AR		Hans Altherr	25	VD		Luc Recordon	37	
		GLP 1949 2007				FDP 1952 2008				FDP 1950 2004				GPS 1955 2007		
ZH		Felix Gutzwiller	2	GL		This Jenny	14	AI		Ivo Bischofberger	26	VD		Géraldine Savary	38	
		FDP 1948 2007				SVP 1952 1998				CVP 1958 2007				SP 1968 2007		
BE		Werner Luginbühl	3	ZG		Peter Bieri	15	SG		Karin Keller-Sutter	27	VS		Jean-René Fournier	39	
		BDP 1958 2007				CVP 1952 1995				FDP 1963 2011				CVP 1957 2007		
BE		Hans Stöckli	4	ZG		Joachim Eder	16	SG		Paul Rechsteiner	28	VS		René Imoberdorf	40	
		SP 1952 2011				FDP 1951 2011				SP 1952 2011				CSPV 1950 2007		
LU		Konrad Graber	5	FR		Vacant	17	GR		Stefan Engler	29	NE		Didier Berberat	41	
		CVP 1958 2007								CVP 1960 2011				SP 1956 2009		
LU		Georges Theiler	6	FR		Urs Schwaller	18	GR		Martin Schmid	30	NE		Raphaël Comte	42	
		FDP 1949 2011				CVP 1952 2003				FDP 1969 2011				FDP 1979 2010		
UR		Isidor Baumann	7	SO		Primin Bischof	19	AG		Pascale Bruderer Wyss	31	GE		Robert Cramer	43	
		CVP 1955 2011				CVP 1959 2011				SP 1977 2011				GPS 1954 2007		
UR		Markus Stadler	8	SO		Roberto Zanetti	20	AG		Christine Egerszegi-Obrist	32	GE		Liliane Maury Pasquier	44	
		GLP 1948 2010				SP 1954 2010				FDP 1948 2007				SP 1956 2007		
SZ		Peter Föhn	9	BS		Anita Fetz	21	TG		Roland Eberle	33	JU		Claude Héche	45	
		SVP 1952 2011				SP 1957 2003				SVP 1953 2011				SP 1952 2007		
SZ		Alex Kuprecht	10	BL		Claude Janiak	22	TG		Brigitte Häberli-Koller	34	JU		Anne Seydoux-Christe	46	
		SVP 1957 2003				SP 1948 2007				CVP 1958 2011				CVP 1958 2007		
OW		Hans Hess	11	SH		Hannes Germann	23	TI		Fabio Abate	35					
		FDP 1945 1998				SVP 1956 2002				FDP 1966 2011						
NW		Paul Niederberger	12	SH		Thomas Minder	24	TI		Filippo Lombardi	36					
		CVP 1948 2007								CVP 1956 1999						

The captions below the names refer to (from left to right) political party affiliation, the year of birth and the year of election to the Council.



Tellers

- 163 Eric Voruz (VD)
- 118 Markus Ritter (SG)
- 110 Andrea Caroni (AR)

Federal Councillors

- 113 Roland Rino Büchel (SG)
- 183 Laurent Favre (NE)
- 105 Maya Graf (BL)
- 62 Ruedi Lustenberger (LU)
- 198 Mauro Poggia (GE)

1st Vice-President Teller

- 191 Hans Keller (AG)

2nd Vice-President Teller

- 137 Pierre-François Veillon (VD)

Other Members:

- 174 Isabelle Chevalley (VD)
- 141 Beat Flach (AG)
- 52 Lorenz Hess (BE)
- 142 Bernhard Guhl (AG)
- 127 Hosiwig Hasler (GR)
- 31 Lothar Zöfren (ZH)
- 29 Martin Landolt (GL)
- 134 Luz Stamm (AG)
- 131 Hans Keller (AG)
- 4 Hans Exler (ZH)
- 115 Lukas Ramin (S)
- 102 Hansjörg Kraut (AG)
- 99 Schellen Krieger (ES)
- 100 Thomas de Courten (BL)
- 40 Albert Hosi (BE)
- 129 Sylvia Fritschli-Ram (AG)
- 35 Andreas Kari (BE)
- 7 Hans Kottmann (ZH)
- 41 Echi Stenenthal (BE)
- 90 Walter Wöhrmann (SO)
- 114 Hans Müller (SO)
- 117 Thomas Brand (GR)
- 124 Heinz Brand (GR)
- 181 Oskar Freistinger (VS)
- 192 Yves Midegger (GE)
- 11 Bruno Zuppiger (ZH)
- 146 Peter Studer (TG)
- 130 Ulrich Giezendörfer (AG)
- 101 Caspar Casar (BL)
- 112 Tom Brühler (SG)
- 109 Jörg Stal (ZH)
- 10 Roland F. Gorer (SO)
- 89 Hansruedi Vannin (BE)
- 42 Hansruedi Vannin (BE)
- 37 Andrea Gerschbier (BE)
- 11 Bruno Zuppiger (ZH)
- 116 Peter Studer (TG)
- 9 Toni Bottozzini (ZH)
- 130 Ulrich Giezendörfer (AG)
- 101 Caspar Casar (BL)
- 112 Tom Brühler (SG)
- 109 Jörg Stal (ZH)
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- 42 Hansruedi Vannin (BE)
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- 11 Bruno Zuppiger (ZH)
- 116 Peter Studer (TG)
- 9 Toni Bottozzini (ZH)
- 130 Ulrich Giezendörfer (AG)

What 'our people in Bern' are doing

The members of the National Council and the Council of States each have a series of more or less effective instruments to assert their opinion or to pass on that of their electors. They can propose legislative amendments, ask the Federal Council critical questions or assign it work to do.

Frequency and duration of parliamentary sessions

The National Council and the Council of States usually meet for an ordinary three-week session in spring, summer, autumn and winter. Committee meetings are held between sessions.

Part-time politicians

The 246 members of the National Council and the Council of States devote an average of 60–75 per cent of their working hours to their parliamentary duties. Generally, they also have another job. This arrangement where representatives take on public tasks and mandates on a part-time basis is known in Switzerland as the *militia system*. The representatives' double workload regularly gives rise to calls for a full-time parliament.

On the other hand, some say that part-time members of parliament are closer to the People and that their professional knowledge is a valuable contribution to political debates.

Sessions in 2012

Spring session: 27 February – 16 March
Special session (NC): 2 – 3 May
Summer session: 28 May – 15 June
Autumn session: 10 – 28 September
Winter session: 26 November – 14 December
(5 December: Election of the President and Vice President of the Swiss Confederation)

The main tasks

Legislation: The National Council and the Council of States constitute the legislature, which is the legislative power in Switzerland. The two chambers, together referred to as the Federal Assembly, debate all constitutional amendments before they are put to the popular vote. In addition, they prepare, amend or repeal federal acts, draw up federal decrees and approve international treaties.

(See also 'How new laws come about' on pages 38/39)

Elections: The two parliamentary chambers sit together as the United Federal Assembly in order to elect the members of the Federal Council, the Federal Chancellor and the judges to the federal courts. Each year during the winter session, it elects the President and Vice-President of the Swiss Confederation from among the seven members of the Federal Council.

In the event of a military threat to the country, the United Federal Assembly also appoints a General as commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

Control: The Federal Assembly is responsible for the overall supervision of the federal administration; It decides, among other things, on the federal government's budget – the level of revenues and expenditure. It also examines and approves the federal accounts.

Instruments

By making a **proposal**, members can make amendments to pending issues under discussion.

Parliamentary initiatives enable a member to submit a draft bill for an act or to propose in general terms that such a text be drafted. All legislative work takes place in a committee. Parliamentary initiatives are subject to a preliminary examination.

A motion obliges the Federal Council to submit a specific draft bill or decree or to take appropriate measures. A motion requires the approval of both chambers.

A postulate is a form of request requiring the Federal Council to examine and report on whether an act or decree needs to be drafted or if other measures need to be taken.

A postulate can also require the Federal Council to present a report on another issue. A postulate is binding once it is approved by one of the two chambers.

An interpellation enables members of the Federal Assembly to request information on important events or matters relating to foreign or domestic policy affecting the Confederation. A debate can be requested on the response given by the Federal Council.

An ordinary question, in the same way as an interpellation, enables members to request information on important events or matters relating to foreign or domestic policy affecting the Confederation. However, contrary to interpellations, ordinary questions are not put before the Federal Council, but are answered in writing by the Federal Council.

Question time is a procedure used only by the National Council to deal with current issues. During question time, members of the Federal Council appear before the National Council to respond to questions from Council members. Question time, which lasts no longer than 90 minutes, takes place at the beginning of the second and third weeks of sessions.

In addition to Council members, committees and parliamentary groups can also submit parliamentary initiatives and interventions. They can be signed by one or more Council members.

7812 requests

Over the course of the 48th legislative period between 2007 and 2011, the members of the National Council and the Council of States submitted a total of 7812 parliamentary requests:

- 481 parliamentary initiatives
- 1952 motions
- 683 postulates
- 1882 interpellations
- 575 ordinary questions and
- 2239 written questions as part of question time in the National Council.

Laying the groundwork

Committees are responsible for preparing items of business and formulating recommendations for their respective Council. They work closely with the Federal Council. In accordance with the Parliament Act, the committees should also monitor social and political developments in their fields of expertise and make proposals as to how new challenges could be tackled and problems solved.

Who does what and where

Both chambers each have eleven standing committees: two *supervisory committees* and nine *legislative committees* respectively.

Their composition depends on the strength of the parliamentary groups. National languages and national regions are, as far as possible, taken into due consideration. A National Council committee has 25 members and a Council of States committee has 13. Thus, a member of the National Council sits on one or two committees and a member of the Council of States on three or four.

The term of office for committee members is four years with the option of being re-elected. The term of office for committee chairpersons is limited to two years.

Work and importance of committees

In contrast to National Council and Council of States sessions, committee meetings are not public. The *in camera* consultations usually foster an open discussion between members, making it easier to find mutual solutions. The committees then brief the media after their meetings.

Members whose motions have not been carried in the committee can subsequently submit minority proposals at the plenary session.

The councils tend to accept their own committees' proposals; the most important principles to be followed are therefore set out in the advisory committees.

On average the committees meet for three to four days every quarter. Here the Council of States Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy Committee is at work.



The nine legislative committees are concerned with legislation in their specific fields.

Supervisory committees and delegations

The **Finance Committees** monitor the federal government's spending, review the federal government's budget and public accounts, and examine proposals for future spending. They are divided into sub-committees that scrutinise the finances of the seven departments. The **Finance Delegation**, made up of three National Council representatives and three Council of States representatives, continually monitors and supervises the federal government's finances. The NRLA Supervisory Delegation carries out overall parliamentary supervision of the construction of the New Rail Link through the Alps (NRLA).

The **Control Committees** exercise overall parliamentary supervision. They fulfil their tasks by carrying out inspections and visiting agencies, commissioning the Parliamentary Administration Control to carry out evaluations, reviewing the annual reports of the Federal Council, the federal courts and other bodies mandated by the Confederation (Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority FINMA, the Federal Institutes of Technology, etc.). They deal with supervision requests submitted by third parties and follow up implementation of recommendations and other parliamentary interventions addressed to the Federal Council. The control committees are divided into sub-committees. In addition, each committee selects three members from its group to form the **Control Delegation** (GPDel) whose task it is to scrutinise activities relating to national security and the intelligence services.

Legislative committees

Foreign Affairs Committees: international relations, neutrality, humanitarian aid, human rights, foreign economic policy, European integration, World Bank, IMF.

Science, Education and Culture Committees: science, education, genetic engineering, languages, culture, sport, family, youth and equality issues.

Social Security and Health Committees: social insurance, health matters, drugs, food, sickness and accident prevention, health and safety in the workplace.

Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy Committees: environment protection, national heritage, spatial planning, water supply and regulation, energy, forestry, hunting and fishing.

Security Policy Committees: military defence, civil defence, national economic supply, peace and security policy, civilian service, war materiel exports.

Transport and Telecommunications Committees: transport and traffic, postal services and telecommunications, media.

Economic Affairs and Taxation Committees: national economy, labour, social partnership, prices, consumer protection, private insurance, export risk guarantees, taxation, agriculture.

Political Institutions Committees: federal authorities, relations between the Confederation and the cantons, political rights, citizenship, foreign nationals, asylum, relations between the Church and the State.

Legal Affairs Committees: civil code, code of obligations, intellectual property, fair trading, data protection, criminal law, military criminal law, parliamentary immunity, amnesty.

Other committees

The **Pardons and Jurisdiction Committee** receives applications for pardons concerning sentences handed down by the Federal Criminal Court or a federal administrative authority, as well as for military criminal cases taken to the Federal Court. After passing applications for pardon to the Federal Council for their comments and proposals, the Committee conducts a preliminary examination of the files and communicates its proposal to parliament for its decision. The Committee is also mandated to fulfil the tasks of the Rehabilitation Committee.

The **Judiciary Committee** is responsible for the preparation of the election and the removal from office of members of the federal courts.

Immunity Committee

Applications for the removal of immunity of Council members and of members of authorities elected by the Federal Assembly are dealt with by both Councils. There is an Immunity Committee (IC) appointed for this purpose in the National Council; in the Council of states applications are dealt with by the Legal Affairs Committee (LAC).

The **Drafting Committee** revises the wording of legislation in the three official languages and decides on their final version.

Delegations

Delegations are mainly called on to cultivate relations with other states; otherwise, they represent the Federal Assembly in international parliamentary assemblies such as the Council of Europe, La Francophonie, the OSCE or NATO.

Taking a common stance

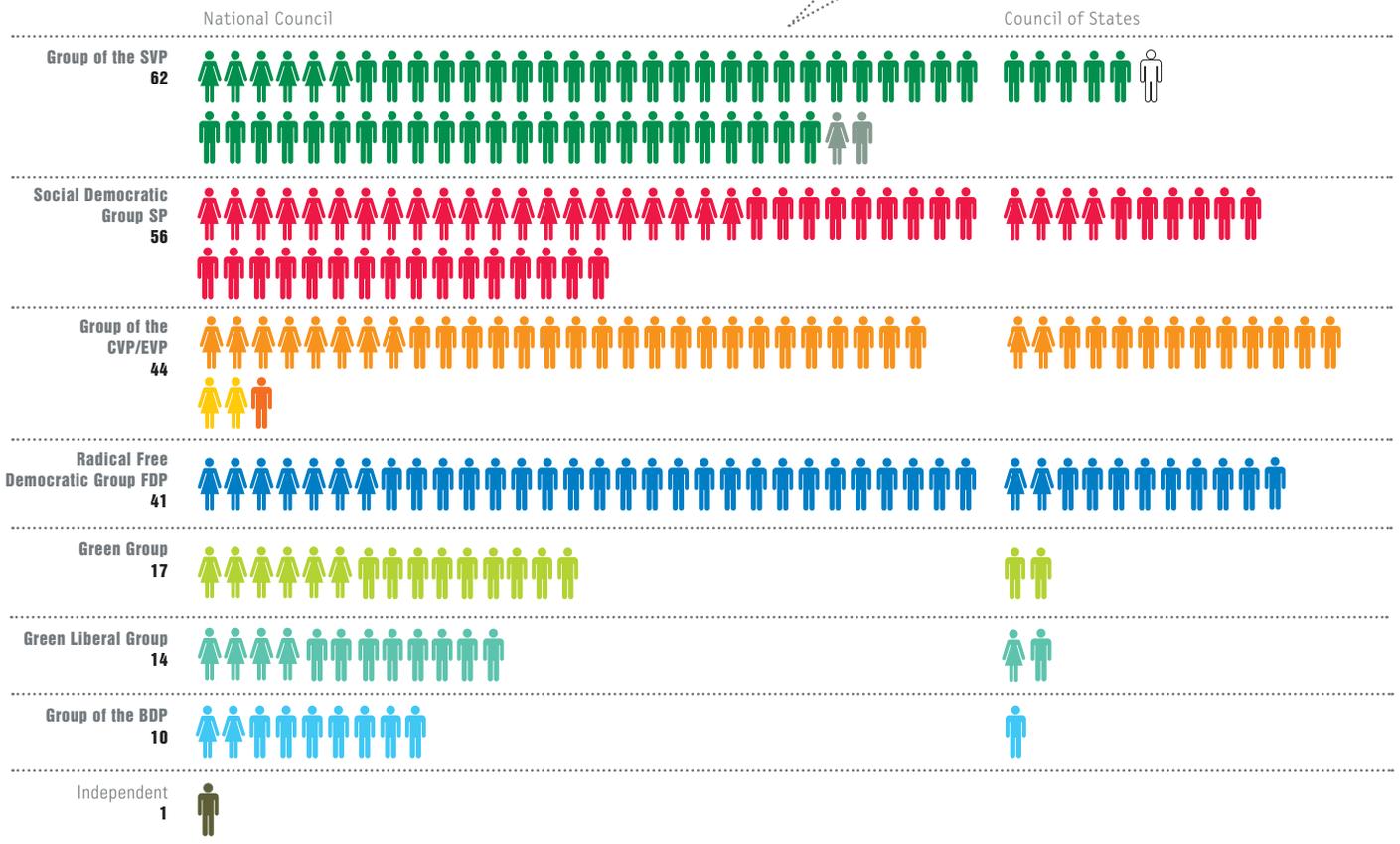
Parliamentary groups comprise members of the same party or parties sharing similar political sympathies. They play an important role in opinion-forming processes, discussing important Council business and agreeing on a line that can be followed by Council members in the Council and in their dealings with the media and the public. At least five members from the same Council are needed to form a parliamentary group. In the National Council, belonging to a parliamentary group is a prerequisite for membership of a committee.

This is why parties with fewer than five members are keen to join a group. But they are also courted because the more members a parliamentary group has, the more committees it can sit on and the greater its influence on Council business.

Politically speaking, the **Federal Assembly** is not divided into parties, but into parliamentary groups. All but one member of parliament currently belong to a parliamentary group.

Money paid for a job done

Parliamentary groups are paid a fixed allowance of CHF 144 500 a year, and each of their members receives the additional sum of CHF 26 800. Members of parliament with no affiliation to a parliamentary group do not receive any of this money and are not entitled to sit on a parliamentary committee or have their say in most debates.



The service centre for the Federal Assembly

Parliamentary Services support the Federal Assembly in the fulfilment of its tasks. They provide a comprehensive service to assist members of parliament in carrying out detailed and creative legislative work. They plan and organise parliamentary sessions and committee meetings, handle secretarial business and prepare reports, minutes and transcripts, and translations, obtain and archive documents and advise and provide technical assistance to Council members in matters related to parliamentary procedure. Parliament's backoffice employs 300 staff who share 209 full-time positions under the leadership of the Secretary-General.

General Secretariat



Secretary-General:
Christoph Lanz

Parliament Building, 3003 Bern
031 322 87 90

information@parl.admin.ch
www.parlament.ch

The *General Secretariat* is responsible for planning the sessions and any related business, and for organisational and procedural matters.

The *Central Secretariat* is parliament's general service office. It makes the basic preparations for parliamentary work, manages addresses and compiles lists.

The *Information Service* maintains contacts with the media, and with the general public. It also supports and advises council members, the parliamentary bodies and the heads of service on information and media-related matters.

The *Public Relations Service* produces communication material on parliament and organises events and guided tours of the Parliament Building. Together with the Federal Chancellery, it also runs the "Political Forum of the Confederation" in the Käfigturm.

The *Internet Service* maintains the parliament website and offers information on a daily basis on the workings of parliament and its various bodies. During parliamentary sessions, it broadcasts the debates.

The *Legal Service* provides advice and information on questions of parliamentary law.

Scientific Services

The activities of committees are an important part of parliamentary work. The volume and complexity of business is continuously increasing, which is why each matter is assigned to one of the committees. The committee secretariats form the *Committees Service*. It plans the committees' work, and provides them with technical, organisational and administrative assistance, and advises them in particular on procedural and jurisdictional questions.

The spoken word is often no sooner said than forgotten. Every parliament therefore also needs a transcription service. The transcription service used by the *Official Bulletin* is one of the most modern in the world: the statements of Council members are recorded and relayed for publication on www.parlament.ch almost in real time.

The *Documentation Centre* is able to provide the information members of parliament need to prepare material for Council decisions or debates.

External Relations and Information

The *External Relations Service* is the secretariat of the Foreign Affairs Committee and Delegations. It also organises foreign trips for members of parliament and visits to Switzerland by delegations from foreign parliaments, and is responsible for questions of protocol.

The *Language Service* provides translations for parliament and the Parliamentary Services. The *Interpreting Service* ensures simultaneous translation of the statements made by members of parliament into the three official languages (German, French and Italian). The *Italian Secretariat* prepares documents relating to all fields and ensures their publication.

Resources, Security and Logistics

The *Personnel Service* implements personnel policies and is the contact for training and organisational development.

The *Finance and Travel Service* is responsible for the preparation and the administration of the budget, accounting and controlling. It arranges for the allowances to be paid to members of parliament and organises their trips.

The *Security and Infrastructure Service* ensures compliance with security measures, plans and coordinates the use of the building and maintains the rooms and the technical infrastructure in the Parliament Building.

The *IT and New Technologies* team is responsible for operating and maintaining the entire IT infrastructure used by the Parliamentary Services and the parliamentary groups' secretariats. It provides all members with personal IT equipment.

The *Operations and Usher Service* is responsible for the infrastructure of the federal chambers, committees and the parliamentary groups. The ushers are available to the chambers at all times during meetings. They also accompany Council Presidents to public events.

The *Project and Integration Management Unit* is responsible for tasks in the areas of infrastructure, security, IT, document management and *e-parl*. The *e-parl* project aims to make all documents necessary for the operations of the councils fully available on the Internet.

The revision of the Narcotics Act

Bringing in new legislation is a complex and at times protracted business. The process takes at least twelve months but it has been known to take as long as twelve years or more. However, the number of new acts has significantly increased in recent years. On average, every week sees a new act come into force or an existing act amended.

With the amendment of the Federal Act of 3 October 1951 on Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances, the concept that has been in place for the last twenty years to address the problem of drugs was given a proper legal footing. Here are the steps that led to this revision.



1	Who: FDHA	When: 1994
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The first step is when someone thinks there is a need for a new piece of legislation or for an existing act to be amended. This can be an individual member of the electorate, interest groups, members of parliament, or sections of the administration, cantons or the Federal Council. In this case it is the Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA. It establishes an expert committee and issues it with the task of preparing a draft revision of the Narcotics Act of 3 October 1951 by the end of 1995.

2	Who: Various	When: 1996
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In its decision of 19 April 1996, the Federal Council empowers the FDHA to conduct consultation proceedings on the report of the expert committee. The report supports the legal anchoring of heroin prescription and the decriminalisation of its consumption; a shift away from the proscription of narcotics or a legalisation of cannabis is rejected.

A majority of responses from the consultation proceedings is favourable towards the recommendations of the expert committee although the recommendation to decriminalise the consumption of all narcotic substances is the most controversial.

3	Who: Federal Council NC-CSSH	When: 1999
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As the decriminalisation of consumption is controversial, the Federal Council draft of 1 September 1999 contains two variants: variant 1 proposes the decriminalisation of all narcotic substances, and variant 2 the decriminalisation of cannabis alone.

The National Council Committee for Social Security and Health submits a further three variants on the decriminalisation of the consumption of all narcotic substances and minor dealing in cannabis to the two put forward by the Federal Council.

4	Who: Various	When: 1999
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There are consequently five variants for consideration in the consultation. The cantons, the federal courts, political parties, business federations and other organisations are all able to submit their comments and propose amendments. The clear preference in the responses to the consultation is for variant 1.

5	Who: FOPH	When: 2000
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The Federal Office of Public Health FOPH compiles the responses to the consultation in a report and drafts a dispatch on the revision of the act.

6	Who: Federal Council	When: 9.3.2001
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The Federal Council examines the text and submits it to Parliament on 9 March 2001.

7	Who: National Council	When: 25.9.2003 14.6.2004
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Following an initial rejection in 2003, on 14 June 2004 the National Council once again decides not to enter into debate on the draft of the Federal Council. The revision of the Narcotics Act fails primarily due to the controversial stance on cannabis.

8	Who: NC-CSSH	When: 4.5.2006
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In 2005, the NC-CSSH considers three parliamentary initiatives and a petition on the revision of the Narcotics Act which are submitted shortly after the failure of the last revision in the National Council.

It postpones a decision on the matter and decides instead to prepare its own committee initiative. On 4 May 2006, it adopts its report on this as well as on the draft to amend the Narcotics Act, thus allowing the elements of the failed revision capable of securing a majority to be implemented swiftly.

9	Who: Federal Council	When: 29.9.2006
----------	--------------------------------	---------------------------

On 29 September 2006, the Federal Council publishes its position on the committee draft. It welcomes the proposal in principle, but requests that heroin be removed from the list of prohibited substances as the revised Narcotics Act envisages a heroin-based, medical treatment.

It submits the text with its requests for other-wise minor changes to parliament.

10**Who:**
NC-CSSH**When:**
3.11.2006

In its debate of 3 November 2006, the NC-CSSH votes by a majority of 15 votes to 8 with one abstention, not to follow the Federal Council's request to remove heroin from the list of prohibited substances.

11**Who:**
National Council**When:**
20.12.2006

In the winter session of 2006, the National Council tables the partial revision of the Narcotics Act and decides to enter into debate on the proposal. It follows the decision of the NC-CSSH and is also against removing heroin from the list of prohibited substances. It accepts the proposal of its CSSH for the most part and adopts it by 108 votes to 65.

12**Who:**
CS-CSSH**When:**
15./16.10.2007

On 15 and 16 October 2007, the Council of States Committee for Social Security and Health CS-CSSH hears representatives of its sister committee and votes in favour of the Federal Council proposal and thus for the removal of heroin from the list of prohibited substances. The article on the purpose of the law proves contentious; the law should not only prevent unauthorised consumption, but also and primarily regulate the provision of pain relievers and their authorised use.

All other proposals that deviate from the decision of the first council concern questions of editing. The CS-CSSH unanimously endorses entering into debate on the proposal.

13**Who:**
Council of States**When:**
18.12.2007

The Council of States fully agrees with the CS-CSSH and votes unanimously in favour of adopting the bill.

14**Who:**
National Council
Council of States**When:**
5.3.2008
19.3.2008

As differences remain between the two chambers regarding the aim and purpose of the law and the question of how heroin should remain prohibited, yet be medically prescribed, the matter moves to the resolution of differences procedure.

The National Council agrees to the extended article of purpose put forward by the Council of States, which states in first place the preventive approach and the encouragement of abstinence and in second place, the need to ensure the availability of narcotic substances for medical and scientific purposes. This does not entail a material change. In addition, the National Council comes up with a concept which retains the prohibition of heroin, yet allows for exceptions.

The Council of States follows the resolutions of the National Council.

15**Who:**
National Council
Council of States**When:**
20.3.2008

On 20 March 2008 the partial revision of the Narcotics Act is put to the final vote in the National Council and is passed by 114 votes in favour to 68 against. The Council of States passes the revision unanimously. As the Narcotics Act is only an act of law and does not involve an amendment to the constitution, it does not automatically come before the people.

16**Who:**
Referendum
committee**When:**
1.4.–10.7.2008

Those opposing the revision, however, manage to gather enough signatures against the amendment of the act within the 100-day period, thereby forcing a referendum.

17**Who:**
People**When:**
30.11.2008

A popular vote is therefore held on 30 November 2008. The proposal is adopted with 68.1% voting in favour.

18**Who:**
Federal Council**When:**
20.5.2009

On 20 May 2009, the Federal Council decides to put the new provisions on heroin-based treatment into force with effect from 1 January 2010. The remainder of the changes to the Narcotics Act are to be introduced at a later date as they require significant amendments to be made at ordinance level.

The picture shows so-called 'party drugs': 3,4-Methylenedioxyamphetamin or MDMA for short and better known as ecstasy, as well as mCCP or meta-Chlorphenylpiperazin.



THE EXECUTIVE: FEDERAL COUNCIL AND DEPARTMENTS OR

The Swiss government



The elections of parliament and the Federal Council last year mark the start of the 49th legislative period since the establishment of the Swiss federal state. At the start of the new four-year term of office the freshly elected cabinet gathers in front of a painting by Franz Gertsch en-

titled 'Spring', which is on display at the museum in Burgdorf dedicated to the artist and his work.

It would be encouraging if the most recent work in the 'four seasons' series could be interpreted as symbolising an outpouring of energy and optimism to inspire the cabinet in the new legislative period.

The artist, who is now in his eighties, worked for over a year on each canvas using his own paints made from earth and mineral pigments. All of the paintings in the series depict the same section of woodland behind the artist's house in Rüscheegg Heubach.

The Federal Council

The Swiss government comprises the seven members of the Federal Council, who are elected individually by the United Federal Assembly for a four-year term of office. The president is elected for one year only and is regarded when in office as *prima inter pares*, or first among equals. She chairs the sessions of the Federal Council and undertakes special ceremonial duties. The Federal Chancellor acts as the government's chief of staff.



Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf
President of the Swiss Confederation
Head of the Federal Department of Finance
Member of the **BDP**
Federal Councillor since 2008



Ueli Maurer
Vice-President of the Federal Council
Head of the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport
Member of the **SVP**
Federal Councillor since 2009



Doris Leuthard
Head of the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications
Member of the **CVP**
Federal Councillor since 2006



Didier Burkhalter
Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
Member of the **FDP**
Federal Councillor since 2009



Simonetta Sommaruga
Head of the Federal Department of Justice and Police
Member of the **SP**
Federal Councillor since 2010



Johann N. Schneider-Ammann
Head of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs
Member of the **FDP**
Federal Councillor since 2010



Alain Berset
Head of the Federal Department of Home Affairs
Member of the **SP**
Federal Councillor since 2011



Corina Casanova
Federal Chancellor since 2008

The composition of the Federal Council in terms of political parties since 1848

FDP	FDP	FDP	FDP	FDP								
FDP	FDP	FDP	FDP	FDP								
FDP	SP	SP	SP	SP								
FDP	FDP	FDP	FDP	FDP	SP	FDP	SVP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
FDP	FDP	FDP	FDP	SVP	SVP	SVP	CVP	SVP	SVP	BDP	SVP	SVP
FDP	FDP	LPS	CVP	CVP	CVP	CVP	CVP	CVP	CVP	SVP	BDP	BDP
FDP	CVP	CVP	CVP	CVP	CVP							
1848	1891	1917	1919	1929	1943	1953	1954	1959				
										2004	2008	2009

The diagram shows the representation of the political parties in the Federal Council since 1848 from the forty years in which its members all came from the Radical Free Democratic Party to the current composition.

Role of the Federal Council

As the highest executive authority of the country, the Federal Council is primarily responsible for the activities of the government. It must continuously

- assess the situation arising from developments in the State and society and from events at home and abroad;
- define the fundamental goals of State action and determine the resources needed to attain them;
- plan and co-ordinate government policy and ensure its implementation;
- represent the Swiss Confederation at home and abroad.

Furthermore, the Federal Council must regularly and systematically scrutinise the workings of the Federal Administration in order to ensure its efficiency and the legality and practicality of its activities. The Federal Council also takes part in the legislative procedure by

- leading the preliminary proceedings of legislation;
- submitting federal acts and decrees to the Federal Assembly;
- enacting ordinances in so far as the Federal Constitution or federal law empowers it to do so.

Finally, the Federal Council drafts the budget and the State accounts.

The Federal Council generally meets for one ordinary session each week and takes decisions on some 2000 to 2500 matters each year. In addition to extraordinary sessions, which are convened at short notice as and when the need arises, a number of special meetings are also held each year, which are dedicated to the consideration of especially complex and important issues.

The sessions of the Federal Council are chaired by the President of the Swiss Confederation, or in her absence, by the Vice-President. They can last between one and ten hours.

The Departments and the Federal Chancellery prepare the agenda, but it is the Federal Council that takes the decisions as a collegial body. Each member of the Federal Council has one vote. The Federal Chancellor is entitled to propose motions and speak, but has no vote.

Collegiality

According to Article 177 of the Federal Constitution, the Federal Council is a collegial body, in which each member has the same rights and responsibilities.

The national government convenes once a week for an ordinary meeting where members express their views on the matters at hand and take decisions. As a rule, the Federal Council avoids putting matters to a vote, as it is normally clear from the discussion what the majority view is. Decisions are reached behind closed doors and must be presented in public unanimously, using the arguments that won the day in the discussions. In other words, members who do not share the opinion of the majority must nonetheless endorse the decisions of the Council as a whole.

Concordance comes from the Latin term 'concordia', which means unanimity or in popular parlance 'one heart, one soul'.

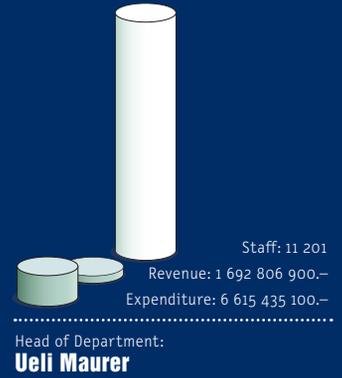
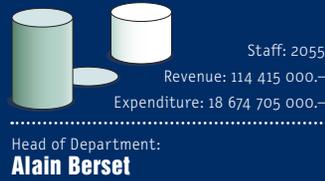
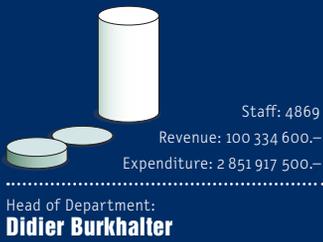
Unlike the consideration given to the various regions of Switzerland, concordance is not stipulated in the constitution, but has evolved over many years through Switzerland's highly developed mechanisms aimed at protecting minorities.

Concordance, does not, however, imply that everyone in parliament and in the government is (or should be) in complete agreement, but rather that all opinions are represented and carry a weight that reflects closely the level of support that they enjoy among the electorate.

The magic formula is the phrase used to describe the way in which the Federal Council has been constituted since 1959 when the seats allocated to parties represented in the national government first corresponded roughly to their share of the vote: the SP (26.3%), the FDP (23.7%) and the CVP (23.3%) each had two seats on the Federal Council, while the SVP (11.6%) had one.

This balance remained unchanged for 44 years. The 2003 National Council elections saw the SVP gain the largest share of the vote, thereby earning them a second seat in government which they took from the CVP. However, in 2008 both SVP members of government shifted allegiance to the newly-founded BDP. Since the beginning of 2009, the SVP has once again had a representative on the Federal Council. Ueli Maurer took over the seat vacated by Samuel Schmid.

Where the 36 400-strong federal staff work



Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA

Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA

Federal Department of Justice and Police FDJP

Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport DDPS

General Secretariat GS-FDFA

General Secretariat GS-FDHA

General Secretariat GS-FDJP

General Secretariat GS-DDPS

State Secretariat

Federal Office for Gender Equality FOGE

Federal Office of Justice FOJ

Office of the Armed Forces Attorney General

Directorate of Political Affairs

Federal Office of Culture FOC

Federal Office of Police Fedpol

Defence

Directorate of International Law DIL

Swiss National Library NL

Federal Office for Migration FOM

Civil Protection

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

Swiss Federal Archives SFA

Federal Office of Metrology METAS

Sport

Consular Directorate

Swiss Meteorological Institute MeteoSwiss

Federal Gaming Board FGB

Armasuisse

Directorate of Corporate Resources DCR

Federal Office of Public Health FOPH

Swiss Institute for Comparative Law SICL

Federal Intelligence Service

Swiss diplomatic and consular missions abroad

Federal Statistical Office FSO

Federal Arbitration Commission for the Exploitation of Copyrights and Related Rights

Federal Social Insurance Office FSIO

National Commission for the Prevention of Torture NCPT

State Secretariat for Education and Research SER

Federal Commission on Migration FCM

Federal Institutes of Technology Group ETH Domain

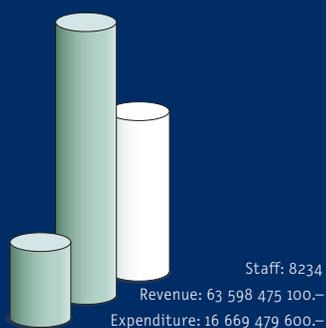
Federal Audit Oversight Authority FAOA

Swiss Agency for Therapeutic Products Swissmedic

Federal Institute of Intellectual Property IIP

Swiss National Museum SNM

The colour-coded organisational units are mostly independent, which is why information on their staff, revenue and expenditure is not included in the respective department figures.



Head of Department:
Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf

Federal Department of Finance DF

General Secretariat GS-DF

State Secretariat for International Financial Matters SIF

Federal Finance Administration FFA

Federal Office of Personnel FOPER

Federal Tax Administration FTA

Federal Customs Administration FCA

Federal Office of Information Technology, Systems and Telecommunication FOITT

Federal Office for Buildings and Logistics FOBL

Federal IT Steering Unit FITSU

Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority FINMA

Swiss Federal Audit Office SFAO

Swiss Alcohol Board SAB

Federal Pension Fund PUBLICA



Head of Department:
Johann N. Schneider-Ammann

Federal Department of Economic Affairs FDEA

General Secretariat GS-FDEA

State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology OPET

Federal Office for Agriculture FOAG

Federal Veterinary Office FVO

Federal Office for National Economic Supply FONES

Federal Housing Office FHO

Office of the Price Supervisor

Competition Commission COMCO

Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training SFIVET

Commission for Technology and Innovation CTI



Head of Department:
Doris Leuthard

Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications DETEC

General Secretariat GS-DETEC

Federal Office of Transport FOT

Federal Office of Civil Aviation FOCA

Swiss Federal Office of Energy SFOE

Federal Roads Office FEDRO

Federal Office of Communications OFCOM

Federal Office for the Environment FOEN

Federal Office for Spatial Development ARE

Swiss Federal Nuclear Safety Inspectorate ENSI



Federal Chancellor:
Corina Casanova

Federal Chancellery FCh

Federal Data Protection and Information Commissioner

Federal Chancellery FCh

Ensuring our democracy really works

Three or four times a year the Swiss people are invited to vote on important political issues, and every four years they elect a new parliament. It is the job of the Federal Chancellery to ensure that the electoral process runs smoothly. The Chancellery makes sure that the cantons and communes organise the vote properly so that ballots are held fairly and in secret. And if parties, organisations, political groups or individuals have a political concern, i.e. they would like something in Switzerland to be changed, the Federal Chancellery is the right place to turn to. Here they receive advice as to the best way to proceed, or what they need to pay attention to when submitting an initiative or launching a referendum.

Changes to the voting system

The days are long since gone when people would queue up after church to vote at the ballot box. Since 1978 it has been possible for votes to be cast from the Thursday before the Sunday of the vote or election. Postal voting was introduced in 1995 and this has since become the norm. And what about the future? The Federal Chancellery is working intensively with the cantons on making it possible to vote via the internet. This is a tall order, as it is necessary to eliminate any possibility of abuse. Successful trials of e-voting have already been held in some cantons, and in October 2011 many Swiss abroad were able to take part in the National Council elections via the internet for the first time.

Ensuring the Federal Council can work efficiently

On the basis of the legislative programme and annual objectives prepared by the Federal Chancellery in conjunction with the seven departments, the Federal Council deals with between 2000 and 2500 items of government business. The Federal Chancellery ensures that the Swiss people receive up-to-date, objective and comprehensive information on government decisions. It acts as an important link between the Federal Council, the different government departments, parliament, the cantons and the public.

The Federal Chancellery is headed by Federal Chancellor Corina Casanova, who is elected by parliament in the same way as the Federal Councillors. She has a say in government affairs and can make proposals on matters relating to her field of business. The Chancellor has a similar function in the Federal Chancellery to a member of the Federal Council heading a government department. The Federal Chancellor is supported in her work by two vice chancellors and about 250 employees working in a modern infrastructure, many of whom are highly qualified special-

ists. A new, complex electronic record and process management system has been recently developed which will make it possible to trace the history of documents and processes back over many years.

Preparing for a Federal Council meeting

Federal Council meetings normally take place in the Federal Council Chamber every Wednesday – on Fridays when parliament is in session – starting at nine o'clock sharp. Meetings usually last between three and five hours. Before an item of business lands on the desks of the Federal Councillors, it goes through a series of stages which are overseen by the Federal Chancellor. When a draft proposal by the lead department has gone through the office consultation procedure, the head of department responsible signs the proposal, and his or her fellow Federal Councillors then have the opportunity to submit their views on it in a joint reporting procedure. This means that they can make counter-proposals, usually in writing. Not until this procedure is complete and the Federal Chancellery has ensured that the item of business is formally and legally correct can it be put on the agenda for a Federal Council meeting.

With an average of 100 items on the agenda at each Federal Council meeting, it is essential that they are chaired very efficiently so that sufficient time can be given to discussing controversial items and strategic issues in full.

What happens after a Federal Council meeting



Immediately after a Federal Council meeting, **Vice Chancellor André Simonazzi** informs parliament and the public of the most important decisions taken during the session. These are made public via the media and on the internet. Of course, this can only happen because the relevant communiqués have been drafted prior to the meeting. The press conference takes place in the media centre immediately after the Federal Council meeting. It can also be viewed online at www.tv.admin.ch.



Federal Council decisions are recorded by the other **Vice Chancellor, Thomas Helbling**, who also oversees their implementation. This involves seeing that bills and decrees are published in the Federal Gazette. The Official Compilation of Federal Legislation (AS) is published weekly and contains the new and amended acts and ordinances; the Classified Compilation of Federal Legislation (SR) is continuously updated and provides a complete overview of current law. The SR is an essential tool for both lawyers and many private individuals, as is evident from the 500 000 or so online queries it receives each day.



Federal Chancellor:
Corina Casanova
 Vice-Chancellors: Thomas Helbling, André Simonazzi

Federal Palace West Wing, 3003 Bern
 031 322 37 91
 Information officers: Ursula Eggenberger, Claude Gerbex
www.bk.admin.ch

Affairs of state in several languages

A multilingual country such as Switzerland relies on all its laws and important parliamentary, government and administrative texts being available in faultless versions in all official languages. The *Central Language Services* at the Federal Chancellery ensure that laws, ordinances and treaties are formulated as clearly as possible in the official languages of German, French and Italian. Many federal government and administrative texts are now also translated into Romansh and English.

Millions of copies published

Three or four weeks before a popular vote is held, the five million voters in Switzerland receive a pamphlet setting out the issues being voted on in a concise and easily understandable manner. A working group led by the Federal Council Spokesperson prepares this information in conjunction with the relevant department, and this is then discussed and approved by the Federal Council. When elections to the National Council are held every four years, the Federal Chancellery publishes a colour brochure explaining the voting procedure and aspects of the Swiss political system.

Political ideas not kept under lock and key

In their efforts to make the world of politics accessible to as many citizens as possible, and to communicate on issues in a clear and exciting way, the Federal Chancellery and Parliamentary Services run a political forum in the historical Käfigturm – ‘prison tower’ – in the centre of Bern. Here political issues are presented in a refreshing way for visitors, school classes, tourists and passers-by. Thematic exhibitions are staged along with talks, podium discussions and films. Political parties and organisations can also hold meetings and small-scale events in the Käfigturm.

Senior management in the spotlight

It cannot be a pleasant experience to have someone pry into your affairs, but senior management in the federal administration are required to undergo a personnel security check. The unit responsible for carrying out these checks is part of the Federal Chancellery. Candidates for the highest positions in the federal administration (e.g. head of a federal office) are questioned to establish if they are likely to be victims of blackmail as a result of their personal background. This involves investigating potential security risks such as large debts, criminal charges or convictions. The unit is part of the Federal Chancellery’s Internal Services.



Under the leadership of **Hans-Rudolf Wenger**, a member of the executive management team, about 50 people including nine trainees ensure that the wheels of the Chancellery keep on turning smoothly. The Internal Services include human resources, finances and accounting, logistics, electronic records and process management, IT, the usher service, event management in the von Wattenwyl house and ‘Lohn’ country residence, and the authentication of signatures from authorities abroad.

Creating transparency and protecting privacy

www.derbeauftragte.ch



Commissioner: Hanspeter Thür	Staff: 24	Revenue: –
		Expenditure: 4 427 600.–

Everyone has the basic right to decide whether and how their personal data are used. The Data Protection Act is designed to protect this right. It sets out the conditions under which private persons, state authorities and companies may process our data. The Federal Data Protection and Information Commissioner FDPIC ensures that the law is respected and provides advice on issues relating to data protection and the freedom of access to information, for which he is also responsible. Based on the principle that state affairs should be made public, citizens can view federal administration documents simply by applying to do so. If the office concerned refuses the applicant access, the FDPIC can be called upon to mediate.



Royal visit

Does 'King' know that in a short while King Juan Carlos I and the President of the Swiss Confederation will step up to the lectern and praise the good relations between their two countries?

Probably not. But he does know what his handler, Martin Messerli, expects of him right now, which is to sniff out anything suspicious, such as explosives or stink bombs, which could jeopardise the State visit by the Spanish royal couple.

While the dog and its handler from the Federal Security Service search all the nooks and crannies in the crescent-shaped lobby, Eligius Caminada from the Federal Office for Buildings and Logistics lays out precious oriental rugs. Meanwhile, Priska Moser and Philipp Baeriswyl from the FDFA coordinate all the work and are responsible, among other things, for the correct seating arrangement for the reception of Their Majesties by the Swiss government. Who is seated where is strictly determined by protocol.

Visits by heads of State – like this one in May 2011 – take place in accordance with diplomatic traditions and rules which are very similar in all European countries: According to international convention, an inspection of the guard of honour and a banquet are a mandatory part of the ceremony everywhere.

Switzerland hosts one to two two-day State visits a year. While the programme for the second day generally includes an excursion, the first day's events follow an official schedule. As a general rule, the entire Federal Council greets the guest with military honours on the Bundesplatz and – because Switzerland does not have an actual seat of government, such as the White House or the Elysée Palace – the Federal Council hosts a reception in the Parliament Building.

Priska Moser and Philipp Baeriswyl work in the Ceremonial and Visits Division of the Protocol Section, and are two of around 5200 federal employees at the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA

The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs is responsible for safeguarding Switzerland's interests abroad and for shaping and coordinating Swiss foreign policy. Its activities are based on the following five foreign policy goals:

- safeguarding Switzerland's independence and prosperity
- alleviating hardship and poverty in the world
- respect for human rights and promotion of democracy
- peaceful coexistence of nations
- preservation of natural resources

General Secretariat GS-FDFA



Secretary-General: Benno Bättig	Staff: 114	Revenue: -	Expenditure: 8 517 000.-
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The General Secretariat supports and advises the head of the FDFA in his daily work. It

- coordinates business within the department for parliament and the Federal Council.
- ensures the achievement of equal opportunities within the FDFA.
- is responsible for department-wide strategic controlling and independent evaluations.
- ensures the effectiveness of the risk management and the internal controlling system within the FDFA.
- informs the public about the activities of the department.

The following bodies also report to the General Secretariat: *Presence Switzerland* which is responsible for Switzerland's communication abroad, the *Cultural Foreign Policy Centre* which deals with the FDFA's cultural strategy and questions relating to cultural policy and the *FDFA Internal Audit Unit* which performs independent audits across all areas of the FDFA's activities.

State Secretariat



State Secretary: Peter Maurer	Staff: 252	Revenue: -	Expenditure: 286 961 000.-
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The State Secretariat plays a leading role in the development and planning of foreign policy on behalf of the head of the FDFA. In the work of developing foreign policy strategies and concepts, the State Secretariat is supported by the Directorate of Political Affairs, which is headed by the State Secretary. The State Secretary can represent the head of the department both at home and abroad, and his duties also involve maintaining Switzerland's bilateral relations with other countries. Further important dossiers include cooperation with the UN, the development of Switzerland's relations with the EU as well as security and peace policy. The Diplomatic Protocol Service and the Integration Office are also attached to the State Secretariat. The Integration Office is the federal government's specialist service for matters concerning European integration and it coordinates relations with the European Union.

Directorate of Political Affairs

Head:
Peter Maurer, State Secretary
and Political Affairs Director

Staff and budget included
in the State Secretariat figures

Assessing global challenges, developing foreign policy strategies, identifying hotspots and areas of tension: the Directorate of Political Affairs is where all the information flows that allows Switzerland's foreign interests to be defended. The Directorate of Political Affairs coordinates everyday foreign policy business and is the office to which all Switzerland's missions abroad report. The Directorate has five geographical and five thematic divisions:

- Europe, Central Asia, Council of Europe, OSCE
- Middle East and North Africa
- Sub-Saharan Africa and La francophonie
- Asia and the Pacific
- Americas
- United Nations and other International Organisations
- Human Security
- Sectoral Policy Coordination
- Security Policy and Crisis Management
- Presidential Affairs and Protocol

Directorate of International Law



Director: Valentin Zellweger	Staff: 47	Revenue: 450 000.-	Expenditure: 5 047 700.-
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International law provides the basis for the peaceful coexistence of states. A foreign policy that adheres to international rules is credible and reliable. International law provides an important guideline for Swiss foreign policy.

As the 'legal conscience' of the FDFA and the Swiss government's central office for international law, the Directorate for International Law (DIL) ensures that Switzerland meets its international legal obligations both abroad and at home. It is involved in negotiating, concluding and implementing agreements based on international law and is committed to the promotion of and compliance with international law. It is also responsible for ensuring that Swiss legal claims against foreign states are enforced.

The DIL deals with a wide range of topics, including neutrality, human rights and international humanitarian law, the legal aspects of cross-border cooperation, privileges and immunity, dealing with the issue of proceeds of corruption, and shipping on the Rhine and other inland waterways. The DIL also coordinates foreign policy measures for combating terrorism and is responsible for relations with the Principality of Liechtenstein.



Head of Department:
Didier Burkhalter

Federal Palace West Wing, 3003 Bern
031 322 31 53
Information officer: Jean-Marc Crevoisier
www.eda.admin.ch

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

www.deza.admin.ch



Director: **Martin Dahinden** Staff: **492** Revenue: –
Local staff: **876** Expenditure: **1 849 345 100.–**

Switzerland contributes to the alleviation of hardship and poverty in the world, to respect for human rights, and to the promotion of democracy and the peaceful coexistence of nations and the natural foundations for life, as stated in the Federal Constitution.

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) fulfils this mission in four main areas of activity:

- Humanitarian aid
- Regional cooperation
- Global cooperation
- Cooperation with Eastern Europe, new EU member states

Humanitarian aid supports the victims of crises and conflicts and promotes preventive measures. The Swiss Disaster Relief Unit (SDR) saves lives and alleviates suffering by providing relief aid and reconstruction assistance in the aftermath of natural disasters and in conflict areas.

Regional cooperation is active in twelve partner countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa and in five countries and regions affected by conflict. It helps people and organisations to overcome poverty and development problems through their own efforts. It is also responsible for the cooperation with regional finance institutions (development banks).

In terms of *Global cooperation*, Switzerland works actively with the governing bodies of the UN organisations, international finance institutions (the World Bank) and global funds. Switzerland makes targeted contributions to resolve cross-border problems such as climate change, food security and migration.

Cooperation with eastern Europe supports political and economic reforms in the West Balkans and in countries of the Community of Independent States of the former Soviet Union (CIS). It is also involved in the enlargement contribution to the new EU countries.

The work of the SDC focuses on ten main areas of activity: health, education, water, rule of law and democracy, migration, agriculture and rural development, business and employment, environment and climate protection, conflict prevention and transformation and economic integration.

Consular Directorate



Director: **Gerhard Brügger** Staff: **35** Revenue: –
Expenditure: **3 525 000.–**

The Consular Directorate (CD) takes into account the growing global mobility of Swiss citizens. It has grouped together its consular services and, as a central contact point, it is able to

guarantee an optimal level of public service. It is divided into three divisions:

- The *Swiss Citizen Services* supports the network of the Swiss representations abroad (embassies and consulates), and operates the *FDFA Helpline*, the central contact point for all enquiries and information relating to consular services (Tel.: 0800 24-7-365, E-mail: helpline@eda.admin.ch).
- The *Delegate for Relations with the Swiss Abroad* promotes the interests of Swiss nationals living abroad, and provides them with information on the topic of living abroad.
- The *Consular Strategies, Developments and Agreements Division* ensures that Swiss representations abroad have the necessary instruments at their disposal for providing an efficient public service in line with people's needs.

Directorate of Corporate Resources



Director: **Helene Budliger Artieda** Staff: **465** Revenue: –
Expenditure: **261 870 200.–**

The Directorate of Corporate Resources (DCR) is the department's service centre for all matters concerning resources and has three main tasks:

- It manages and administers a range of resources (staff, financial, logistics, IT etc.) and ensures they are used effectively.
- It manages the network of Switzerland's diplomatic and consular missions abroad. It takes measures to ensure the security of these missions and their staff, and is responsible for the communication channels and coordination between the Swiss diplomatic missions abroad and the head office in Bern.
- It creates the conditions for results-oriented management in the Swiss diplomatic missions abroad.

In addition, legislation, the application of law and legal advice for the department (with the exception of questions of international law) are included in the DCR's remit. The *Swiss Government Travel Centre*, which organises the official international travel arrangements for the whole of the federal administration, is also part of this directorate.

Swiss diplomatic and consular missions abroad

Staff: **962** Revenue: **99 884 600.–**
Local staff: **1657** Expenditure: **436 651 500.–**

Some 150 missions abroad represent Swiss interests towards other states and international organisations and provide services to Swiss nationals and businesses abroad. The network includes embassies, general consulates, missions to multilateral bodies and SDC cooperation offices.

From olden times

Nikkibarla Calonder is a conservator and restorer in the process of removing fine particles of dirt from a late medieval wool embroidery under daylight lighting. She is wearing protective nitrile rubber gloves and using a special vacuum cleaner with a micro nozzle. Meanwhile, her colleague Katharina Schmidt-Ott is preparing to take a closer look at the metal buttons of a dress.

Centuries-old fabrics – whether tapestries or items of clothing such as the ruffs in the foreground – require special care for their conservation. Fabrics have often been in use for a long time and are in many cases poorly preserved. Some fabrics have become faded or brittle; some are damaged by mould or moths; and others are destabilised due to their complex construction of differently ageing materials.

All the elaborately and expertly conserved textiles here – whether antique or from more recent times – merit being investigated, preserved, and if necessary, restored as well as possible. This is because along with the thousands of other objects in the National Museum, they represent our country's cultural heritage.

All the objects that have been entrusted to the Swiss National Museum are cared for here in the Collection Centre in Affoltern am Albis. They cover large swathes of history ranging from pile dweller spearheads to ancient Helvetian jewellery and Confederation halberds, right up to the very first Swatch.

As a valuable testimony to the past, these items are on display to the public to provide an insight into our history – as exhibits in permanent and temporary exhibitions in the National Museum in Zurich, at the Château de Prangins or in the Forum of Swiss History in Schwyz.

Nikkibarla Calonder and Katharina Schmidt-Ott work in the Collection Centre of the Swiss National Museum and are two of around 2400 federal employees at the Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA



Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA

General Secretariat GS-FDHA

www.edi.admin.ch



Secretary-General: Lukas Bruhin	Staff: 65	Revenue: 1 490 000.–	Expenditure: 122 355 200.–
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The General Secretariat is responsible for planning, coordination and controlling, it acts as a hub between the federal offices and the head of the department and provides consultancy services for the entire department. Its legal service supervises charitable national and international foundations. The Federal Commission against Racism, the Service for Combating Racism and the Bureau for the Equality of People with Disabilities are affiliated to the General Secretariat.

Federal Office for Gender Equality FOGE

www.gleichstellung-schweiz.ch



Director: Sylvie Durrer	Staff: 12	Revenue: 26 400.–	Expenditure: 8 389 700.–
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The FOGE is responsible for gender equality and equal opportunities at federal level. It is particularly active in the areas of equality before the law, equal pay for paid work, equal opportunities in the field of unpaid work and in the fight against domestic violence. It supports advice centres, initiatives and projects to promote equal opportunities. The Secretariat of the Federal Commission for Women's Issues is affiliated to this office.

Federal Office of Culture FOC

www.bak.admin.ch



Director: Jean-Frédéric Jauslin	Staff: 85	Revenue: 1 438 900.–	Expenditure: 163 809 500.–
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The FOC formulates the federal government's cultural policy. It promotes cultural life in all its diversity and creates the conditions to ensure that it can continue to flourish. It promotes artistic creation and supports cultural organisations and Switzerland's various linguistic and cultural communities. It ensures the preservation of historic buildings and monuments, areas of local character and archaeological sites. The FOC is the contact point for queries regarding looted art and the transfer of cultural goods. The FOC manages a number of valuable collections, including the federal art collection.

Swiss National Library NL

www.nb.admin.ch



Director: Marie-Christine Doffey	Staff: 129	Revenue: 345 000.–	Expenditure: 38 774 900.–
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The Swiss National Library's task is to collect, preserve, catalogue and provide access to all printed and electronic publications relating to Switzerland. In addition, the NL houses a series of special collections, the most important being the Swiss Literary Archive and the Graphic Collection. The Dürrenmatt Centre in Neuchâtel is also part of the Swiss National Library.

Swiss Federal Archives SFA

www.bar.admin.ch



Director: Andreas Kellerhals	Staff: 55	Revenue: 525 900.–	Expenditure: 20 966 700.–
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The SFA evaluates, safeguards, catalogues and raises public awareness of Confederation documents with archival value. The full inventory extends over 50 running kilometres and 13 terabytes and includes original documents such as the Federal Constitution, deeds, photos, films, recordings and databases. In a democratic constitutional state, the archiving of such records is essential for continuity and transparency and it enables citizens to exercise democratic control over government and administrative activities and provides a basis for research.

Swiss Meteorological Institute MeteoSwiss

www.meteoschweiz.ch



Director: Christian Plüss	Staff: 294	Revenue: 32 545 000.–	Expenditure: 92 863 600.–
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As the national weather and climate service, MeteoSwiss provides services for the public and business. It observes the atmosphere over Switzerland, produces weather forecasts, warns the authorities and the public in the event of severe weather and analyses climate data. The regional centres in Zurich, Geneva and Locarno, the centre for meteorological measurement technology in Payerne and the aviation weather services at Zurich and Geneva airports provide first-hand weather and climate observations and are in close contact with their clients on site. The surface observation system, weather radars, satellites, radio soundings and other remote sensing instruments monitor the weather in three dimensions.

Federal Office of Public Health FOPH

www.bag.admin.ch



Director: Pascal Strupler	Staff: 471	Revenue: 27 251 000.–	Expenditure: 2 563 289 300.–
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The FOPH and the cantons are jointly responsible for public health and for developing a national health policy. This includes the upkeep and development of health and accident insurance. The FOPH draws up legal requirements for consumer protection (in particular for foodstuffs, chemicals, medicines, cosmetic products and commodities) and ensures that these laws are observed. It is responsible for monitoring contagious diseases and for protecting the population against radiation. The FOPH is responsible for national programmes to reduce addiction (e.g. to tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs) and to promote healthy living. It is also responsible for the national HIV/AIDS programme. It regulates academic and postgraduate training for medical professionals and awards federal diplomas in these areas. The office is also in charge of legislation for and the monitoring of biological security, research on humans and transplantation medicine. The FOPH represents Switzerland's interests in the field of health in international organisations and towards other countries.



Head of Department:
Alain Berset

Inselgasse 1, 3003 Bern
031 322 80 33

Information officers: Ariane Geiser, Katja Zürcher-Mäder
www.edi.admin.ch

Federal Statistical Office FSO

www.statistik.admin.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	1 910 000.–
Jörg Marti	573	Expenditure:	169 221 800.–

Statistics help to create transparency in relation to social and political issues. The FSO therefore publishes information on the situation and trends in Switzerland in many different areas of life. It provides the quantitative information needed to understand the present and to plan for the future. The *Statistical Yearbook*, *Pocket Statistics* and, most importantly, the new internet portal provide an overview of the available information and give links to more detailed statistics. The FSO ensures that the services it provides are scientific, topical, user-friendly and comply with data protection regulations.

Federal Social Insurance Office FSIO

www.bsv.admin.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	44 851 100.–
Yves Rossier (to 30.4.2012)	270	Expenditure:	13 034 060 900.–

Switzerland has an effective and solid social insurance system, which is an important element in upholding social peace. This needs to be maintained in the future, even under difficult economic conditions. The FSIO ensures that the elements of the social insurance system within its remit are properly administered and adapted in line with new challenges; these are Old Age and Survivors' Insurance (AHV), Invalidity Insurance (IV), supplementary benefits, occupational pension funds, compensation for loss of earnings for people doing military service and women on maternity leave, and family allowances. In addition, it is responsible at federal level for dealing with issues relating to family, children, youth and old-age, generational relationships and for general socio-political issues. The FSIO oversees the work of the implementing bodies and is responsible for regularly adapting legislation to changing social realities. In some areas, such as start-up funding for child day-care services, it is itself the implementing body.

State Secretariat for Education and Research SER

www.sbf.admin.ch



State Secretary:	Staff:	Revenue:	4 031 700.–
Mauro Dell'Ambrogio	101	Expenditure:	2 460 973 400.–

The SER is responsible for drafting and implementing federal policy in the areas of higher and university education, research and space affairs. In education its main responsibilities are the academic baccalaureate, promoting cantonal universities and preparing and evaluating the implementation of the ETH Group's federal performance mandate. The SER invests in the quality of Switzerland as a research location by providing resources for the Swiss National Science Foundation, academies, non-university research institutions, Switzerland's memberships in international research organisations and cooperation in international scientific programmes.

Federal Institutes of Technology Group ETH Domain

www.ethrat.ch



President of the ETH Board:	Staff:	Revenue:	–
Fritz Schiesser	13 680	Expenditure:	2 323 764 200.–

The Federal Institutes of Technology in Zurich and Lausanne and four further research institutes, the Paul Scherrer Institute, WSL (the Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research), Empa (Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials Testing and Research) and Eawag (Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology) achieve academic results at the highest level with their combined staff of about 18 000, over 23 000 undergraduate and postgraduate students and about 670 professors. These institutions are grouped together in the ETH Domain, which is strategically managed by the ETH Board. The ETH Board approves and supervises development plans, carries out control activities and ensures good coordination with its partners. It draws up estimates and accounts for the ETH Domain's budget and coordinates the management and maintenance of its real estate.

Swiss Agency for Therapeutic Products Swissmedic

www.swissmedic.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	76 260 000.–
Jürg Schnetzer	300	Expenditure:	74 750 000.–

Swissmedic is the agency responsible for authorising and overseeing all therapeutic products. It ensures that only high quality, safe and effective medicinal products are on the market, thereby making an important contribution to human and animal health. The institute works with partner agencies on a national and international level.

Swiss National Museum SNM

www.nationalmuseum.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	4 300 000.–
Andreas Spillmann	133	Expenditure:	28 400 000.–

Three museums – the National Museum in Zurich, the Château de Prangins and the Forum of Swiss History in Schwyz – as well as the collections centre in Affoltern am Albis – are united under the umbrella of the Swiss National Museum (SNM). The permanent exhibitions at the museums present Swiss cultural history from its beginnings to the present, and give an insight into Swiss identity and the rich tapestry of our country's history and culture.



No open skies

The opening above is barred, the walls are solid and smooth: It's not easy to get out of here; only when you have served your sentence. And in many cases that may be a long time.

At the formal acceptance of work, Marcel Ruf, Director of the Lenzburg penal institution, explains to the group the measures that have been taken to ensure that the new exercise yard of the central prison is as escape-proof as possible. His listeners are (from left to right) prison warden Bruno Graber and federal employees John Zwick, Rudolf Bünzli and Claude Véronique Tacchini.

John Zwick is deputy head of the Section for the Execution of Sentences and Measures at the Federal Office of Justice. Together with his colleague Claude Véronique Tacchini, he oversees the appropriate use of federal funding towards the extension of the cantonal prison. In accordance with federal requirements, individual cells, for example, must have a floor area of at least twelve square metres, sufficient daylight and natural ventilation.

The Lenzburg penal institution is one of seven secure penal institutions in Switzerland. Following the extension it now has 300 cells, 216 of which are intended for men serving secure custodial sentences and 84 for pre-trial detention, semi-detention and the execution of short custodial sentences.

Both security wings house dangerous offenders who are convicted of serious offences, and pose a high risk of absconding. Many of these offenders are mentally ill and unpredictable, and therefore represent a serious threat both to the general public as well as to the 200 prison staff and fellow inmates.

The new central prison also features a special unit for prisoners of retirement age, which is the first such unit in Switzerland.

John Zwick and Claude Véronique Tacchini work in the Section for the Execution of Sentences and Measures of the Federal Office of Justice: They are two of around 3000 federal employees at the Federal Department of Justice and Police FDJP

Federal Department of Justice and Police FDJP

General Secretariat GS-FDJP

www.ejpd.admin.ch



Secretary-General: Matthias Ramsauer	Staff: 106	Revenue GS: 5 892 300.-
Head of ISC: Christian Baumann	ISC: 190	Expenditure GS: 61 786 500.-
		Revenue ISC: 78 729 300.-
		Expenditure ISC: 93 654 000.-

The General Secretariat (GS) supports and advises the head of department in her daily work and ensures that the different sections of the department cooperate smoothly. It coordinates business for parliament and the Federal Council; it informs the public via the media or internet of the FDJP's activities and manages human resources and finances for the whole department.

The *Information Technology Service Centre* (ISC-FJPD) is also part of the FDJP. It develops and manages IT applications, such as search systems or the register of criminal records, for the justice, police and migration authorities throughout Switzerland. Post and telecommunications surveillance services also come under the administration of the ISC-FJPD.

Federal Office of Justice FOJ

www.bj.admin.ch



Director: Michael Leupold	Staff: 213	Revenue: 20 840 400.-
		Expenditure: 156 579 700.-

The Federal Office of Justice drafts legislation on civil law, criminal law, debt collection and bankruptcy law, international private law and public and administrative law. The office also advises the other agencies of the Federal Administration on all legislative matters. It is responsible for keeping the register of convictions, the supervision of the commercial register, the register of births, marriages and deaths, the land registry, debt collection and bankruptcy and the execution of sentences and measures. It provides building subsidies for the costs incurred by the cantons for establishments required in the penal system. Operational cost subsidies for youth welfare residential units also help to ensure the quality of the educational work.

The Federal Office of Justice represents Switzerland at international level at the Strasbourg human rights bodies and in many other organisations and is the central authority dealing with international child abductions and adoptions. The Office collaborates with foreign authorities in the spheres of legal assistance and extraditions.

Federal Office of Police Fedpol

www.fedpol.admin.ch



Director: Jean-Luc Vez	Staff: 768	Revenue: 11 279 900.-
		Expenditure: 250 468 900.-

Fedpol employees carry out tasks in a range of areas to protect the population and the Swiss constitutional state. On behalf of the Office of the Attorney General, they investigate several hundred cases of serious crimes a year at federal level. These crimes include terrorism, organised crime and money laundering.

Fedpol also supports the cantonal prosecuting authorities in various fields, such as the fight against human trafficking and smuggling or internet child pornography.

Fedpol also ensures the protection of federal authorities and buildings and of persons and buildings requiring protection under international law. Fedpol is also responsible for Swiss passports and ID cards and acts as an intermediary between producers, issuing authorities and Swiss nationals. Fedpol provides central police services throughout Switzerland for national and international partners, such as database operations to search for persons or property and to identify persons and leads. To strengthen the fight against cross-border crime, Fedpol also concludes police agreements with individual countries.

Federal Office for Migration FOM

www.bfm.admin.ch



Director: Mario Gattiker	Staff: 729	Revenue: 53 205 000.-
		Expenditure: 1 127 670 500.-

A registered German nurse wants to work at Bern University Hospital – what requirements does she and her employer need to meet? A Swiss company wants to hire an engineer from India – what are the conditions for hiring a person from a country outside the EU/EFTA? A family from Eritrea applies for asylum in Switzerland – under what conditions will the application be approved? The employees of the Federal Office for Migration (FOM) resolve this type of issue on a daily basis. At the same time, they also develop the legal framework for legislation on asylum, foreign nationals, naturalisation or integration.

Together with the cantons and other partners, the FOM aims to ensure the peaceful coexistence of the Swiss and foreign population. These integration measures focus on projects in the areas of language, education and employment.

Federal Office of Metrology METAS

www.metas.ch



Director: Christian Bock	Staff: 139	Revenue: 17 125 800.-
		Expenditure: 44 638 000.-

Swiss products and services are famous for their high quality, precision and reliability. In order to maintain this standard, our economy needs to be in a position to measure, test and assess the properties of its goods and services to the requisite degree of precision. From measuring precision in production processes to calculating electrical energy or keeping within the prescribed environmental limits, the economy and society only function if the right measurements are made correctly.

The Federal Office of Metrology carries out Switzerland's reference measuring, prepares the necessary legal provisions for measuring standards and ensures that they are respected. This means that Switzerland is able to measure and test to the requisite degree.



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Federal Gaming Board FGB

www.esbk.admin.ch



Director: Jean-Marie Jordan	Staff: 34	Revenue: 401 161 900.-	Expenditure: 390 740 800.-
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The Federal Gaming Board supervises the casinos in Switzerland. It ensures that casinos offer their patrons a fair and enjoyable game. Its main task is to ensure compliance with legal provisions to fight money laundering and compulsive gambling. The FGB also has the task of levying gaming tax on casinos, which mainly flow into the Old Age and Survivors compensation fund. Finally, it works with the police to crack down on unlawful gaming.

Swiss Institute for Comparative Law SICL

www.isdc.ch



Director: Christina Schmid	Staff: 30	Revenue: 1 547 600.-	Expenditure: 7 885 500.-
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'Other countries, other customs' is a German saying which is particularly pertinent in Switzerland, a small nation with a wide network of relations with foreign countries. 'Other customs', i.e. foreign law, can be of relevance in mixed nationality families or economic relations. But how does one find out about a certain law in Kazakhstan or a judicial decision in Mongolia? The Swiss Institute for Comparative Law (SICL) provides information on foreign legal systems to the courts, authorities and lawyers. The SCIL provides reference models and sources of inspiration for the legislative process to ensure that Switzerland can benefit from experience gained in other countries.

Federal Arbitration Commission for the Exploitation of Copyrights and Related Rights

www.eschk.admin.ch



President: Laura Hunziker Schnider	Staff and budget included in the General Secretariat figures
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Anyone who copies, sends or reproduces music outside of the private sphere must pay a royalty to the author. This obligation also applies to literary or audiovisual works. Compensation is not only paid to the artists, but also to anyone who exhibits or sells such work to the public. All these types of compensation are agreed between the Swiss collecting companies and the associations of users concerned and set forth in tariffs. The task of the Arbitration Commission is to examine and approve these tariffs.

National Commission for the Prevention of Torture NCPT

www.nkvf.admin.ch



President: Jean-Pierre Restellini	Staff and budget included in the General Secretariat figures
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In 2009 Switzerland ratified the UN's Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, thereby explicitly committing itself to international efforts to combat torture. The task of the

National Commission for the Prevention of Torture (NCPT) is to implement this optional protocol in Switzerland. By making regular visits to and checks of Swiss prisons and other penal institutions, the Commission contributes to the prevention of torture and other abuse. The NCPT is made up of experts from the fields of medicine, law and the criminal justice system.

Federal Commission on Migration FCM

www.ekm.admin.ch



Director: Walter Leimgruber	Staff and budget included in the FOM figures
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As an extra-parliamentary commission, the FCM advises the Federal Council and the federal administration on migration issues, draws up advisory opinions and recommendations and publishes reports. The Commission is made up of 30 members, around half of whom have personal experience of migration.

Federal Audit Oversight Authority FAOA

www.revisionsaufsichtsbehorde.ch



Director: Frank Schneider	Staff: 21	Revenue: 5 600 000.-	Expenditure: (inkl. Bildung Reserven): 5 600 000.-
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The FAOA ensures that auditing services in Switzerland are conducted correctly. To this end, the Oversight Authority operates a licensing office and maintains a public register with the names of natural persons and legal entities that provide auditing services required by law. In addition, the Oversight Authority supervises auditing companies which provide auditing services for public companies. It cooperates closely with other official oversight authorities, stock exchanges, law enforcement agencies, civil courts and supreme audit institutions abroad.

Federal Institute of Intellectual Property IIP

www.ige.ch



Director: Roland Grossenbacher	Staff: 209	Revenue: 43 848 000.-	Expenditure: 42 745 000.-
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Creative minds can register their inventions and creations with the Institute to protect them from being copied: new technical inventions can be patented, names can be trademarked and shapes or forms protected. The IIP provides information online and over the phone for all those interested and gives support for patent research. The Institute also advises the federal authorities on matters relating to intellectual property and represents Switzerland in this field abroad and in international organisations.

Clean air of Spiez

One of the hoses hanging from the ceiling provides Marc Strasser with fresh air from outside the Spiez Laboratory. Slight positive pressure is maintained in his protective suit, so that in the event of any damage, such as a small tear, no contaminated air is able to enter.

Not only is the suit totally impermeable, the entire laboratory complex is literally hermetically sealed and is also kept at low pressure. This means that absolutely no unwanted air can penetrate or leave the complex, not even a tiny grain of dust, let alone viruses and bacteria.

The Spiez Laboratory is responsible for dealing with NBC protection, in other words protection from nuclear, biological and chemical hazards. As Head of the Biology Division, Marc Strasser is responsible for quickly and accurately diagnosing highly infectious pathogens, which occur naturally, as in the event of an epidemic, or are deliberately used as biological weapons.

Dangerous diseases capable of spreading around the world within a short space of time, such as SARS, bird or swine flu in the last few years, occur time and again. Some countries still operate biological weapons programmes and a terrorist attack using the Ebola virus or anthrax, for example, is also conceivable.

It is only once a particular micro-organism has been identified that it is possible to develop effective measures and provide appropriate medical treatment to those affected.

For Marc Strasser and his team who deal with extremely dangerous pathogens, safety is the absolute priority. The public and the environment must be protected from the release of deadly germs. The laboratory complex is therefore not only built to withstand earthquakes, but it is also 16,000 times more insulated than a Minergie house!

Marc Strasser is Head of the Biology Division at the Spiez Laboratory, part of the Federal Office for Civil Protection, and one of around 11 800 federal employees at the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport DDPS



Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport DDPS

General secretariat GS-VBS



Secretary-General: Brigitte Rindlisbacher	Staff: 461	Revenue: 4 762 000.-	Expenditure: 102 087 000.-
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The head of the DDPS has a very wide range of responsibilities and is supported in his daily work by the General Secretariat, a team of specialists from very varied fields that also plans for the medium and long term. The GS manages, coordinates and monitors the use of department funds in the areas of personnel, finances, legal affairs, IT, spatial planning and environment. It is also responsible for security policy strategy, communication, the Am Guisanplatz Library, translation services, the DDPS Damage Compensation Centre and Information Security and Facility Protection (ISFP).

Office of the Armed Forces Attorney General

www.aa.admin.ch



Armed Forces Attorney General: Brigadier Dieter Weber	Staff and budget included in the General Secretariat figures
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The Office of the Armed Forces Attorney General AFAG ensures that the military courts can fulfil their task independently of armed forces command and of the administration. The Armed Forces Attorney General is the head of the military justice system and highest military prosecutor. He instigates and monitors criminal proceedings in the military courts and fulfils all other procedural obligations and duties assigned to him by the legislature.

Defence

www.armee.ch



Chief of the Armed Forces: Lieutenant General André Blattmann	Staff: 9218	Revenue: 355 398 100.-	Expenditure: 5 261 099 700.-
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The second D in DDPS stands for Defence, the backbone of the Swiss armed forces in planning, leadership and management. Defence is the largest sector in the department and is headed by the Chief of the Armed Forces, who holds the rank of lieutenant general (three-star general). The Defence sector consists of the Armed Forces Planning Staff and the Armed Forces Joint Staff, the Land Forces and the Air Force, the Armed Forces College, the Armed Forces Logistics Organisation and the Armed Forces Command Support Organisation.

The Armed Forces Joint Staff is responsible for implementing political guidelines and directives on a military strategy level. It is also in charge of development, planning, resource allocation and steering in the armed forces, and ensures the required level of readiness of the forces and operations, whether for the security for the Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, peace support in the Balkans (e.g. by Swisscoy in Kosovo) or disaster relief for avalanches, flooding or forest fires in Switzerland or abroad.

The Commanders of the Land Forces and the Air Force, also lieutenant generals, bear overall responsibility for training the Land Forces and the Air Force and for preparing ground and air units for action.

The militia officers and professional soldiers are educated and trained at the Armed Forces College. The Logistics Organisation ensures the supply and return of arms, equipment and food, maintenance and infrastructure, medical services and the transport troops. The Command Support Organisation provides all necessary electronic support services.

Civil Protection

www.bevoelkerungsschutz.ch



Director: Willi Scholl	Staff: 281	Revenue: 14 383 100.-	Expenditure: 170 424 700.-
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The P in DDPS stands for civil protection. Civil protection is an integrated system to provide crisis management, protection, rescue and assistance. In the event of disasters and emergencies it ensures the cooperation of the five partner organisations: the police and fire services, the health service, technical operations and civil defence. A joint management body is responsible for coordinating and managing operations.



Head of Department:
Ueli Maurer

Federal Palace East Wing, 3003 Bern
031 324 50 58
Information officers: Peter Minder
www.vbs.admin.ch

Responsibility for civil protection lies mainly with the cantons. The federal government, in particular the Federal Office for Civil Protection (FOCP) takes care of the general planning and coordination of protection against nuclear, biological and chemical threats, early warning and alerting systems and other emergency procedures, training and protective infrastructure. The federal government is responsible in particular for issuing instructions in the event of increased radioactivity, emergencies relating to dams, epidemics and livestock epidemics and armed conflict.

Within the FOCP there are two services with special tasks. The National Emergency Operations Centre in Zurich is responsible for warning and alerting the authorities and emergency services. The Spiez Laboratory is Switzerland's institute for NBC protection. Its services are often called on by the UN and other international organisations.

Sport

www.baspo.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	16 502 000.-
Matthias Remund	341	Expenditure:	199 471 700.-

The S in DDPS stands for Sport. The Federal Office of Sport (FOSPO) promotes sports and physical activity for the whole population. Its activities focus on the positive effects of sport and movement: health, education, performance and the economy. The FOSPO devises and develops national sports policy and implements the resulting tasks. The FOSPO's most important programme is Youth+Sport, in which around 550 000 young people take part each year in 75 different disciplines. The Swiss Federal Institute of Sports in Magglingen, canton Bern is one of the most important training facilities in Swiss sport. Its core competencies include teaching, research and development as well as services in the fields of sport and sport science.

In Magglingen and Tenero (canton Ticino) the FOSPO runs state-of-the-art education, training and course centres which are open to universities, associations, clubs and schools.

Armasuisse

www.armasuisse.ch



Chief of Defence Procurement:	Staff:	Revenue:	1 301 761 700.-
Ulrich Appenzeller	900	Expenditure:	881 858 400.-

Armasuisse is the DDPS competence centre for procurement, technology, real estate and geodata. It ensures that the armed forces and civil protection are supplied with the systems, vehicles, equipment and properties that they require. Armasuisse is one of two federal government procurement centres. There is scarcely a household in Switzerland that doesn't have some Armasuisse product, such as the high quality products produced by the Federal Office of Topography (swisstopo) or the personal equipment of a member of the Swiss Armed Forces.

Armasuisse comprises the Corporate Management Staff, the Central Services, the Federal Office of Topography (swisstopo), and the following areas of competence: command and reconnaissance systems (e.g. procurement of simulators), land systems (e.g. procurement of armoured vehicles), air systems (e.g. procurement of aircraft for the federal government), purchasing and cooperation, science and technology and real estate (managing in the region of 26 000 properties and 26 000 hectares of land belonging to the DDPS).

As armasuisse is responsible for arms and equipment during their entire life cycle, it is also responsible for their liquidation.

Federal Intelligence Service



Director:	Staff and budget
Markus Seiler	confidential

The Federal Intelligence Service FIS has the legal mandate to conduct a global evaluation of the threat to Switzerland, thus contributing directly to the protection of the country with its operative and preventative services. To this end it obtains, analyses and evaluates intelligence before passing on its findings and assessments with the aim of providing a situation analysis suitable for decision-makers at all levels. Particular emphasis is placed on the early recognition of threats and dangers, but also on identifying opportunities for Swiss interests. The FIS deals with topics such as terrorism, proliferation, violent extremism and illicit intelligence gathering, but also with regional security developments, including their military aspects. The Service is supported by a broad network of domestic and foreign partners. It is supervised by various bodies of the administration and by parliament.

5625 an hour

This is the rate at which five-franc coins are struck by the coining presses at the federal mint Swissmint; that's 45 000 over the course of a normal eight-hour day, and a total of three million coins last year, according to the Director, Kurt Rohrer.

About once every ten or twelve minutes his colleague Adrian Richli takes a coin as it comes off the conveyor belt and examines it carefully: are both sides clearly struck? Is the design correctly positioned? Are the thickness and diameter exact? Is there any unevenness or possibly even tiny cracks? Is the rim cleanly cut or has a little bit of metal been left on the edge? Faulty coins are removed and the cause examined so that it can be remedied immediately.

On the subject of metal, when the price of silver rose sharply in the mid-1960s, the material value of half-, one- and two-franc coins suddenly exceeded their face value. As a result, these coins were hoarded and even melted down. It was therefore decided to change their composition. Since then coins from the half-franc piece to the five-franc piece no longer contain silver, but are made of a cheaper copper-nickel alloy, as was already the case for ten- and twenty-centime pieces.

Today about 4.8 billion Swiss coins are in circulation with a total value of over 2.7 billion francs. Recently, the demand for coins has been growing. Nevertheless it is likely that cash-free forms of payment, in particular credit cards with the new PayPass function, will render coins increasingly redundant.

Adrian Richli (front) and Kurt Rohrer work at Swissmint, an independent agency of the Federal Finance Administration, and are among the 9000 or so federal employees at the Federal Department of Finance FDF



Federal Department of Finance FDF

General Secretariat GS-FDF



Secretary-General: Jörg Gasser	Staff: 91	Revenue: 1 056 200.-	Expenditure: 58 380 400.-
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It is Tuesday evening and the brightly lit offices in the Bernerhof are a hive of activity. The departments are submitting their final comments on the items of FDF business for the following morning's Federal Council meeting. The FDF offices concerned provide the necessary documentation for the consultation procedure and other relevant papers, many of which have to be translated. The public is kept informed of Federal Council business simultaneously via the media. The General Secretariat plans, coordinates and reviews all FDF business and supports President Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf in her work.

State Secretariat for International Financial Matters SIF

www.sif.admin.ch



State Secretary: Michael Ambühl	Staff: 36	Revenue: -	Expenditure: 16 988 700.-
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International financial and tax matters have recently gained in importance and Switzerland has also been affected by this. In order to address the resulting challenges more efficiently, the State Secretariat for International Financial Matters SIF was established in 2010. The SIF defends Switzerland's interests in international financial, monetary and tax matters and represents the country – alongside the Swiss National Bank – in influential bodies such as the Financial Stability Board and the International Monetary Fund. The SIF draws up the national regulatory framework to ensure that Switzerland can be a secure, competitive and globally recognised financial centre and location for business. It leads negotiations on tax issues between Switzerland and the EU or other major partners. The SIF is also actively engaged in global efforts to fight money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

Federal Finance Administration FFA

www.efv.admin.ch



Director: Fritz Zurbrugg	Staff: 176 excl. Swissmint (25) and the CCO (648)	Revenue: 2 092 930 800.-	Expenditure: 6 260 393 500.-
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Do not spend more than you earn: In 2001 the electorate voted for the Federal Council and parliament not to run up any further debt. The debt brake therefore requires expenditure to rise at a lower rate than revenue over the economic cycle. The FFA has to comply with this requirement when it draws up the budget for the coming year. The FFA also draws up a financial plan for the three following years to give political players sufficient time to make the appropriate changes and decide whether projects need to be halted, or if new sources of revenue need to be sought.

The FFA's transparent accounting ensures that parliament and the people can see how their taxes are being spent. The FFA oversees the legal framework of the monetary system.

Attached to the FFA are the Central Compensation Office (CCO) and Swissmint, the federal mint. The CCO is the executive body of the Confederation which deals with old age and invalidity insurance (AHV, IV) and compensation for loss of earnings. Swissmint produces the country's coinage.

Federal Office of Personnel FOPER

www.epa.admin.ch



Director: Barbara Schaeerer	Staff: 112	Revenue: 9 962 500.-	Expenditure: 220 185 900.-
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Around 36 800 employees work in the federal administration, which offers interesting and innovative working conditions. As a modern and attractive employer, the federal administration also contributes to the country's strong standing in the international competition among locations for work. FOPER's policies ensure that the federal administration remains an attractive employer and continues to attract and retain the best people for the job.

Federal Tax Administration FTA

www.estv.admin.ch



Director: Urs Ursprung	Staff: 959	Revenue: 48 332 595 200.-	Expenditure: 7 510 625 300.-
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Without tax receipts there would not be enough money to finance old age pensions, transport, education, research and many other public activities. The FTA raises a major part of the Confederation's receipts and so ensures that the Confederation can fulfil its public duties. It ensures that VAT, direct federal tax, withholding tax and other duties are levied properly and efficiently. At an international level, the FTA represents Switzerland on technical tax issues in conjunction with the State Secretariat for International Financial Matters SIF and is responsible for providing administrative assistance in tax matters. The FTA prepares legislative amendments in the field of domestic tax law and contributes to the healthy functioning and development of a modern tax system.

Federal Customs Administration FCA

www.ezv.admin.ch



Director: Rudolf Dietrich	Staff: 4398	Revenue: 11 847 500 000.-	Expenditure: 1 493 577 500.-
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Switzerland generates every second franc abroad. The FCA has the task of operating what will soon be the only customs border in western and central Europe in such a way that import and export businesses and regular travellers notice as little as possible. Swiss businesses should be able to operate on markets without being disadvantaged in terms of their competitors. The FCA also levies a series of consumption taxes such as mineral oil tax and tobacco duty.

The Border Guard is the uniformed and armed section of the FCA and is the largest national civilian security organisation. Be-



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sides carrying out customs services and customs-related policing activities, its duties include tracing persons, vehicles and stolen property, fighting drug smuggling and document fraud and carrying out duties in the migration sector.

Federal Office of Information Technology, Systems and Telecommunication FOITT

www.bit.admin.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	366 123 400.-
Giovanni Conti	1075	Expenditure:	367 054 200.-

People expect to have electronic access to the administration's services in all areas, whether it is to order a new passport or file tax returns. The FOITT plays a major role in providing a link between the Confederation and the public, whether in terms of access to information and services via the Internet, or linking checkpoints at airports and borders with administrative units in Bern. It provides the federal offices with modern, uniform workplace systems and efficient access to the central information repositories and applications.

Federal Office for Buildings and Logistics FOBL

www.bbl.admin.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	946 207 000.-
Gustave E. Marchand	664	Expenditure:	711 179 000.-

Why are most of the offices in the federal administration filled with the same light grey furniture? That is because federal employees are not allowed to simply order their desks and chairs from any furniture manufacturer that takes their fancy. A thousand desks, ten pallets of ballpoint pens, tonnes of printer paper – standardised items purchased in bulk are less expensive than individual purchases. Quotes must be sought and the best offer wins the contract. This is one of the responsibilities of the FOBL, which also builds, maintains and manages the federal government's properties, whether it's the Federal Palace, administrative buildings, museums, castles or embassies around the world.

Federal IT Steering Unit FITSU

www.isb.admin.ch



Delegate:	Staff:	Revenue:	2 100 000.-
Peter Fischer	43	Expenditure:	31 095 100.-

Little happens nowadays without the help of IT, and this is also the case in the federal administration. Information and communication technologies (ICT) are employed to make administrative activities as cost effective and secure as possible. This is a key objective in the Federal Council's IT strategy. The Federal IT Steering Unit FITSU is responsible for seeing that the strategy is applied. FITSU issues guidelines for the administrative units and centrally manages certain standard ICT and IT services required by many federal administration staff and offices in the same or similar form and quality. FITSU also coordinates the work between the Confederation, cantons and communes in the field of e-government.

Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority FINMA

www.finma.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	-
Patrick Raaflaub	379	Expenditure (with reserve funds):	100 000 000.-

Switzerland is one of the world's leading financial markets. The financial sector is therefore extremely important for the country's economy. Supervision of the core areas of the financial sector (banks, insurance companies, stock exchange, etc.) is undertaken by FINMA. It has to adapt its activities to changes in the financial markets and the ever-increasing complexity of the task at hand in order to be able to make its contribution to protecting financial market clients and trust in the integrity and competitiveness of Switzerland's financial centre.

Swiss Federal Audit Office SFAO

www.efk.admin.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	1 140 000.-
Kurt Grütter	85	Expenditure:	22 460 900.-

As the Confederation's supreme audit institution, the SFAO has the right to request information from all federal employees about their work. It endeavours to identify deficiencies and weaknesses and improves the performance of federal activities by convincing staff of its expert recommendations.

Swiss Alcohol Board SAB

www.eav.admin.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	310 648 000.-
Alexandre Schmidt	142	Expenditure:	34 957 000.-

The SAB is celebrating its 125th anniversary in 2012. It regulates the market for alcohol by means of taxes, controls and restrictions on trading and advertising. Alcosuisse, the SAB's profit centre, supplies ethanol to the Swiss economy. As part of the total revision of the Alcohol Act, the ethanol market is to be liberalised and the taxation and monitoring system will be revised. The aim is to create a coherent alcohol policy under which uniform provisions would exist for the trade in all alcoholic drinks, particularly taking into account the protection of minors.

Federal Pension Fund PUBLICA

www.publica.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	34 095 632.-
Dieter Stohler	120	Expenditure:	30 303 538.-

The federal pension fund, PUBLICA, is an independent, collective public federal institution. With about 100 000 insured persons, it is one of the largest pension funds in Switzerland and manages about 34 billion Swiss francs of retirement savings. The staff at PUBLICA advises around 56 000 active insured persons and 48 000 pensioners on all aspects of their pensions.



Just stay calm

All the right procedures have to be followed: although the candidate is operating the ventilator for the umpteenth time, today there is more at stake than ever before. This is because the candidate and her colleague in the ambulance uniform are taking the practical examination for the Federal PET Diploma as an Emergency Medical Technician under the watchful eye of four independent experts.

One of the examiners, Nicole Aeby-Egger, who appears to have a good view from the step, is an expert from the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology.

EMTs are responsible for transporting sick or injured people who are not in a critical condition. In simple situations they assess and care for patients independently; in emergencies, they provide first aid and request support from paramedics or a doctor.

They are responsible for looking after the people in their care on site and during transport. And they have to keep a clear head and stay calm at all times even when under pressure and dealing with complex situations.

Their skills are acquired through Switzerland's system of professional education and training. Every year thousands of people qualify from the four hundred or so courses offered at professional colleges and from a similar number of Federal PET Diploma and Advanced Federal PET Diploma Examinations to carry out demanding activities in the professional world. The Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology is responsible for providing the relevant legal basis.

Candidates only pass examinations once a team of experts unanimously agrees that all of the technical and personal requirements have been met. And it is only then that they are awarded their professional education qualification, as are 28 000 other graduates every year.

Nicole Aeby-Egger is a project manager in the Professional Education and Training Division of the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology and is one of around 2400 federal employees at the Federal Department of Economic Affairs FDEA

Federal Department of Economic Affairs FDEA

General Secretariat GS-FDEA

www.evd.admin.ch



Secretary-General: Monika Rühl	Staff: 277	Revenue: 47 654 800.-	Expenditure: 127 042 900.-
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The General Secretariat is the staff and coordination office of the department and supports and advises the head of department in his daily work. Its brief also involves planning, coordinating and monitoring the department's activities and it is responsible for overseeing the results and assessing the effects of its decisions. The General Secretariat provides human resources, finance and logistics, accounting and translation services for the whole department, as well as IT services through its IT Service Centre.

For administrative purposes the *Federal Consumer Affairs Bureau FCAB* and the *Central Office for Civilian Service ZIVI* report to the General Secretariat. The FCAB is the federal government's central office for economic policy-related concerns on the part of consumers. It is also responsible for ensuring the declaration of origin of wood and wood products and together with SECO runs a product safety information and reporting office.

In Switzerland, young men who object to doing military service on grounds of conscience may perform civilian service instead. ZIVI, which has regional centres in six locations throughout Switzerland, ensures that there are enough civilian service positions available and prepares those performing civilian service for deployment at its training centre.

State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

www.seco.admin.ch



Director: Marie-Gabrielle Ineichen-Fleisch	Staff: 422	Revenue: 8 560 400.-	Expenditure: 1 087 699 100.-
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SECO is responsible for all core issues concerning economic policy. Its aim is to promote sustainable economic growth by creating an appropriate regulatory and economic policy framework.

Employers and employees should be able to benefit from growth-oriented policies, the removal of barriers to trade and a reduction in Switzerland's high prices. On the domestic front, SECO acts as an interface between business, social partners and government. It supports the regionally and structurally balanced development of the economy and ensures the protection of employees. With its labour market policy it contributes to preventing and tackling unemployment and consequently to upholding social peace. SECO also helps to ensure access to all markets for Swiss goods and services and investment. In terms of foreign economic policy, it is active in the formulation of efficient, fair and transparent rules for the world economy. Switzerland's relations to the European Union and to the European Free Trade Association are coordinated by the Integration Office, a joint office of the FDFA and the FDEA.

The Swiss Accreditation Service SAS, which is now affiliated to SECO, is responsible for the accreditation of public and private inspection and conformity assessment bodies in accordance with internationally recognised standards.

Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology OPET

www.bbl.admin.ch



Director: Ursula Renold	Staff: 133	Revenue: 2 794 700.-	Expenditure: 1 367 108 700.-
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Education, research and innovation are essential for our country's economic, societal and social development. The OPET deals with all three areas: It is the federal government's centre of expertise for vocational and professional education and training, universities of applied sciences and innovation policy. As such it plays its part in training well-qualified workers and making Switzerland an attractive location in which to do business. Together with the cantons and the professional associations, the OPET aims to ensure a high level of vocational and professional training. It coordinates the universities of applied sciences, which not only train future managers, but are also involved in applied research and development. In the field of innovation, the OPET prepares the ground for the federal government's innovation policy, negotiates international agreements and is responsible for appraising the work of the Commission for Technology and Innovation and its funding activities.

Federal Office for Agriculture FOAG

www.blw.admin.ch



Director: Bernard Lehmann	Staff: 927	Revenue: 234 791 100.-	Expenditure: 3 776 882 000.-
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Switzerland has 1 051 747 hectares of farmland, 1 602 819 head of cattle in its pastures and 167 462 people employed in the agricultural sector. Each year, the federal government provides agriculture with financial support of around CHF 3.7 billion. The FOAG works to ensure that the country's farmers produce high quality foodstuffs in a way that is both sustainable and market oriented. Its aim is to have a multifunctional farming system that contributes to meeting the food needs of the population, maintaining the basic necessities of life, as well as the settlement of rural areas. A socially acceptable balance must be sought between developments in domestic policy and the need to respond to changing external factors. The FOAG deals with the development of rural areas and promotes agricultural research at its *Agroscope* research stations.

Federal Veterinary Office FVO

www.bvet.admin.ch



Director: Hans Wyss	Staff: 160	Revenue: 7 998 100.-	Expenditure: 66 385 700.-
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A tourist is stopped at the airport with a handbag made from reptile leather and another would like to enter the country with his dog. Highly contagious diseases such as foot and mouth disease or rabies are also prevalent in Europe and require preventive measures. Animal rights activists call for stricter laws governing livestock farming while farmers are opposed to the costs this would involve. The tabloid press calls for 'effective measures



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against fighting dogs', while many dog owners complain about being required to take classes, and feel they are being harassed.

All these situations have one thing in common: they are all difficult issues covered by the FVO. Animal health, animal protection, food safety, species protection and international cooperation in all these areas are dealt with by FVO employees on a daily basis. Many of these are emotive issues, and that is how it should be as a federal office is there to help people – the FVO also helps animals.

Federal Office for National Economic Supply FONES

www.bwl.admin.ch



Delegate:	Staff:	Revenue:	109 100.–
Gisèle Girgis-Musy	32	Expenditure:	8 122 400.–

Switzerland sources virtually 100 per cent of its raw materials, 80 per cent of its energy, 40 per cent of its food, and a large proportion of essential therapeutic products from abroad. All kinds of incidents, from technical disruptions to political tensions in the source countries, can interrupt the flow of vital goods to Switzerland. In its capacity as centre of expertise in matters regarding security of supply, the FONES, in close collaboration with the private sector, ensures that short-term supply shortages do not result in significant disruption for the population and economy. It ensures, for example, that in the event of transport problems sufficient cargo space is available or that the lights stay on even if there is a shortage of power.

Federal Housing Office FHO

www.bwo.admin.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	36 000 000.–
Ernst Hauri	42	Expenditure:	89 442 500.–

Housing is a basic need, but houses and apartments are also important economic assets. Each year around CHF 28 billion is invested in housing construction. Living costs are the greatest items of expenditure for households. Tenants pay some CHF 29 billion a year in rent and around CHF 19 billion is paid by home owners to creditors by way of mortgage interest payments.

The FHO works closely with property developers to ensure that there is an adequate supply of affordable housing and that changing needs are taken into account. The FHO also seeks to reconcile the interests of landlords and tenants in the area of tenancy law.

Office of the Price Supervisor

www.preisueberwacher.admin.ch



Price supervisor:	Staff:	Revenue:	–
Stefan Meierhans	14	Expenditure:	3 554 300.–

People used to worry about the cost of a cup of coffee. Now it tends to be doctors' or hospital bills, water rates, rubbish disposal and postal charges, radio and television licence fees or the cost of public transport. The Office of the Price Supervisor protects consumers from excessive pricing. It monitors price trends and blocks or eliminates improper price increases that have not resulted from free competition.

Competition Commission COMCO

www.weko.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	2 193 200.–
Rafael Corazza	48	Expenditure:	12 206 900.–

Consumer goods in Switzerland are frequently more expensive than abroad, businesses often put pressure on their suppliers and there are regular mergers between companies. COMCO monitors such activities, prohibits illegal cartels and intervenes in cases where free competition is restricted. Its stated aim is to ensure unrestricted market access for businesses in Switzerland and open borders with foreign countries.

Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training SFIVET

www.ehb-schweiz.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	5 500 000.–
Dalia Schipper	162	Expenditure:	41 100 000.–

SFIVET is the centre of expertise for basic and continuing training of VET/PET professionals and it trains VET/PET specialists in its Masters Programme in VET/PET. The Research and Development Division deals with current VET/PET issues and guarantees the transfer of knowledge into practice. SFIVET monitors and implements new education ordinances and is part of a close-knit network with external partners.

Commission for Technology and Innovation CTI

www.kti-cti.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	1 122 600.–
Klara Sekanina	21	Expenditure:	136 271 600.–

The CTI promotes joint research projects between the private sector and universities, the creation and development of knowledge-based firms, as well as knowledge and technology transfer through networks and platforms.

The Commission for Technology and Innovation (CTI) is an independent executive commission consisting of around 60 members and some 60 Start-up coaches and a secretariat which employs around 20 people.

Built to stand strong in any situation

The 122-metre high arch Gebidem dam located above the village of Bitsch in Valais retains the melt water from the Aletsch Glacier, which backs up into a lake containing over nine billion litres of water.

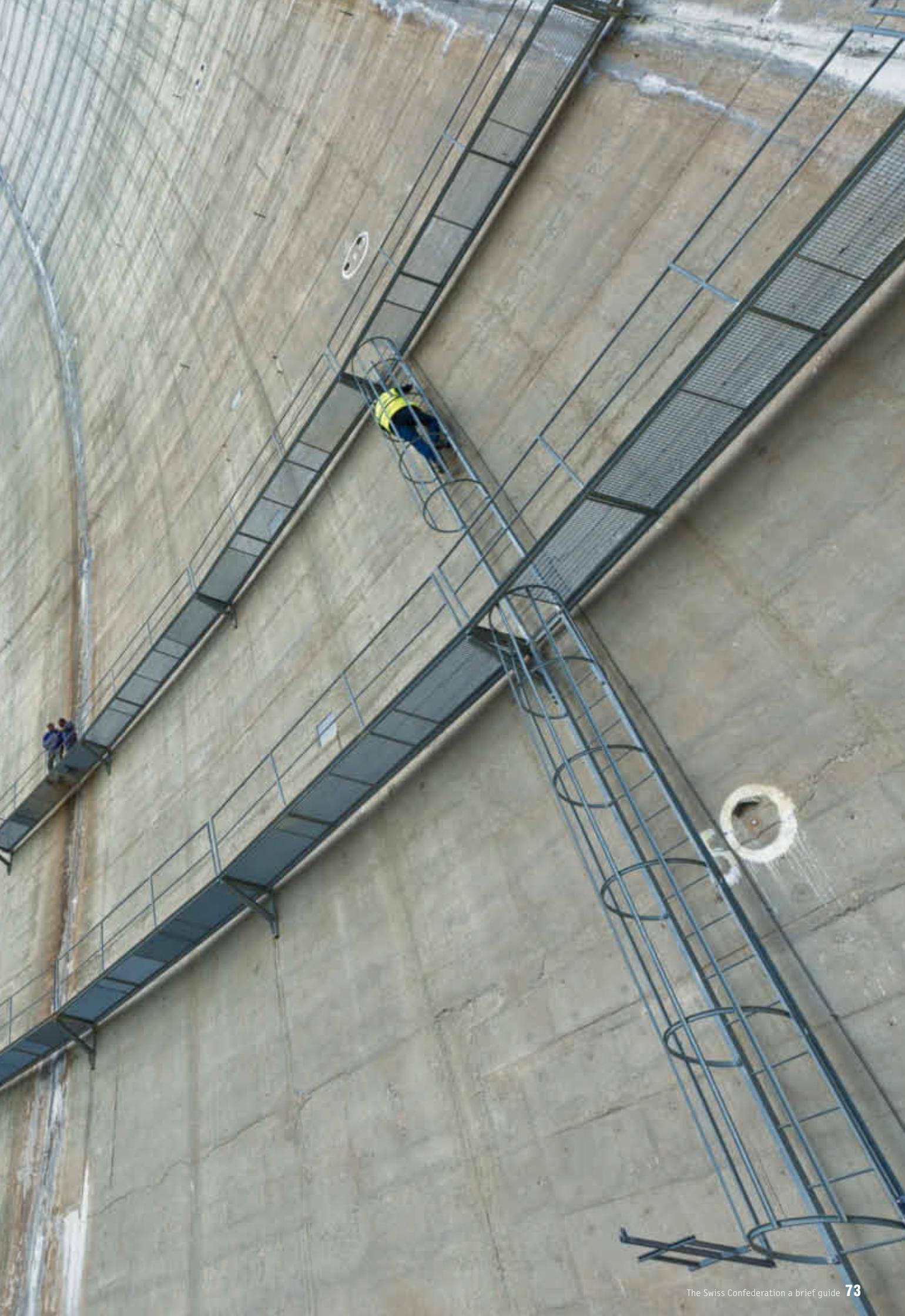
The Gebidem dam is one of over two-hundred large dams subject to federal supervision. There are also around one thousand further smaller dams throughout the country subject to cantonal supervision. The vast majority of the dams are used to produce electricity. Switzerland generates around 55 per cent of its electricity needs using hydropower.

To ensure that Switzerland's most important source of renewable energy can be used safely in the future, the dams must be inspected thoroughly on a regular basis and maintained in perfect working order at all times.

Johannes Maier is an engineer and one of the seven specialists of the Swiss Federal Office of Energy, who are responsible for the safety of Switzerland's large dams. Here, together with two experts from the operating company, he is carrying out the compulsory annual inspection and checking the dam wall inside and out.

He takes readings of movements in the massive concrete structure at numerous different measurement points; he examines the joins between the individual blocks; as he walks through the galleries, he gauges how much water penetrates from the rock; he records any anomalies so that appropriate measures can be taken immediately. For whatever happens, the dam must be capable of withstanding any conceivable risk and remain steadfast.

Johannes Maier works in the Legal Services and Safety Division for the Dam Safety Section of the Swiss Federal Office of Energy, and is one of around 2200 federal employees at the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications DETEC



Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications DETEC

General Secretariat GS-DETEC

www.uvek.admin.ch



Secretary-General: Walter Thurnherr	Staff: 82	Revenue: 3 821 500.-	Expenditure: 100 106 400.-
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The GS serves as the staff office for the department. It coordinates the work of the offices, which is crucial due to the overlapping nature of many items of business. The GS-DETEC also prepares items of business for the Federal Council, supports political planning, acts as an intermediary between DETEC and parliament and ensures coherent external communication. The GS is also primarily responsible for the resources used within the department. In addition, it also acts as owner with regard to Swiss Post, SBB, Swisscom and Skyguide and supervises the implementation of the strategic aims set out by the Federal Council.

The Independent Complaints Authority for Radio and Television, the Communications Commission (ComCom), the Swiss Accident Investigation Board, the Postal Services Regulation Authority (PostReg), the Federal Electricity Commission (ElCom), the Swiss Federal Nuclear Safety Inspectorate, the Federal Inspectorate for Heavy Current Installations, the Federal Pipelines Inspectorate and the Railways Arbitration Commission are all affiliated to the GS-DETEC for administrative purposes.

Federal Office of Transport FOT

www.bav.admin.ch



Director: Peter Füglistaler	Staff: 263	Revenue: 8 508 600.-	Expenditure: 4 933 853 400.-
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The Swiss are a nation of train travellers. No-one travels by train more frequently, and in terms of distance travelled the Swiss are world champions. Switzerland also leads in Europe in terms of the railway's share of the freight transport market. This is the result of Switzerland's coherent transport policy which focuses on the continuing development of the rail network. At present, the Gotthard base tunnel is currently under construction. At a length of 57 kilometres it will be the longest rail tunnel in the world and is expected to enter into operation in 2016.

The gradual expansion and financing of rail infrastructure is coordinated by the Federal Office of Transport (FOT). It carries out the tasks set by the Federal Council and parliament, monitors compliance in terms of cost and deadlines and issues the necessary authorisations.

The FOT is also responsible for safety supervision in public transport. It issues the regulations required for the safe construction and operation. In addition, it carries out random checks to ensure that public transport companies are fulfilling their responsibility with regard to safety. The aim is to maintain the high level of safety or raise it further still, if this can be achieved at reasonable cost.

Federal Office of Civil Aviation FOCA

www.aviation.admin.ch



Director: Peter Müller	Staff: 265	Revenue: 12 549 400.-	Expenditure: 175 627 400.-
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'Safety first' is the FOCA's overriding principle. The FOCA uses a system of certifications and inspections to guarantee the implementation of high safety standards in Swiss aviation when measured against a European cross-section. In order to further improve air safety, the FOCA applies a system of non-punitive reporting. This principle allows pilots, air traffic controllers, mechanics and ground crews to report errors and accidents without being prosecuted. This approach places greater emphasis on learning from incidents that compromise safety than on penalising those at fault. In addition, the FOCA seeks to strengthen safety culture in Swiss aviation through new instruments such as the introduction of safety management systems in companies.

Swiss Federal Office of Energy SFOE

www.bfe.admin.ch



Director: Walter Steinmann	Staff: 182	Revenue: 14 542 100.-	Expenditure: 179 512 900.-
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The Federal Council's energy policy is oriented towards improving energy efficiency, promoting renewable energy sources, particularly hydropower, rapidly expanding the electricity grid, and on increasing energy research and international cooperation. The SFOE has the task of putting these energy policy principles into practice and draws up suitable frameworks and measures to achieve this, such as regulations on the energy consumption of household appliances, consumer electronics, light bulbs and electric motors. The aim is to ensure that our country will still have sufficient, safe, affordable and environmentally friendly energy supplies in the future.

Federal Roads Office FEDRO

www.astra.admin.ch



Director: Rudolf Dieterle	Staff: 446	Revenue: 33 607 000.-	Expenditure: 3 193 669 900.-
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The traffic on Swiss roads should flow smoothly. FEDRO is mandated by the Federal Council and parliament to solve the following problems: which sections of the national road network need to be extended? Which stretches need to be resurfaced? Which tunnels need to be brought in line with the latest safety standards?

FEDRO implements the 'Via sicura' road safety programme adopted by parliament. The aim of the programme is to continue to reduce the number of people killed or injured in road accidents. Therefore only well-trained drivers with safe, efficient vehicles should be driving on safe roads. As such FEDRO sets the requirements that drivers of 40-tonne trucks need to fulfil to ensure they transport their cargo safely, or it adapts technical requirements affecting e-bikes, in order to promote this form of mobility.



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Federal Office of Communications OFCOM www.bakom.admin.ch



Director: Martin Dumermuth	Staff: 251	Revenue: 693 509 900.-	Expenditure: 92 306 200.-
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Every day we listen to the radio, pick up the phone, send e-mails, surf online and watch TV. In order to be able to use all these services, there has to be a stable and powerful communications infrastructure in place. OFCOM has the task of enabling, licensing and supervising all this.

With the growing communications needs of the 21st century there is a need for ever more powerful infrastructure. In order to ensure that everyone in Switzerland can benefit, OFCOM oversees all important steps at the political level. In addition it is laying the foundations for modern infrastructure and is currently in talks with industry representatives on how the population can be connected to the high speed telecommunication networks.

OFCOM also allocates frequencies for radio and television stations. It ensures that the individual radio and TV stations do not infringe the conditions of their licence, e.g. on surreptitious advertising, and distributes the revenues from licence fees fairly among all regions in Switzerland.

Federal Office for the Environment FOEN www.umwelt-schweiz.ch



Director: Bruno Oberle	Staff: 408	Revenue: 39 515 000.-	Expenditure: 1 358 439 300.-
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We all want to live healthy safe lives. We also want to be able to enjoy the beautiful countryside and mountains. We naturally also expect a sound economy allowing us to lead comfortable lives.

But what does all that have to do with environment policy? A great deal. Habitats and ecosystems are not only pleasing because of their diversity and their exceptional flora and fauna, but they also provide further benefits, such as filtering water, pollinating crop plants and regulating the climate. Furthermore, they provide us with food, raw materials and other goods. One of the core tasks of the FOEN is the long term preservation of this diversity of life or biodiversity. By helping to safeguard the sustainable use of water, soils and the air, it contributes to a healthy economy, especially in an Alpine country like Switzerland where nature itself can also be a threat. Flooding, rock slides or avalanches make that blatantly clear. The FOEN helps to ensure that the cantons, communes and residents are prepared for these things – be it in the shape of forests to protect roads and housing, or maps indicating the areas where natural hazards are most likely to be expected.

Federal Office for Spatial Development ARE www.aren.admin.ch or www.raumentwicklung.ch



Director: Maria Lezzi	Staff: 64	Revenue: 49 100.-	Expenditure: 18 734 400.-
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Globalisation marches on. The EU countries have become a strong economic area. That presents Switzerland with great challenges. It has to position itself and play on its strengths – with efficient urban and economic centres, a dense network of lively and attractive towns, a varied and well-preserved countryside as well as sustainable farmland.

Thanks to modern transport infrastructure, journey times between Switzerland's towns, tourist and rural centres have shrunk in recent years. That has had a positive impact on Switzerland's network of towns and rural areas. On the other hand, the flipside is that the need for housing has grown and valuable natural landscapes and productive land has been lost. Settlements and transport are not yet optimally attuned. Spatial planning in Switzerland is therefore not as sustainable as demanded by the Federal Constitution and the Spatial Planning Act. This is why the Federal Office for Spatial Development ARE supports and encourages projects that steer the spatial development of our country towards more sustainable paths. An example of this is the close partnership with the cantons, cities and communes to draw up the Swiss spatial plan, which is a forward-looking scope of action and policy guidelines for the future spatial development of Switzerland. ARE is also significantly involved in monitoring and coordinating the update of the Spatial Planning Act, which is currently (2012) being debated in parliament.

Swiss Federal Nuclear Safety Inspectorate ENSI



Director: Hans Wanner	Staff: 137	Revenue: 57 900 000.-	Expenditure: 53 400 000.-
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The Swiss Federal Nuclear Safety Inspectorate ENSI is responsible for ensuring the safe operation of nuclear installations in Switzerland. It is an independent public body and reports directly to the Federal Council. ENSI took over from the Federal Nuclear Safety Inspectorate HSK, which used to be part of the Federal Office of Energy. The overriding aim of the federal government's supervisory activities in the field of nuclear energy is to protect the population and environment from harm resulting from radioactivity. ENSI therefore supervises Switzerland's five nuclear power stations, the interim storage sites for radioactive waste and the nuclear research units at the Paul Scherrer Institute, Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne and the University of Basel. This involves ensuring that operators comply with regulations, facilities in a safe condition and operated according to regulations and there is sufficient protection against radioactivity. ENSI is also responsible for the safe transport of radioactive material and research into the storage of radioactive waste in deep geological repositories.



THE FEDERAL COURTS OR

The Judiciary



If you look through the cafeteria skylight at the 12-storey tower of the new court building in St. Gallen, you would be forgiven for thinking it was ready for business, but in early 2012 the finishing touches are still being made. The five divisions of the Federal Administrative Court and its associated services will only set to work in July,

and the newly created Federal Patent Court will take up residence in the autumn.

When this striking construction and new landmark in the town of St. Gallen opens its doors, the task of dispersing the federal courts to the different geographical and linguistic regions of Switzerland, as decreed by parliament for feder-

alist reasons, will be complete. The Federal Supreme Court, the highest judicial authority, makes its rulings in Lausanne and Lucerne, the Federal Criminal Court in Bellinzona, and the Federal Administrative and Federal Patent Courts in St. Gallen.

The Judiciary

The Federal Supreme Court is the highest court in Switzerland. Along with the federal courts of first instance, the Federal Criminal Court, Federal Administrative Court and Federal Patent Court, it forms the country's judiciary. On the basis of the decisions of these courts, the law is developed and adapted to changing circumstances. In the case of an alleged violation of human rights, a final ruling can, in certain circumstances, be referred to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg (the Council of Europe's judiciary).

The new courts of first instance at federal level

Until quite recently, there were only two courts at federal level, the Federal Supreme Court in Lausanne and the Federal Insurance Court in Lucerne. After Swiss voters approved a reform of the justice system by a large majority in 2000, the *Federal Criminal Court* and the *Federal Administrative Court* were created as courts of first instance at federal level. The aim was to reduce the burden on the Federal Supreme Court and strengthen its role as the highest court in the country. The reform was also designed to increase legal protection for litigants and simplify the appeal process.

The main reason for establishing the *Federal Patent Court* was to take into account the growing complexity of patent issues and provide the greater expertise required as a result.

The highest judicial authority at federal level is the Federal Supreme Court

The majority of decisions issued by the three federal courts of first instance can be referred to the *Federal Supreme Court*, which is based in Lausanne and Lucerne.

Which cases do the federal courts of first instance deal with?

The *Federal Criminal Court* hears complex criminal cases of first instance under federal jurisdiction which used to come before the Federal Supreme Court. One current example is the case against members of the Hells Angels which began at the Federal Criminal Court in Bellinzona in autumn 2011. This group has been charged on a number of counts, including organised crime, drug offences, attempted blackmail, attempted abduction and planning a robbery. The case is ongoing at the time of going to press.

The *Federal Administrative Court* principally deals with appeals against decisions made by the Federal Administration. One well known case which came before the Federal Administrative Court in 2011 concerned the Federal Data Protection and Information Commissioner's complaint against the Internet company Google concerning Google Street View. The Federal Administrative Court upheld this complaint in part. The decision was appealed to the highest instance, the Federal Supreme Court. Its decision was still pending at the time of going to press.

The *Federal Patent Court* is the newest of the three federal courts of first instance. It is the court of first instance in Switzerland in patent litigation.

What does the Federal Supreme Court rule on?

The *Federal Supreme Court* hears appeals against decisions by the three federal courts of first instance and by the cantonal courts of final instance.

One example of a public law case upon which the Federal Supreme Court made a ruling concerns an appeal brought by a member of the electorate regarding a popular vote in canton Neuchâtel in spring 2011. The Federal Supreme Court granted the appeal because the proposal submitted to the vote contravened the Federal Constitution. Voters had been asked to give a single answer to two questions, one concerning a change in tax law and the other on childcare. That is to say, they had the choice between either accepting both proposals or rejecting both proposals. The Federal Supreme Court ruled that this contravened voting freedom and the principle of consistency of subject matter. Because the five federal judges involved were in agreement, the decision was reached by what is known as the 'circulation procedure'.

Under this procedure, one of the judges drew up a draft of the decision in writing. This was then circulated among the other judges involved. The final wording of the decision was then drafted based on the remarks and suggestions of the other judges. If the judges had not been in agreement, it would have been necessary to hold *public deliberations*.

Why are the federal courts located in different places?

Since it was established, the Federal Supreme Court has been based in Lausanne. As part of recent judicial reforms, for federalist reasons parliament decided to keep the social law division of the Federal Supreme Court in Lucerne and to situate the courts of first instance in Bellinzona and St. Gallen. This distribution of the courts in different geographical and language regions in Switzerland also underlines the fact that the courts are independent from each other.

The Presidency of the Federal Supreme Court

The Federal Assembly appoints the President and Vice President of the Federal Supreme Court from among its judges. The appointment is for two years, and can be renewed once. The President is head of the whole court and is also the public face of the court.



President of the
Federal Supreme Court:
Lorenz
Meyer
SVP



Vice-President of the
Federal Supreme Court:
Gilbert
Kolly
CVP

His deputy is the Vice President or, if the latter is unable to fulfil this duty, the longest-serving judge. If two judges have served for the same period of time, the older judge fulfils this duty.

The 38 federal court judges...

...and the 19 part-time judges carry out their duties in one of the seven divisions of the court in Lausanne or Lucerne. The United Federal Assembly appoints federal court judges according to lin-

guistic, regional and party-political criteria; the judges serve a term of office of six years. They are assisted in their work by a staff of 250.

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The Federal Supreme Court affords an opportunity for legal redress, ensures the uniform application of federal law and develops the law in accordance with changes in society. It is not proactive, but acts in response to complaints. As a rule, an appeal can only be made to the Supreme Court if a ruling has been made by a cantonal court of final instance or the Federal Criminal, Administrative or Patent Court. The Federal Supreme Court is the court of final instance for almost all areas of law:

Public cases

The Federal Supreme Court hears appeals in matters of public law. These include political rights (the right to vote, popular elections and votes), basic rights (personal freedom, equality before the law etc.) and tax law. The two public law divisions rule on cases in these areas.

Civil cases

The Federal Supreme Court also rules on appeals relating to civil matters. These include civil law (e.g. family law), the code of obligations (e.g. purchase contract law) and commercial law. In disputes relating to assets, the value of the claim must amount to at least CHF 30 000 and CHF 15 000 in cases relating to employment or tenancy law. The two civil law divisions rule on disputes in these areas of law.

Criminal cases

The Federal Supreme Court hears appeals against cantonal decisions in criminal cases or against decision of the Federal Criminal Court.

Social law

The Federal Supreme Court, in particular the two social law divisions, deals with appeals in public matters against decisions of the cantonal insurance courts.

Federal Supreme Court
1000 Lausanne 14
021 318 91 02
direktion@bger.ch
www.bger.ch
www.eidgenoessischegerichte.ch

The Federal Criminal Court is the general criminal court of the Confederation, and has its seat in Bellinzona. It operates independently, but is subject to the administrative supervision of the Federal Supreme Court and the supervisory control of the Federal Assembly, which appoints the court's judges. There are currently eighteen judges and their term of office lasts six years. Around 40 members of staff assist them in their work.

Since 1 January 2012 the court has been composed of one criminal chamber and one appeals chamber. Some of the Federal Criminal Court's decisions are final, but an appeal can be brought to the Supreme Court against the vast majority of its decisions.

Criminal chamber

The Criminal Chamber is the court of first instance for offences that come under federal jurisdiction. These are mainly felonies and misdemeanours against federal interests, explosives offences and cases of white-collar crime, organised crime, corruption and money laundering offences that do not fall within cantonal jurisdiction or which have an international element. In addition, the Court has jurisdiction over offences under the Federal Acts on Civil Aviation, Nuclear Energy and Pipelines.

Appeals Chamber

The Appeals Chamber hears appeals against rulings and procedural measures of the Office of the Attorney General, the Federal Criminal Police and in matters relating to administrative criminal law. It also deals with cases concerning conflicts of jurisdiction between cantonal and federal prosecution authorities. The Appeals Chamber also rules on matters relating to international mutual assistance in criminal matters. It hears appeals against decisions relating to the extradition of persons facing prosecution or a sentence abroad, as well as appeals against decisions concerning other forms of mutual assistance relating to foreign criminal proceedings and sentences to be served abroad.

Federal Criminal Court
PO Box 2720, 6501 Bellinzona
091 822 62 62
www.bstger.ch
www.eidgenoessischegerichte.ch

The Federal Administrative Court was set up in 2007 and has its seat in Bern and Zollikofen. From 1 July 2012 it will be hearing cases in a new building in St. Gallen.

The main task of the Federal Administrative Court is to rule on public law disputes that fall within the jurisdiction of the Federal Administration. These include appeals against decisions by federal or, in certain exceptional cases, cantonal courts, but also suits concerning federal administrative law in the first instance.

The Federal Administrative Court acts in such cases either as a court of lower instance for the Federal Supreme Court or as the final or only instance; in more than half the cases it deals with, its decision is final.

The Federal Administrative Court is independent in its activities but is subject to the administrative supervision of the Federal Supreme Court and the supervisory control of the Federal Assembly. The latter appoints the Federal Administrative Court judges for a six-year term of office.

Organisation

75 judges and about 330 further staff are employed at the Federal Administrative Court.

The court is organised into five divisions each with two chambers and a General Secretariat.

The divisions are responsible for dealing with appeals and litigation proceedings. Each division deals with cases in a particular legal field.

- *Division I* is responsible for appeal proceedings in various areas including environment, transport, energy and taxes.
- *Division II* focuses on proceedings relating to education, competition and the economy.
- *Division III* deals mainly with proceedings in the field of immigration, social security and health.
- *Divisions IV and V* deal exclusively with asylum law, in particular in relation to questions of refugee status and deportation orders.

In most of these fields, an appeal can be made to the Federal Supreme Court against a decision by the Federal Administrative Court. In only a few areas, in particular appeals relating to asylum law, are the decisions of the Federal Administrative Court final.

The Federal Administrative Court publishes material decisions on the Internet.

Federal Administrative Court
Until 30.6.2012: Schwarztorstrasse 59, Postfach, 3000 Bern 14
From 1.7.2012: Postfach, 9000 St. Gallen
058 705 26 26
www.bvger.ch
www.eidgenoessischegerichte.ch

The Federal Patent Court will, as the Confederation's court of first instance in patent related matters, hear civil disputes concerning patents from 1 January 2012 instead of the cantonal courts, which have been responsible to date. It is exclusively responsible for validity and infringement disputes. Other civil suits in connection with patents can also be brought before the Federal Patent Court, such as suits regarding licence agreements or the right to a patent.

The Federal Patent Court renders its decisions as a lower court of the Federal Supreme Court. It is also subject to the Supreme Court's administrative supervision and the supreme supervision of the Federal Assembly.

The Court has its seat in St. Gallen. In the autumn of 2012 it will move into its own building; until then it will be housed temporarily at St. Leonhardstrasse 49 in St. Gallen.

The judges of the Federal Patent Court are elected by the Federal Assembly for a term of office of six years. Alongside two full-time judges there are also 36 part-time judges, 25 of whom have technical training and 11 of whom have legal training. They all have proven experience in the field of patent law.

Individual cases are heard by a panel of three, five or seven judges. Each panel is made up of jurists and technical experts. The composition of the panels depends on the technical criteria.

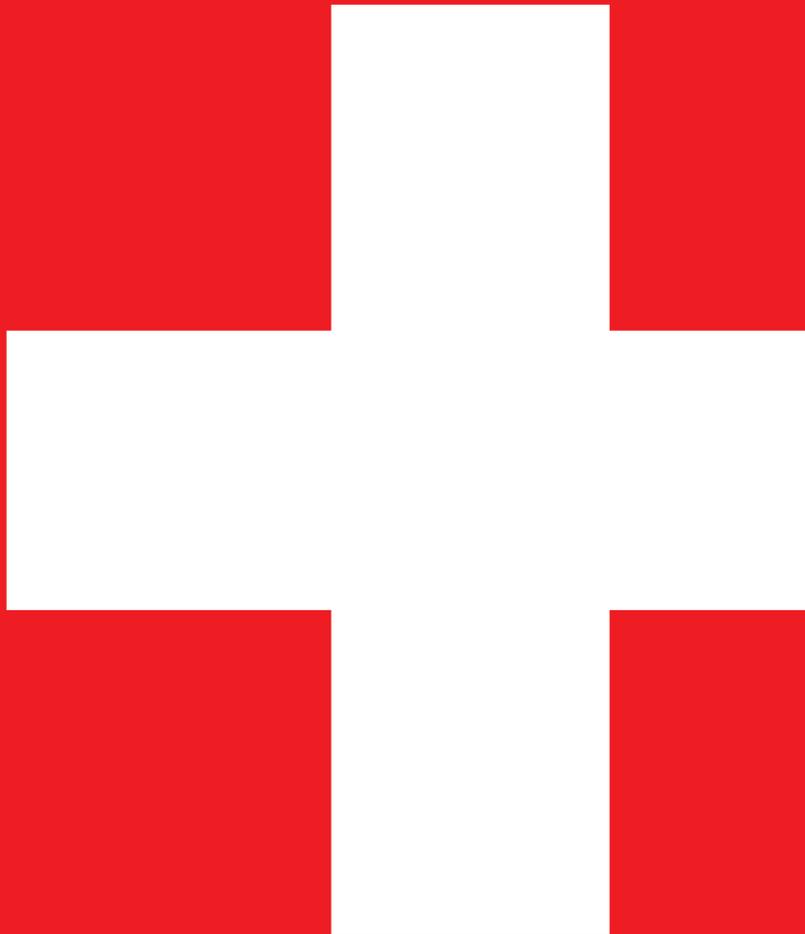
Preliminary measures are decided by the President sitting as a single judge. If technical questions arise in the course of proceedings, the President can call up two judges specialised in technical matters.

At the Federal Patent Court English may be used for submissions and at hearings instead of an official language if both parties give their consent. The Court's decisions, however, are issued in an official language.

The Federal Patent Court seeks to ensure that cases are processed swiftly and cost effectively. With the expertise of its judges, most cases should be able to proceed without having to call on the opinions of external experts which are costly and time consuming.

Federal Patent Court
Postfach, 9000 St. Gallen
www.bpatger.ch
www.eidgenoessischegerichte.ch

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