

THE SWISS CONFEDERATION A BRIEF GUIDE

2011



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Chancellery FCh

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Cover picture:

With the parliament building behind her, 'Lora' can be seen almost every day on the Bundesplatz in Bern. She is not posing for journalists or TV cameras in the hope of becoming a national star; she is watching her master's and his opponent's every move in a game of chess. Which player will put the other in check, and when and how will they do it? Or will it be a tie again?

Content

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The Swiss Confederation a brief guide

Dear reader,

For me personally, politics is always exciting. But 2011 will be a particularly interesting year for us all as it is an election year. On 23 October elections to the National Council will be held in all cantons, and to the Council of States in many of the cantons. And in December there will be fresh elections to the Federal Council. A new legislative period will begin.

An election year raises the public's awareness of political issues and also causes the parties and candidates to present their opinions in a more defined way. At the end of the day some will have been elected, others not. But following the elections, in contrast to other democracies, our country will not be governed by just one or two parties, but by a collegial government which enjoys broad support. And parliament, composed of a range of political forces, will continue to seek sustainable solutions; sometimes the vote will be passed by a large majority, sometimes by a narrower one. Our political system, which has been built on consensus and compromise since the foundation of the federal state, has proved to be a strong one. This is borne out, for example, by the fact that Switzerland has weathered the economic crisis – which was triggered by the financial crisis – relatively well in comparison with other countries.

2011 is a year in which preparations for the new legislative period are being made; it is an opportunity for the Federal Council to reflect more closely on the great challenges facing the country and equip Switzerland with a new legislative programme for the coming years.



And 2011 is a special year in other respects. 8 March is the hundredth anniversary of International Women's Day, and this year Swiss women celebrate 40 years of the vote. For the first time in its history, the Swiss Confederation has a government composed mainly of women. Last year, the three highest offices in the country were held by women, and in this election year Switzerland will again be represented by a woman in the person of President Micheline Calmy-Rey. The coming months will show what role the more equal representation between the sexes, regions and languages plays in the election campaign, besides the specific and ideological issues. I very much hope that a large proportion of the electorate will make use of their right to vote.

This brochure gives you a detailed yet clear overview of the opportunities our democracy offers to individuals and the people as a whole; it explains how exactly our successful, federally-constructed political system works and how the legislature, executive and judiciary function together.

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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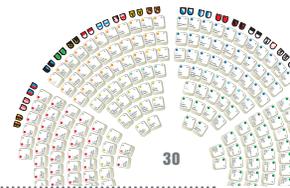


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'The Swiss Confederation: a brief guide' online

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.



“The world has become more complex”

This is your second year as president, the first time being in 2007. Has it now become routine for you?

As president I represent our country at home and abroad. That is an enjoyable and exciting job which doesn't involve routine. One priority in my year as president will again be keeping in closer touch with the Swiss people. I want to be president for all the people in Switzerland; not one who is just seen on television shaking hands with the great statespeople of the world, but a president who listens to people when they talk about their worries and concerns and about what pleases them. I'm looking forward to it!

Has anything about the president's role changed since you last held the office four years ago?

More is required of the president now. One reason for this is that Switzerland is increasingly interconnected with the rest of the world. You may be familiar with that nice metaphor of the butterfly which flaps its wings in Shanghai and so causes a tornado in New York. This is also an analogy for the complex political realities and relationships in the globalised world. Everything is connected to everything else: migration and climate, climate and energy, energy and business, business and development, development and migration. Political decisions about the environ-

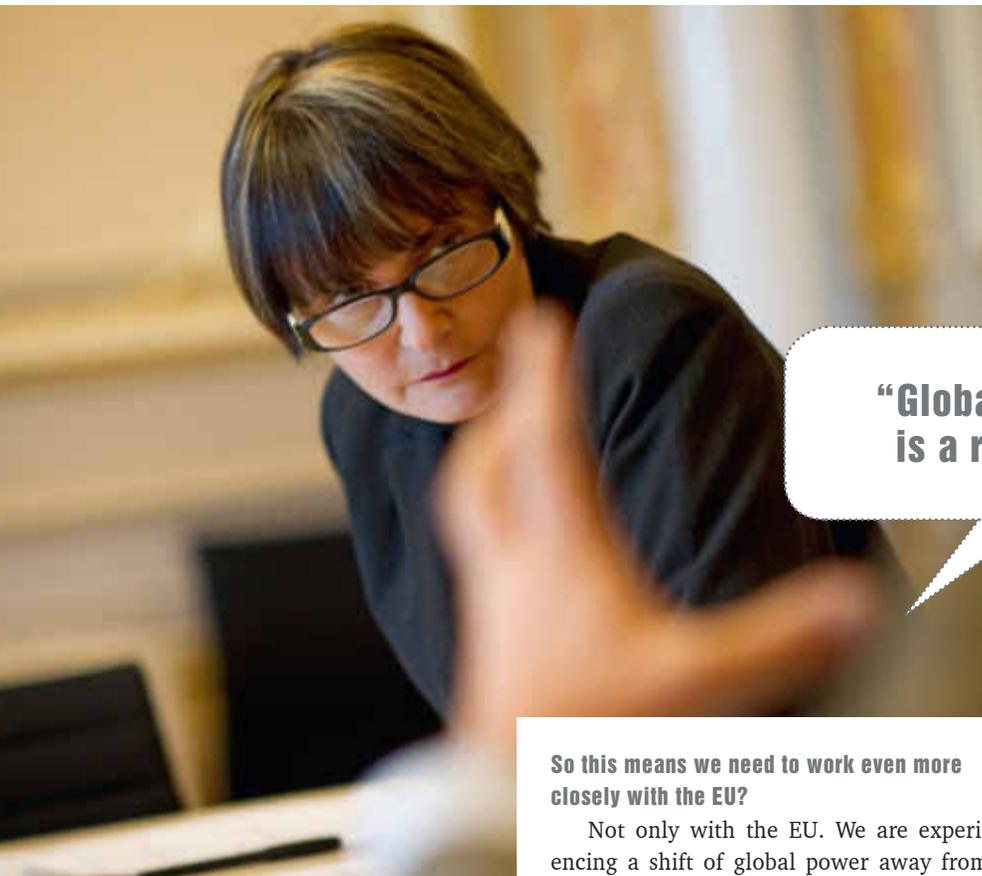
ment or exchange rates which are made in Beijing and Washington have an impact on people in Olten and Lausanne. Switzerland is not an island in this world of international dependencies and causalities. If it wants to preserve and promote its standard of living, security and quality of life, it requires strong government which presents a unified, collegial and confident face. This is where the president plays a central role.

Talking of collegiality – the Federal Council has not had a very good track record recently....

Cooperation within the Federal Council is better than is often claimed. Both the UBS and Libyan crises were successfully resolved. The two Swiss hostages, Max Göldi and Rachid Hamdani, have safely returned to their families. But it's true, collegiality in the government is an important issue and of course there is always room for improvement. In a sense the Federal Council is a permanent 'grand coalition' representing around 80% of the electorate. It's not always easy to work well together. Yet cooperation is essential; because we weathered the financial crisis relatively well compared to other European states, we are now more often the target of criticism, for instance with our taxation system or financial markets. We must defend our legitimate interests under difficult circumstances, especially on a European level. To do this we need a well-functioning, i.e. constructive and efficient Federal Council.

You mentioned globalisation and pressure from outside; many people view these developments with scepticism or even fear

I can understand those fears. The world in which we live is changing at an unbelievable rate: immigration, international competition, multicultural communities, the flood of information - all of this can be frightening and simply too much. There are advantages and disadvantages to globalisation, but one thing is sure: it's our reality, and a reality in which we have to be open and cooperative if we are to protect our own interests in the best way possible. Isolating ourselves and retreating behind our Alps is not an option. The most urgent issues – economic growth, the labour market, climate change, transport or immigration – do not heed borders between countries. Individual states cannot deal with these issues alone; the international community must work together in tackling them. For instance, if we want to protect ourselves against infectious diseases such as SARS or bird flu, which can rapidly spread around the globe, then we need to take part in European early warning and response systems. If we want to fight cross-border crime with suitable modern instruments, for instance, we need access to the Schengen Information System SIS, the Europe-wide electronic database.



“Globalisation is a reality”

So this means we need to work even more closely with the EU?

Not only with the EU. We are experiencing a shift of global power away from Europe and the USA towards emerging economies, especially in Asia. Europe is losing influence, and in a dramatic way. Since the 1980s Asia’s share of economic growth has tripled to about 50%, while the developed economies’ share has halved to 30%. In 2050 Europe will be home to just 7% of the global population. There is no longer an undisputed global power; the world political scene is becoming increasingly multipolar. India and China, Brazil and Turkey are all new players on the international stage, and new international forums such as the G20 are demanding a leading role. The world has become more complex, and we must adapt to the changes.

How? What can little Switzerland do?

In economic terms Switzerland is a medium-sized state with one of the ten biggest financial markets and the fifth most important currency. In terms of competitiveness, innovation and quality of life, we are regularly up among the best in international ratings. We are a valued and respected member of the international community. Switzerland’s voice is heard

and carries weight. I am proud of this. Up until now we have reacted to global developments by pursuing an active foreign policy and this is something we will continue to do. We must have an influence on a bilateral, regional and multilateral level. We must have our say in decisions which will affect Switzerland sooner or later. In the ‘great game’ of globalisation the success of a sovereign state depends to a large extent on how far it is able to forge international alliances and play an influential role in international organisations and committees.

How successful are we in these efforts, if we take the autonomous application of EU law, for instance? The EU is also suggesting that we may be coming to the end of the bilateral path....

The EU wants to make the bilateral path more dynamic. That is also in our interests because a slow and cumbersome development of the bilateral agreements could create barriers to market access and lead to competitive disadvantages. But this may not be allowed to mean that Swiss sovereignty and our system of direct democracy is compromised in any way. It would be unacceptable simply to adopt EU law. Through the bilateral agreements we cooperate very successfully in the fields of business, science, research and security. However, the issue of sovereignty in this bilateralism is one of the greatest challenges facing our country in my year as president.

“We must have influence internationally”

“Switzerland’s voice is heard and carries weight”

Once again: What is Switzerland doing in order to have influence in the world?

We are building up bilateral, intergovernmental support outside Europe, in particular by intensifying our relations with the USA, the three Asian superpowers China, India and Japan, and with South Africa and Brazil. On a multilateral level we support improved working methods in the UN Security Council, the central UN body. We want to see an improvement in transparency and accountability in the Security Council. We would also like non-members to be more involved in the decision-making process and the right of veto to be curtailed. We are campaigning with another group of countries to be included in the G20’s decision-making process. We advocate the total abolition of nuclear weapons, as we consider the use of this type of weapon to be unfeasible, immoral and illegal. Switzerland is also engaged in internationally-recognised development cooperation and provides good offices. And finally, Switzerland can only maintain its influence and uphold its reputation in the international community if it actively participates in solving international problems. Our political capital depends on this.

Can you give an example of this?

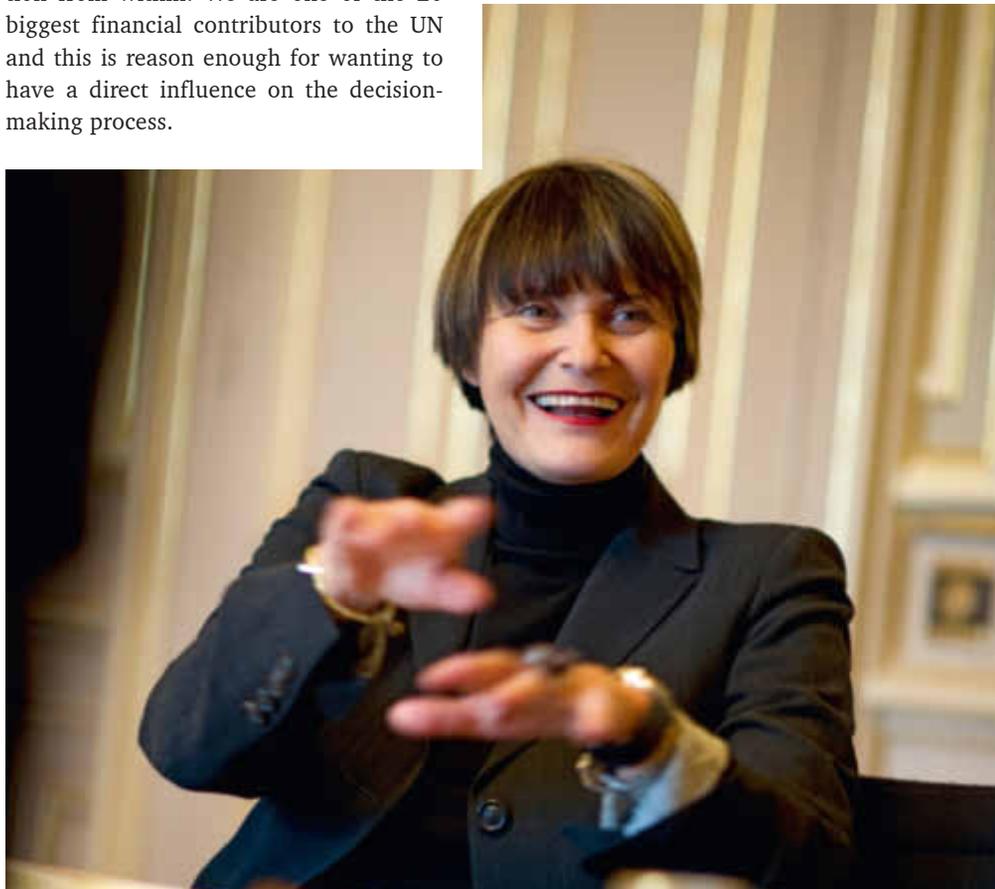
In the conflict between Moscow and Tbilisi, Switzerland mediated between the Russians and Georgians, representing each one’s interests to the other side. We act as the USA’s protecting power in representing Washington’s interests in Iran. And we played a mediating role between Turkey and Armenia, contributing to their decision to sign two protocols on the normalisation of their relations in Zurich. Of course, we don’t do this simply out of self-interest. But at the same time this involvement helps us create and nurture relationships which are based on trust.

So if Switzerland wants real influence then it needs to run for a seat in the UN Security Council...

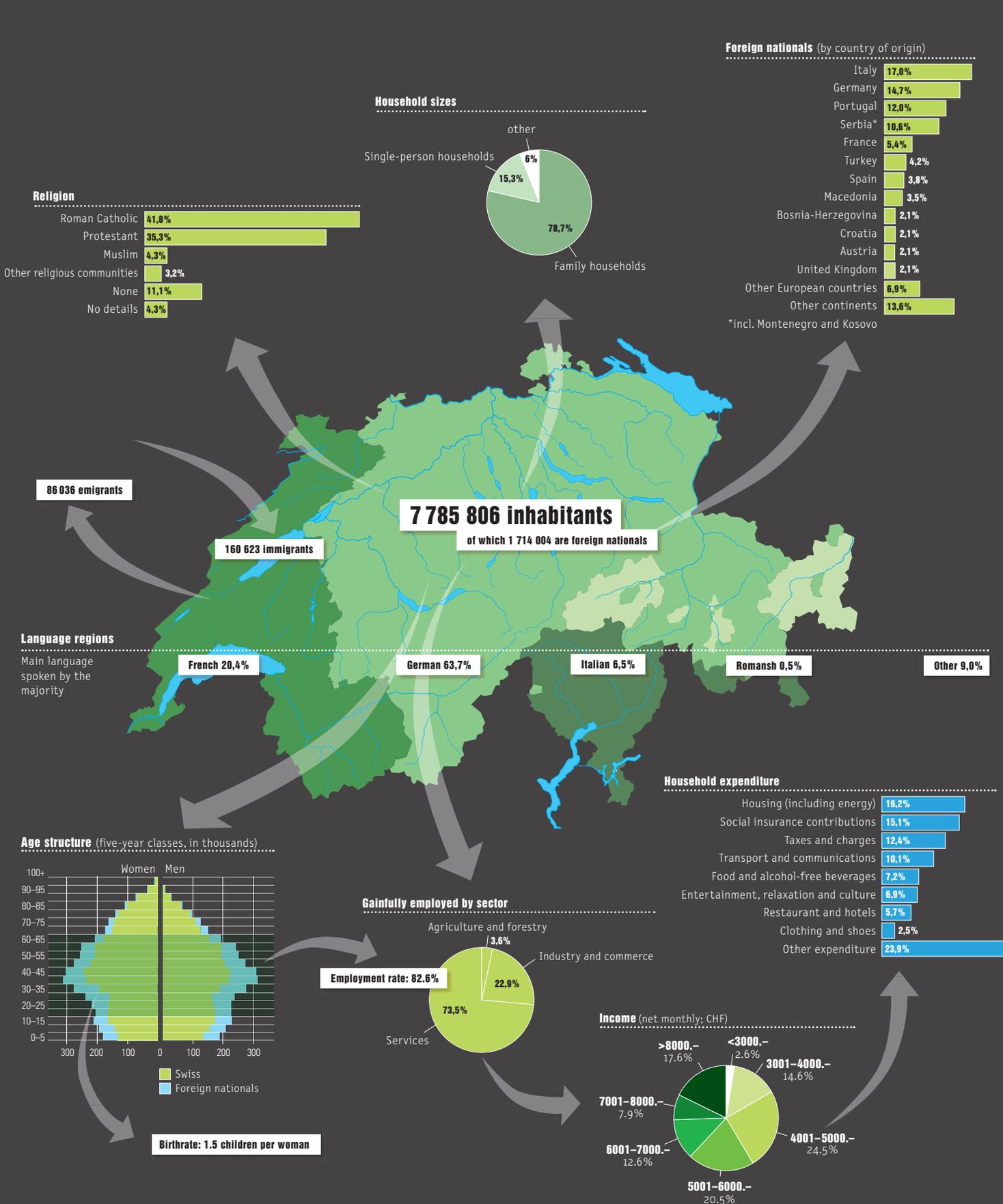
Parliament’s foreign affairs committees have agreed in principle to Switzerland’s candidacy. I will raise this issue in the Federal Council. Membership of the Security Council would be an additional way of representing our interests. Switzerland could build up its contacts with important economic and political players and work towards reform of this institution from within. We are one of the 20 biggest financial contributors to the UN and this is reason enough for wanting to have a direct influence on the decision-making process.

Do you already have a full travel agenda?

Even as foreign minister I already only travel abroad when my physical presence is really required. As president I will do the same. But there are important issues which, in my presidential role, I will be able to influence, or at least must try to influence. For example, I will certainly meet top EU representatives and the heads of state or heads of government of the major European countries, in particular of our neighbouring countries. We must also extend our relations with the G20 countries. And finally, there are events on the multilateral stage which the president is now required to attend, such as the UN General Assembly in New York.

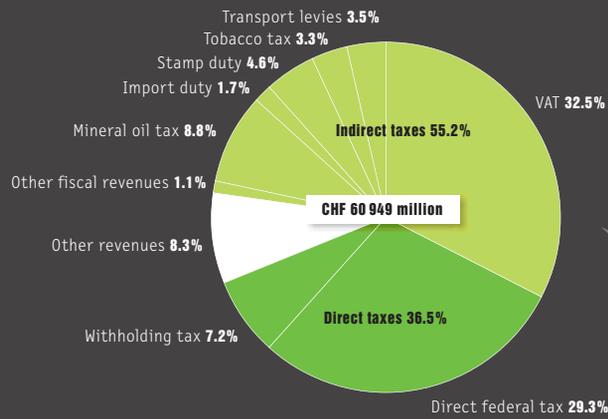


Population

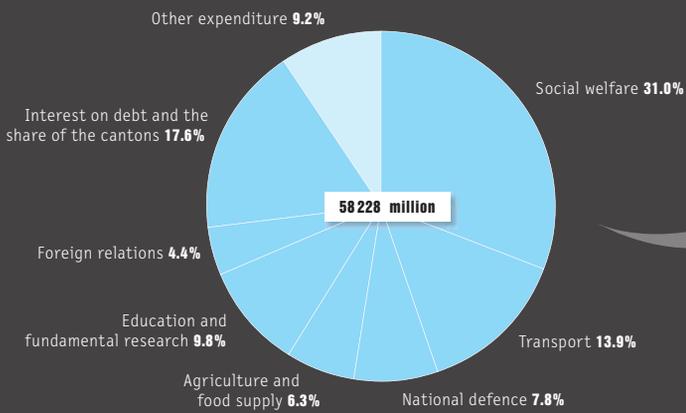


Finances

Federal revenue 2009



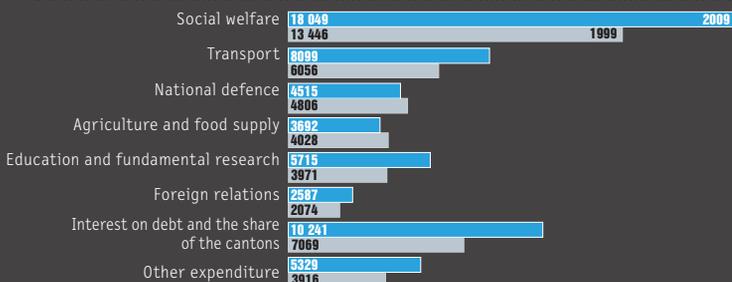
Federal expenditure 2009



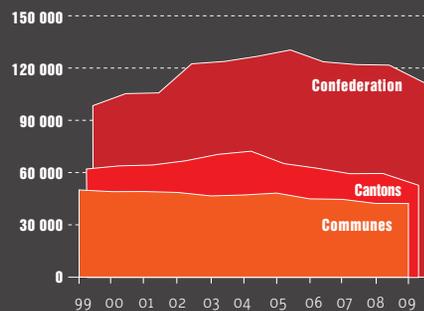
Developments in revenue (CHF million)



Developments in expenditure (CHF million)



Developments in debt (CHF million)



How long has there been a Switzerland?

According to traditional lore, Uri, Schwyz and Nidwalden 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 work-



The picture of Napoleon from the studio of Jacques-Louis David bearing the title 'Napoleon crossing the Alps at the Saint Bernhard Pass, 20 May 1800'

ing 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).

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 **1978** 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.



A UNIQUE POLITICAL SYSTEM OR

Swiss democracy



Once a year – usually on the first Sunday in May – the electorate of Glarus is invited to gather for the People’s Assembly on the Zaunplatz in their main town.

At cantonal level, Appenzell Innerrhoden is the only other canton in which citizens still express their political opinion and pass resolutions by a show of hands. In all other cantons this oldest

form of communal political expression has given way to the ballot box.

The citizens of Glarus have the right ‘to counsel, to detract or to increase’, that is to say, they can express their opinion on any item of business and call for it to be changed, postponed or rejected. Furthermore, this can be done on the spot, without having to collect signatures beforehand.

This means that they have a more direct influence on cantonal politics, and not merely the possibility of voting ‘yes’ or ‘no’ on a proposal at the ballot box.

Yet as is the case almost everywhere, only a minority actually exercises its right of direct democracy: In Glarus only about one third of eligible voters ever takes part in the People’s Assembly.

2551 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.



2551 communes Communes are the smallest political units in Switzerland. There are currently 2551 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.



Three years ago the number of communes in Switzerland fell by 79, two years ago by 40 and over the last year by 45. Canton Glarus has experienced the most dramatic reduction; as of 2011 it will only have three communes. In 2006 the canton's electorate voted to reduce the 27 local communes, 18 school districts, 16 social services districts and 9 citizens' communes to a mere three amalgamated communes.

At 430 square kilometres, the commune of Glarus Süd is greater in area than the cantons of Basel-Stadt, Schaffhausen and both Appenzells put together, and geographically is now the largest commune in the country.



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.



Glarus is the only canton with a person depicted on its coat of arms – St. Fridolin holding a staff and a bible. According to legend, Fridolin was an Irish missionary who converted the people of Glarus to Christianity in the sixth century.

As he lay on his deathbed, a rich man is said to have bequeathed Fridolin a large area of Glarus, a bequest which was contested by the deceased's neglected brother. In court, the dead man appeared – already in a state of some considerable decomposition – and gave his support to Fridolin. This is why the saint is depicted in church imagery accompanied by a skeleton and is held to be the patron saint who protects against inheritance fraud.



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 foundation Pro Patria – ‘for the fatherland’ – evolved from the Swiss National Celebrations Committee, founded in 1909. Today its main task is to preserve Swiss national heritage. Its annual funds of around three million francs come from the sale of Pro Patria postage stamps and the 1 August insignia – sold mainly by children and teenagers. Last year’s 100th Pro Patria collection will be used for the upkeep of the legendary panorama picture of the Battle of Murten. The impressive painting was restored for the Expo.02 national exhibition and should in future be on permanent display.

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.

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 4.9 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

Parliament also elects the Supreme Court: the judiciary

The supreme judicial authorities are the Federal Supreme Court in Lausanne and in Lucerne, together with its two courts of first instance: the Federal Criminal Court in Bellinzona and the Federal Administrative Court in Bern.

> pages 76–81

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

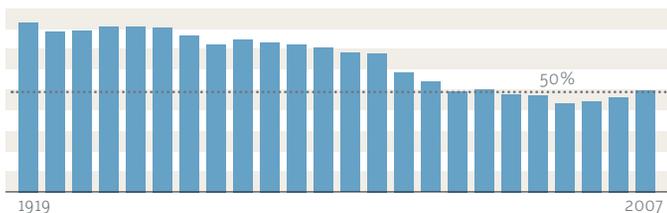
- **mandatory referendum**

Amendments to legislation

- **optional referendum**

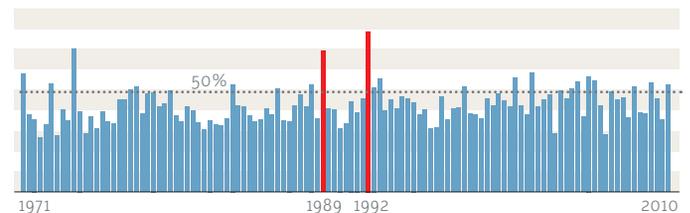
New laws and amendments to existing laws and similar parliamentary decisions, along with certain international treaties are only put to the vote if required by an *optional referendum*. A popular majority is sufficient for such a proposal to be accepted.

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.

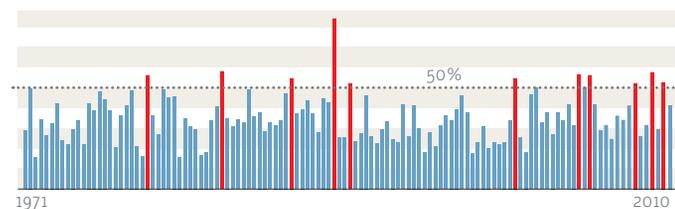
Federal legislation, decisions of parliament and certain international treaties are subject to an *optional referendum*: in this case, a popular ballot is held if 50 000 citizens so request. The signatures must be collected within 100 days of publication of the new legislation. The referendum is similar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

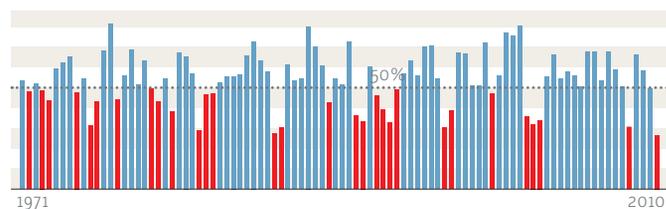
Referendum:
 Maximum amount of time for collecting signatures
> 100 days
 Required number of signatures
> 50 000

Popular initiatives adopted and rejected since 1971



Of a total of 121 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.

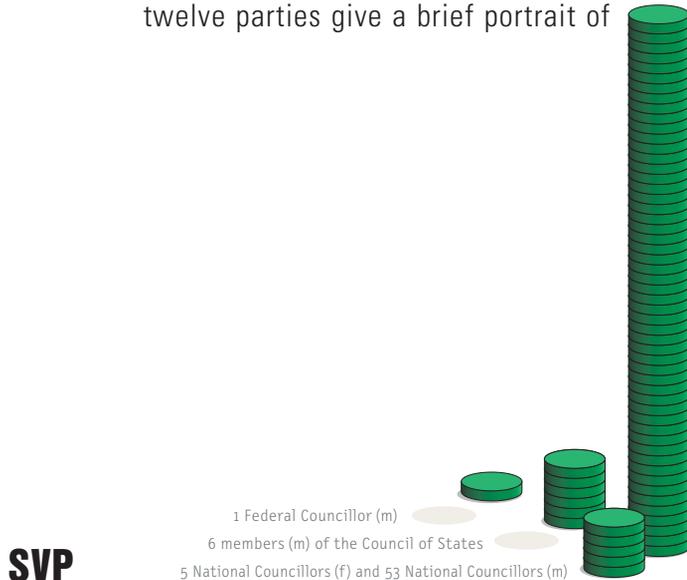
Optional referendums since 1971



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 twelve parties give a brief portrait of themselves on the following pages.



SVP Swiss People's Party



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

The party was formed in 1971 from the union of the Swiss Farmers, Trade and Citizen's Party (BGB) and the Democratic Parties of the cantons of Glarus and Graubünden and, with a 29% share of the vote, is Switzerland's strongest party. The SVP result in the 2007 parliamentary elections was the best that any single party has ever achieved.

With the election of Ueli Maurer to the Federal Council on 10 December 2008, the SVP once again became part of the national government. However, given its support among the electorate, the party is underrepresented with only one Federal Councillor.

Our election promise – a 'contract with the People'

The SVP is firmly committed to the concerns of its voters. The party stands for an independent, neutral Switzerland, a streamlined state, low taxes, a strong location for business with secure jobs, and effective prevention of crime, and of abuse of asylum and of the social security system. The main points of the SVP's manifesto for the current legislative period were set out at a party conference in its 'contract with the People':

- We do not wish to join the European Union
- We want to deport criminal foreign nationals
- We want to lower taxes for all

With this clear policy based on conservative values, the SVP wants to ensure prosperity, jobs and a secure and free future for our country.



SP Swiss Social Democratic Party



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

The SP's policies are designed to benefit everyone, not just a minority. For strength lies in sharing responsibility – in our everyday lives, economic life and politics. This is what the SP fights for. It does not want a privileged few to unashamedly hoard for themselves an ever larger piece of the cake.

Social justice is central to SP policies. People who find themselves in need should receive help – in the form of adequate unemployment benefits and strong Invalidity Insurance, for example. Day school provision, the promotion of early learning, apprenticeships and grants help to give everyone a fair chance in life. This has nothing to do with making us all the same, but a lot to do with fairness – no one should have to spend their whole life stuck in the same place in society where fate has put them.

We are against new nuclear power stations. That is why it's so important to convert to using renewable energies. This will protect the climate and create 100 000 new jobs. The SP wants to take Switzerland forward and help shape its future, along with its people in government and parliament and with the many committed people from all sections of society throughout Switzerland.

FDP

FDP.The Liberals



Party President: 130 000 members
 National Councillor **Fulvio Pelli** Founded in 1894, merged in 2009 www.fdp.ch

In 2009 the Radical Free Democratic Party FDP Switzerland and the Swiss Liberal Party joined forces to become *FDP.The Liberals*. The party stands for freedom of choice and achievement in an open society of opportunity. All individuals should be able to shape their lives through personal initiative, personal responsibility, freedom and competition. The liberal movement is represented in the Federal Council by Didier Burkhalter and Johann Schneider-Ammann.

We want:

- *more jobs*. We call for reforms to create 200 000 jobs by 2015. This can be achieved by having the lowest VAT in Europe, tax deductions for childcare, a radical simplification of taxes, a bilateral partnership with Europe, free trade agreements and a first-class education system.
- *national cohesion and solid social services*. With the 6th revision of the Invalidity Insurance system the principle of 'Work before benefits' should apply, and we must overcome the barriers to a reform of Old Age and Invalidity Insurance. Foreigners are welcome in Switzerland if they integrate into society.
- *a streamlined, citizen-friendly state*. Since 2003 the FDP's financial policies have helped to reduce the debt burden by CHF 20 billion. In order to continue in this way, the state needs to concentrate on key issues such as education and security, and be strong in these areas.



CVP

Christian Democrat People's Party

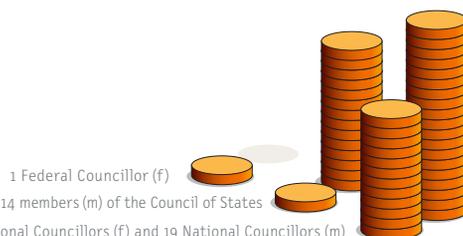


Party President: 100 000 members
 National Councillor **Christophe Darbellay** Founded in 1912 www.cvp.ch

The CVP is a business-oriented party. As a liberal and social force it strives to create a balance between individuals and society and between personal responsibility and solidarity. Our approach to coexistence is based on a Christian view of humankind and society. The party is committed to the internal and external security of our country. These values are represented in the Federal Council by Doris Leuthard.

The CVP focuses on four main areas:

- It promotes Switzerland as a business location and financial centre with attractive levels of tax, excellent infrastructure and a high standard of education. We create and safeguard jobs and prosperity through innovation.
- It strengthens families as a basis for our community. We are committed to creating better general conditions, particularly in terms of work-life balance, lower taxes and greater purchasing power for all families.
- It wants to secure Switzerland's social services long-term. We consider that financing these services is the greatest challenge facing us in the next 20 years. This can only be accomplished through targeted reforms and by avoiding unrealistic expansion or cutbacks.
- It pursues a sustainable climate and environmental policy. We are committed to preserving a habitable environment for future generations.



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

GPS

Swiss Green Party



Party President: 6500 members
National Councillor **Ueli Leuenberger** Founded in 1983 www.gruene.ch

The Green Party is the largest party that does not have a seat in the Federal Council. There is a Green Party in all cantons apart from Obwalden. Its representatives are committed to promoting ecological and social policies on all levels. The Green Party is represented in the governments of seven cantons and 28 communes. Our goals for the coming legislative period are: efficient climate protection and abandoning the use of nuclear power, the reorganisation of the economy along more environmental lines, strengthening social institutions and an active peace policy.

2 members (m) of the Council of States
10 National Councillors (f) and 10 National Councillors (m)



glp

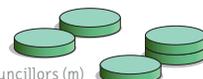
Swiss Green Liberal Party



Party President: 2000 members
National Councillor **Martin Bäümle** 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 and 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.

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



BDP

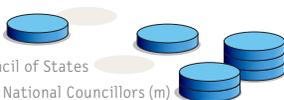
Conservative Democratic Party



Party President: 6500 members
National Councillor **Hans Grunder** 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 without taboos, fear of confrontation or personality cults. It seeks an unblinkered, solution-oriented approach. 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.

1 Federal Councillor (f)
1 member (m) of the Council of States
2 National Councillors (f) and 3 National Councillors (m)



EVP

Swiss Evangelical People's Party



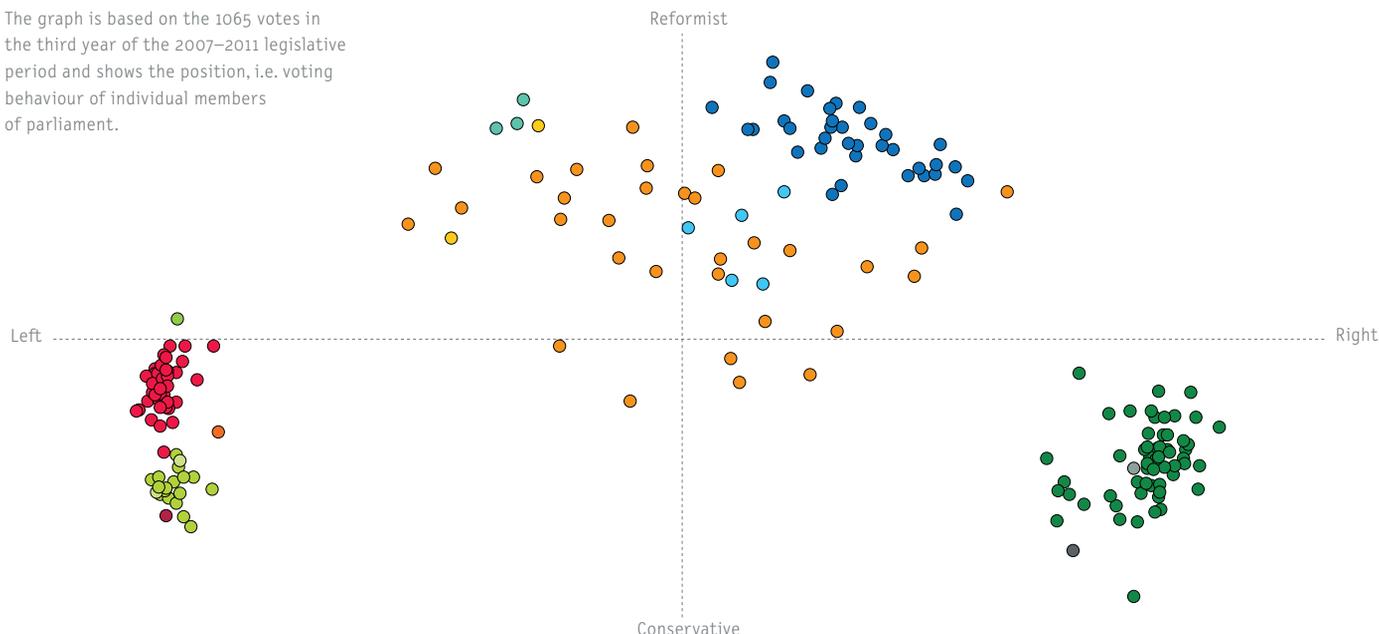
Party President: 4800 members
Heiner Studer Founded in 1919 www.evppew.ch

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 endurance, 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.

2 National Councillors (f)



The graph is based on the 1065 votes in the third year of the 2007–2011 legislative period and shows the position, i.e. voting behaviour of individual members of parliament.



Alternative Left



2000 members
Founded in 2009
www.la-gauche.ch

Our society is confronted with a crisis-ridden globalised financial system, increasing social imbalances, greater dangers due to climate change, the undermining of public services and rampant privatisation of everything and everyone. The call is growing ever louder for a new social order founded on the emancipation of all people.

The Alternative Left aims to give all citizens a voice in all aspects of politics. It wants to unite in a single political movement all left-wing forces wanting to bring about social and ecological change.

Urgent social and ecological issues are inextricably linked; there will be no answer to them unless we question capitalism and a system in which production is the driving force.

EDU

Federal Democratic Union



Party President: **Hans Moser**
3000 members
Founded in 1975
www.edu-schweiz.ch

True values and plain talking! The EDU seeks sustainable solutions and in its commitment to God the Almighty promotes a free and constitutional Switzerland. The EDU does not follow fleeting trends or the mainstream, but adheres to fundamental values, the word of God and the creation of the world and of mankind according to the Bible. The EDU encourages people to assume responsibility for their actions. The focal points of our policy include protection of human life at every stage of its existence as well as the environment and the private sphere, traditional marriage and family values, education and the labour market in Switzerland, balanced finances and debt reduction.

CSP

Christian Social Party



Party President: **Marius Achermann**
1500 members
Founded in 1997
www.csp-pcs.ch

Our politics are aimed at allowing everyone to live a safe and dignified life. Sustainable action for preserving the environment, good educational opportunities, secure jobs and pensions are central to our policies. We feel that we share responsibility for what happens at home and in the world at large. Our party is synonymous with solidarity and tolerance.

In real terms this means: promoting a sustainable energy policy – for example, no new nuclear power stations – a socially responsible and ecological economy, good schools and traineeships, jobs for all, solid social institutions and an active peace policy.

Lega

Ticino League



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.



THE LEGISLATURE: NATIONAL COUNCIL AND COUNCIL OF STATES OR

The Swiss parliament



All debates in the Federal Assembly are open to the public, and during sessions particularly large numbers of people throng the newly created visitors' entrance to the Federal Palace. Many visitors want to experience at first-hand the debates and votes on laws, international agreements and the federal budget. Who knows,

perhaps members of parliament really do speak and act in the interests of the people if they know they are being observed by those they represent.

The 131 seats in the gallery of the National Council chamber are usually well filled – by school-children on civic education field trips, pensioners, even foreign visitors wanting to get an idea of how

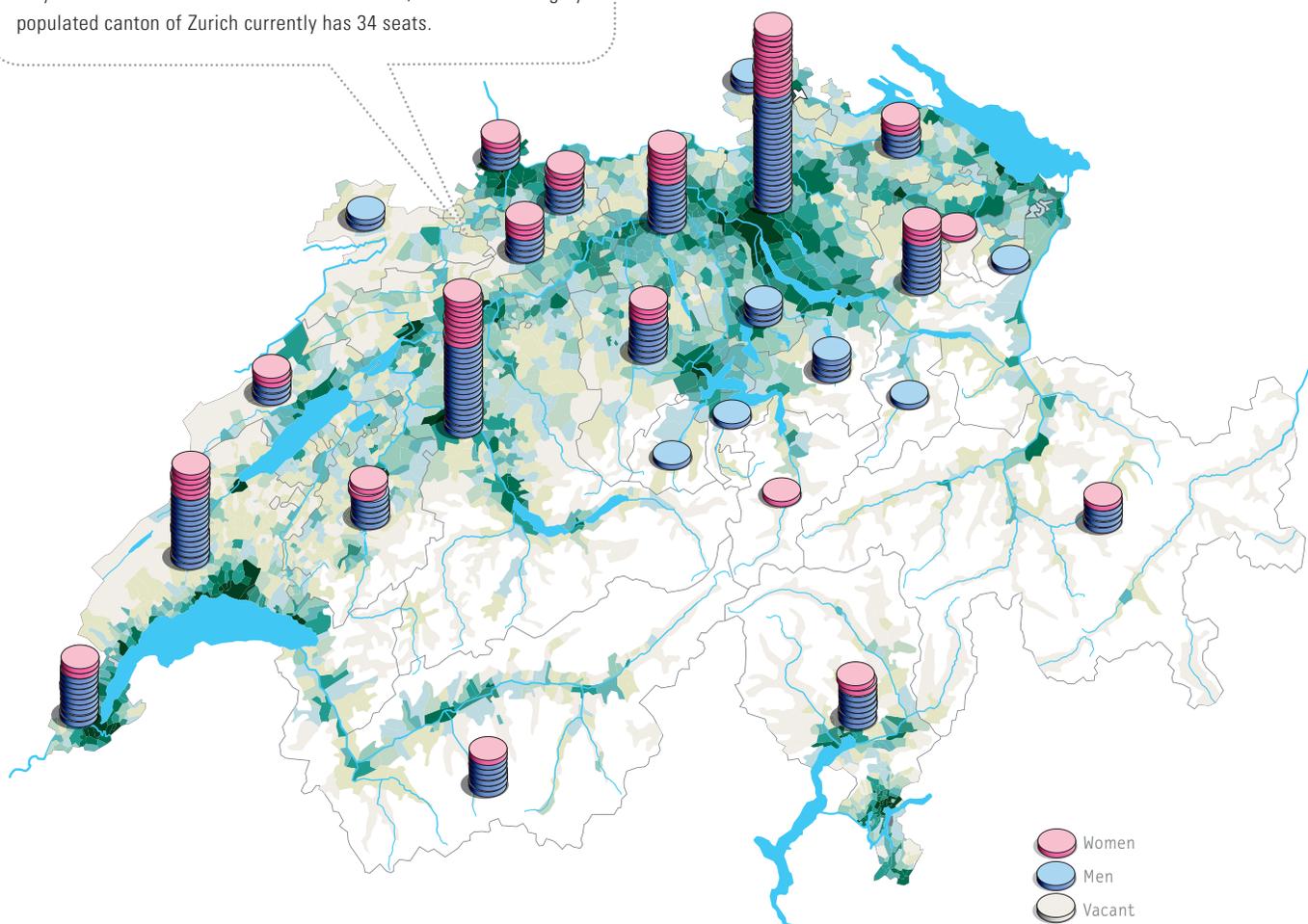
a multilingual parliament operates. But even when the people's representatives are not in session, over a hundred thousand visitors are attracted each year to the recently fully renovated and modernised parliament building, the centre of Swiss politics.

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 only around 15 000 inhabitants, also sends a People's representative to the Federal Palace. Similarly, the neighbouring canton of Appenzell Auser rhoden 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 canton Jura, elections to the *Council of States* are also held in all cantons according to the first-past-the-post system. This procedure naturally favours large parties or leading figures with a high public profile. Minorities 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 2, 8	1	ZH		Filippo Leutenegger FDP 1952 2003 6, 12	26	BE		Christian Wasserfallen FDP 1981 2007 2, 6	51	OW		Christoph von Rotz SVP 1966 2007 8	76
ZH		Toni Bortoluzzi SVP 1947 1991 5, 7	2	ZH		Ruedi Noser FDP 1961 2003 9	27	BE		Therese Frösch GPS 1951 2003 2	52	NW		Edi Engelberger FDP 1940 1995 7, 11	77
ZH		Hans Fehr SVP 1947 1995 10	3	ZH		Martin Bäumle GLP 1964 2003 1, 6	28	BE		Franziska Teuscher GPS 1958 1995 6, 8	53	GL		Martin Landolt BDP 1968 2009 1	78
ZH		Alfred Heer SVP 1961 2007 11	4	ZH		Tiana Angelina Moser GLP 1979 2007 3, 4	29	BE		Alec von Graffenried GPS 1962 2007 11	54	ZG		Josef Lang GPS 1954 2003 3, 7	79
ZH		Hans Kaufmann SVP 1948 1999 9, 11	5	ZH		Thomas Weibel GLP 1954 2007 5, 8	30	BE		Hans Grunder BDP 1956 2007 6	55	ZG		Gerhard Pfister CVP 1962 2003 10, 12	80
ZH		Christoph Mörgeli SVP 1960 1999 3, 4	6	ZH		Urs Hany CVP 1955 2006 8, 12	31	BE		Ursula Haller BDP 1948 1999 3, 7	56	ZG		Marcel Scherer SVP 1952 1999 5, 12	81
ZH		Natalie Simone Rickli SVP 1976 2007 8	7	ZH		Kathy Riklin CVP 1952 1999 3, 4	32	BE		Andreas Brännimann EDU 1955 2009 1	57	FR		Dominique de Buman CVP 1956 2003 9	82
ZH		Hans Rutschmann SVP 1947 2004 6, 10, 12	8	ZH		Barbara Schmid Federer CVP 1965 2007 11	33	BE		Norbert Hochreutener CVP 1946 1995-99, 03 8, 11	58	FR		Thérèse Meyer-Kaelin CVP 1948 1999 5	83
ZH		Ernst Schibli SVP 1952 2001 1, 10	9	ZH		Maja Ingold EVP 1948 2010 2, 11	34	BE		Ricardo Lumengo 1962 2007 3	59	FR		Christian Levrat SP 1970 2003 1, 8	84
ZH		Ulrich Schülter SVP 1944 1995-07, 09 3, 7	10	BE		Andreas Aebi SVP 1958 2007 3	35	BE		Marianne Streiff-Feller EVP 1957 2010 7, 10	60	FR		Jean-François Steiert SP 1961 2007 4	85
ZH		Jürg Stahl SVP 1968 1999 3, 5	11	BE		Adrian Amstutz SVP 1953 2003 6	36	LU		Yvette Estermann SVP 1967 2007 3, 5	61	FR		Jacques Bourgeois FDP 1958 2007 6	86
ZH		Bruno Zuppiger SVP 1952 1999 1, 7	12	BE		Andrea Martina Geissbühler SVP 1976 2007 10, 11	37	LU		Josef Kunz SVP 1945 1995 1, 4	62	FR		Jean-François Rime SVP 1950 2003 9	87
ZH		Jacqueline Fehr SP 1963 1998 5, 8	13	BE		Jean-Pierre Graber SVP 1946 2007 1	38	LU		Felix Müri SVP 1958 2003 4	63	FR		Marie-Thérèse Weber-Gobet CSP 1957 2008 2, 5	88
ZH		Mario Fehr SP 1958 1999 3, 4	14	BE		Rudolf Joder SVP 1950 1999 10	39	LU		Ida Glanzmann-Hunkeler CVP 1958 2006 2, 7	64	SO		Elvira Bader CVP 1955 1999 2, 6	89
ZH		Chantal Galladé SP 1972 2003 4, 7	15	BE		Simon Schenk SVP 1946 1994 4, 8	40	LU		Ruedi Lustenberger CVP 1950 1999 2, 6	65	SO		Pirmin Bischof CVP 1959 2007 9	90
ZH		Christine Goll SP 1956 1991 2, 5	16	BE		Erich von Siebenthal SVP 1958 2007 2, 12	41	LU		Plus Segmüller CVP 1952 2007 7	66	SO		Roland F. Borer SVP 1951 1991 5, 7	91
ZH		Andreas Gross SP 1952 1991 10	17	BE		Hansruedi Wandfluh SVP 1952 1999 9	42	LU		Otto Inelichen FDP 1941 2003 4	67	SO		Walter Wobmann SVP 1957 2003 6, 10	92
ZH		Daniel Jositsch SP 1965 2007 11	18	BE		Evi Allemann SP 1978 2003 7, 8	43	LU		Georges Theiler FDP 1949 1995 9	68	SO		Kurt Fluri FDP 1955 2003 10, 11	93
ZH		Anita Thanei SP 1954 1995 11	19	BE		André Daguét SP 1947 2003 2, 11	44	LU		Prisca Birrer-Heimo SP 1959 2010 9	69	SO		Bea Heim SP 1946 2003 1, 10, 12	94
ZH		Marlies Bänziger GPS 1960 2007 1	20	BE		Margret Kiener Nellen SP 1953 2003 1	45	LU		Louis Schelbert GPS 1952 2006 1, 9	70	SO		Brigit Wyss GPS 1960 2007 2, 11	95
ZH		Bastien Girod GPS 1980 2007 6	21	BE		Hans Stöckli SP 1952 2004 10, 12	46	UR		Gabi Huber FDP 1956 2003 8, 11	71	BS		Beat Jans SP 1964 2010 6	96
ZH		Katharina Prelicz-Huber GPS 1959 2008 4, 5	22	BE		Ursula Wyss SP 1973 1999 1, 6	47	SZ		Peter Föhn SVP 1952 1995 8	72	BS		Silvia Schenker SP 1954 2003 5, 10	97
ZH		Daniel Vischer GPS 1950 2003 1, 11	23	BE		Peter Flück FDP 1957 2010 4	48	SZ		Pirmin Schwander SVP 1961 2003 1, 11	73	BS		Sebastian Frehner SVP 1973 2010 5	98
ZH		Doris Fiala FDP 1957 2007 3, 4	24	BE		Christa Markwalder FDP 1975 2003 3, 11	49	SZ		Andy Tschümperlin SP 1962 2007 10	74	BS		Anita Lachenmeier-Thüring GPS 1959 2007 7, 8	99
ZH		Markus Hutter FDP 1957 2003 1, 8	25	BE		Pierre Triponez FDP 1943 1999 5	50	SZ		Reto Wehrli CVP 1965 2003 3, 5	75	BS		Peter Malama FDP 1960 2007 4, 7	100

The captions below the names refer to (from left to right) political party affiliation, year of birth, year of election to the Council and the committees (see pp 34–35) on which the council member sits. 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).

THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

BL		Caspar Baader SVP 1953 1998 9	101	GR		Sep Cathomas CVP 1945 2003 2, 6	126	TI		Ignazio Cassis FDP 1961 2007 5	151	VS		Viola Amherd CVP 1962 2005 8, 11	176
BL		Christian Miesch SVP 1948 1991–95, 03 2, 7	102	GR		Tarzislus Caviezel FDP 1954 2007 8	127	TI		Fulvio Pelli FDP 1951 1995 9	152	VS		Christophe Darbellay CVP 1971 2003 9	177
BL		Susanne Leutenegger Oberholzer SP 1948 1987–91, 99 9, 11	103	GR		Andrea Hämmerle SP 1946 1991 8	128	TI		Marina Carobbio Guscetti SP 1966 2007 1	153	VS		Paul-André Roux CVP 1960 2010 11	178
BL		Eric Nussbaumer SP 1960 2007 6	104	AG		Sylvia Flückiger-Bäni SVP 1952 2007 9	129	TI		Fabio Pedrina SP 1954 1999 8	154	VS		Roberto Schmidt CVP 1962 2007 6, 10	179
BL		Maya Graf GPS 1962 2001 4	105	AG		Lieni Füglistaller SVP 1951 2005 1, 4	130	TI		Meinrado Robbiani CVP 1951 1999 5	155	VS		Oskar Freysinger SVP 1960 2003 4, 11	180
BL		Hans Rudolf Gysin FDP 1940 1987	106	AG		Ulrich Giezendanner SVP 1953 1991 8	131	TI		Chiara Simoneschi-Cortesi CVP 1946 1999 4, 8	156	VS		Jean-René Germanier FDP 1958 2003 8	181
BL		Elisabeth Schneider-Schneiter CVP 1964 2010 3	107	AG		Walter Glur SVP 1943 1999 2	132	TI		Norman Gobbi Lega 1977 2010 8	157	VS		Stéphane Rossini SP 1963 1999 2, 5	182
SH		Hans-Jürg Fehr SP 1948 1999 3, 9	108	AG		Hans Killer SVP 1948 2007 6, 12	133	VD		André Bugnon SVP 1947 1999 8, 10	158	NE		Laurent Favre FDP 1972 2007 6	183
SH		Thomas Hurter SVP 1963 2007 7	109	AG		Luzi Stamm SVP 1952 1991 3, 11	134	VD		Alice Glauser-Zufferey SVP 1954 2007 2, 4	159	NE		Sylvie Perrinjaquet FDP 1955 2007 4, 7	184
AR		Marianne Kleiner FDP 1947 2003 1, 5	110	AG		Pascale Bruderer Wyss SP 1977 2002 4	135	VD		Jean-Pierre Grin SVP 1947 2007 1	160	NE		Francine John-Calame GPS 1954 2005 3	185
AI		Arthur Loepfle CVP 1942 1999 1, 7	111	AG		Max Chopard-Acklin SP 1966 2009 7	136	VD		Guy Parmelin SVP 1959 2003 5, 6	161	NE		Jacques-André Maire SP 1957 2009 2	186
SG		Elmar Bigger SVP 1949 1999 6, 12	112	AG		Doris Stump SP 1950 1995 6	137	VD		Pierre-François Veillon SVP 1950 2003 2	162	NE		Yvan Perrin SVP 1966 2003 7, 10	187
SG		Toni Brunner SVP 1974 1995 6	113	AG		Esther Egger-Wyss CVP 1952 2007 1, 10	138	VD		Josiane Aubert SP 1949 2007 4	163	GE		Martine Brunschwig Graf FDP 1950 2003 1, 3	188
SG		Rino Roland Büchel SVP 1965 2010 3	114	AG		Ruth Humbel CVP 1957 2003 5, 10	139	VD		Ada Marra SP 1973 2007 10	164	GE		Hugues Hiltbold FDP 1969 2007 10	189
SG		Theophil Pfister SVP 1942 1999 4	115	AG		Markus Zemp CVP 1954 2006 9	140	VD		Roger Nordmann SP 1973 2004 6	165	GE		Christian Lüscher FDP 1963 2007 11	190
SG		Lukas Reimann SVP 1982 2007 11	116	AG		Corina Eichenberger-Walther FDP 1954 2007 2, 7	141	VD		Eric Voruz SP 1945 2007 7	166	GE		Jean-Charles Rielle SP 1952 2007 5	191
SG		Jakob Büchler CVP 1952 2003 7	117	AG		Philipp Müller FDP 1952 2003 9, 10	142	VD		Daniel Brélaz GPS 1950 1979–89, 2007 8	167	GE		Maria Roth-Bernasconi SP 1955 1995–99, 2003 2, 12	192
SG		Lucrezia Meier-Schatz CVP 1952 1999 9	118	AG		Geri Müller GPS 1960 2003 3, 7	143	VD		Adèle Thorens Goumaz GPS 1971 2007 9	168	GE		Carlo Sommaruga SP 1959 2003 3, 11	193
SG		Thomas Müller CVP 1952 2006 1	119	TG		J. Alexander Baumann SVP 1942 1995 2	144	VD		Christian van Singer GPS 1950 2007 6, 12	169	GE		Antonio Hodggers GPS 1976 2007 10	194
SG		Hildegard Fässler-Osterwalder SP 1951 1997 3, 9	120	TG		Peter Spuhler SVP 1959 1999 9	145	VD		Charles Favre FDP 1957 1999 9	170	GE		Ueli Leuenberger GPS 1952 2003 10	195
SG		Paul Rechsteiner SP 1952 1986 5, 9	121	TG		Hansjörg Walter SVP 1951 1999 9	146	VD		Olivier François FDP 1955 2007 2, 12	171	GE		Yves Nidegger SVP 1957 2007 11	196
SG		Yvonne Gilli GPS 1957 2007 4, 5	122	TG		Edith Graf-Litscher SP 1964 2005 8	147	VD		Isabelle Moret FDP 1970 2006 2, 10	172	GE		André Reymond SVP 1940 2003 3	197
SG		Walter Müller FDP 1948 2003 3, 7	123	TG		Brigitte Häberli-Koller CVP 1958 2003 1, 4	148	VD		Claude Ruey FDP 1949 1999 5	173	GE		Luc Barthassat CVP 1960 2005 3	198
GR		Brigitta M. Gädent BDP 1960 1995 2	124	TG		Werner Messmer FDP 1945 1999 6	149	VD		Jacques Nelryncck CVP 1931 1999–2003, 07 4	174	JU		Dominique Baettig SVP 1953 2007 5	199
GR		Hansjörg Hassler BDP 1953 1999 9	125	TI		Fabio Abate FDP 1966 2000 1	150	VD		Josef Zisyadis AL 1956 1991–96, 99 9, 10	175	JU		Jean-Claude Renwald SP 1953 1995 9	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	1	GL		Pankraz Freitag	13	AR		Hans Altherr	25	VD		Luc Recordon	37
		GLP 1949 2007 6, 8, 11				FDP 1952 2008 1, 4, 11				FDP 1950 2004 1, 5, 7				GPS 1955 2007 3, 7, 11	
ZH		Felix Gutzwiller	2	GL		This Jenny	14	AI		Ivo Bischofberger	26	VD		Géraldine Savary	38
		FDP 1948 2007 3, 4, 5				SVP 1952 1998 1, 6, 8				CVP 1958 2007 3, 4, 6				SP 1968 2007 4, 8, 11	
BE		Werner Luginbühl	3	ZG		Peter Bieri	15	SG		Eugen David	27	VS		Jean-René Fournier	39
		BDP 1958 2007 4, 9, 11				CVP 1952 1995 1, 4, 7, 8				CVP 1945 1999 3, 5, 9				CVP 1957 2007 1, 3, 7	
BE		Vacant	4	ZG		Rolf Schweiger	16	SG		Erika Forster-Vannini	28	VS		René Imoberdorf	40
						FDP 1945 1999 1, 6, 9, 11				FDP 1944 1995 5, 6, 9				CVP 1950 2007 2, 6, 8	
LU		Konrad Graber	5	FR		Alain Berset	17	GR		Christoffel Brändli	29	NE		Didier Berberat	41
		CVP 1958 2007 2, 8, 9				SP 1972 2003 1, 6, 9, 10				SVP 1943 1995 5, 6, 8				SP 1956 2009 1, 3, 5, 6	
LU		Helen Leumann-Würsch	6	FR		Urs Schwaller	18	GR		Theo Maissen	30	NE		Raphaël Comte	42
		FDP 1943 1995 2, 4, 9				CVP 1952 2003 1, 5, 10				CVP 1944 1995 3, 4, 7				FDP 1979 2009 1, 7, 10	
UR		Hansheiri Inderkum	7	SO		Rolf Büttiker	19	AG		Christine Egerszegi-Obrist	31	GE		Robert Cramer	43
		CVP 1947 1995 6, 10, 11				FDP 1950 1991 6, 8, 10				FDP 1948 2007 5, 8, 10				GPS 1954 2007 2, 6, 10	
UR		Markus Stadler	8	SO		Roberto Zanetti	20	AG		Maximilian Reimann	32	GE		Liliane Maury Pasquier	44
		GLP 1948 2010 2, 4, 11				SP 1954 2010 7, 9, 11				SVP 1942 1995 2, 3, 10				SP 1956 2007 3, 4, 5	
SZ		Bruno Frick	9	BS		Anita Fetz	21	TG		Hermann Bürgi	33	JU		Claude Héche	45
		CVP 1953 1991 5, 7, 9				SP 1957 2003 1, 4, 5, 9				SVP 1946 1999 4, 7, 11				SP 1952 2007 2, 7, 8, 10	
SZ		Alex Kuprecht	10	BL		Claude Janiak	22	TG		Philipp Stähelin	34	JU		Anne Seydoux-Christe	46
		SVP 1957 2003 2, 5, 7				SP 1948 2007 2, 8, 11				CVP 1944 1999 1, 5, 9				CVP 1958 2007 2, 3, 4, 11	
OW		Hans Hess	11	SH		Peter Briner	23	TI		Filippo Lombardi	35	The captions below the names refer to (from left to right) political party affiliation, year of birth, year of election to the Council and the committees (see pp 34–35) on which the council member sits.			
		FDP 1945 1998 2, 7, 8				FDP 1943 1999 2, 3, 10				CVP 1956 1999 2, 6, 8, 10					
NW		Paul Niederberger	12	SH		Hannes Germann	24	TI		Dick Marty	36				
		CVP 1948 2007 2, 7, 10				SVP 1956 2002 1, 3, 9, 10				FDP 1945 1995 3, 9, 11					

Other rules apply to Swiss people living abroad

Swiss citizens living abroad have the option of being registered in Switzerland on the electoral roll – either in their home commune or in their former commune of residence. This gives them the right to vote and take part in elections at federal level and even to be elected to the National Council.

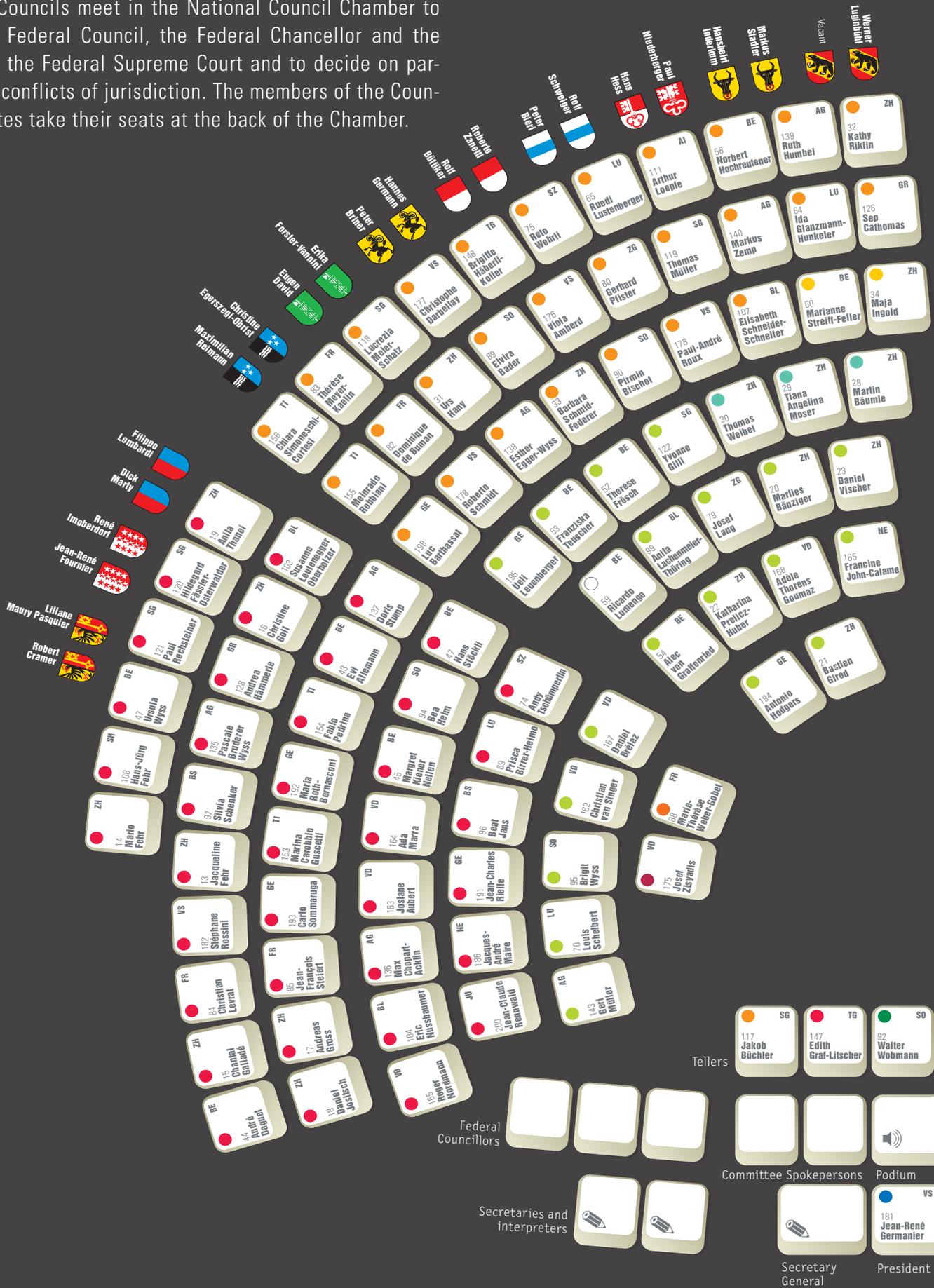
However, depending on where they are registered, Swiss people living abroad may or may not be able to take part in elections to the Council of States, depending on what their cantonal law provides.

Swiss people living abroad only have full political rights in ten cantons where they can take part in National Council and Council of States elections and can also have their say on federal and cantonal matters. These cantons are Bern, Fribourg, Geneva, Graubünden, Jura, Schwyz, Solothurn, Ticino, Basel-Landschaft and Neuchâtel: in the last two cantons they are even allowed to have a say in the affairs of the commune.



Number of ballot papers distributed: 246

The two Councils meet in the National Council Chamber to elect the Federal Council, the Federal Chancellor and the judges of the Federal Supreme Court and to decide on pardons and conflicts of jurisdiction. The members of the Council of States take their seats at the back of the Chamber.



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 2011

Spring session: 28 February – 18 March

Summer session: 31 May – 18 June

Autumn session: 12 – 30 September

Winter session: 5 – 23 December

(14 December: election of the Federal Council)

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.

5399 requests

Since the beginning of the 48th legislative period (winter session 2007) the members of the National Council and the Council of States have submitted a total of 5399 parliamentary requests up to and including the autumn session 2010.

- **327 parliamentary initiatives**
- **1314 motions**
- **437 postulates**
- **1259 interpellations**
- **432 ordinary questions and**
- **1630 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 twelve standing committees: two *supervisory committees* and ten 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.

* Because a new method for calculating the allocation of committee seats has been in place since 2009, a transitional system is being used until the end of the 2007–2011 legislative period under which ten additional committee seats are available in order to prevent underrepresentation.

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 National Council Committee for the Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy is at work.



The ten legislative committees are concerned with legislation in their specific fields. The Committee for Public Buildings exists in the National Council, but not in the Council of States.

Supervisory committees and delegations

1 | 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).

2 | 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 Federal Banking Commission, 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.

The committees are numbered in order to make it easier to identify which assembly members sit on which committee (pages 26–28).

Legislative committees

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

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

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

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

7 | Defence Committees: military defence, civil defence, national economic supply, peace and security policy, civilian service, war materiel exports.

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

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

10 | 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.

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

12 | Committee for Public Buildings: civilian public buildings at home and abroad.

Other committees

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

The **Committee on Pardons and Conflicts of Jurisdiction** examines requests for pardons submitted to the Federal Assembly and rules on conflicts of jurisdiction between the highest federal authorities.

The **Rehabilitation Committee** quashes convictions against persons who helped people to flee persecution during the period of National Socialism.

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

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

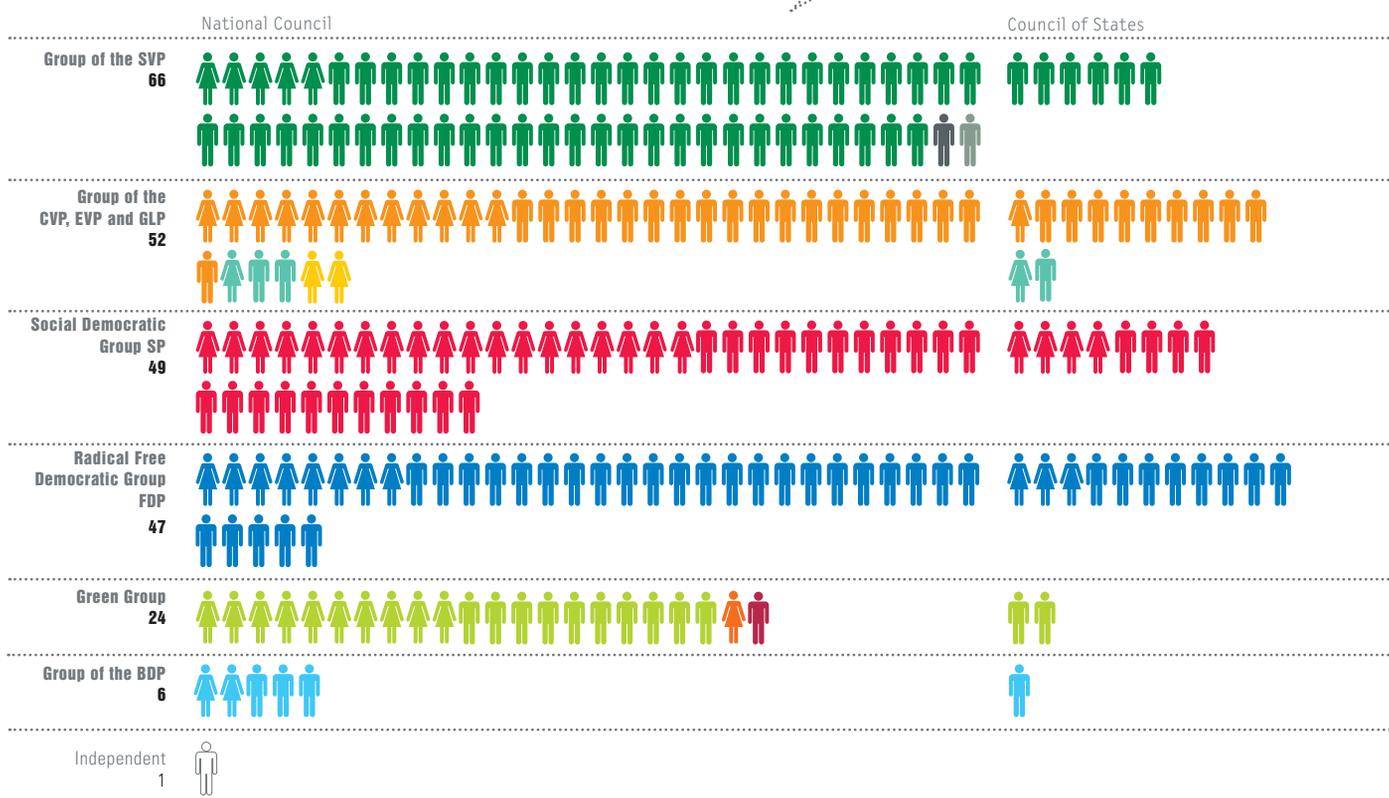
Parliamentary groups comprise members of the same party or parties sharing similar political sympathies. They play an important role in opinion-forming processes, discussing important Council business and agreeing on a line that can be followed by Council members in the Council and in their dealings 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 impact 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 203 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
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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 Federal Council has existed for more than 160 years and during this time has had a total of 114 members, including the seven present members, but the first 'official photo' of the council in office was only taken in 1993.

The highest governing authority in Switzerland and the Federal Chancellor posed for this year's portrait in the same place that the first picture was taken 18 years ago: in the corridor outside the Federal Council chamber in the west wing of the Federal Palace.

There is a noticeable difference between this and the original photograph. Back then, Ruth Dreifuss was the only woman in the picture, whereas since last October's Federal Council elections (and forty years since women obtained the vote), for the first time, women are in the majority.

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.



Micheline Calmy-Rey
President of the Swiss Confederation
Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
Member of the **SP**
Federal Councillor since 2003



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



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



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



Didier Burkhalter
Head of the Federal Department of Home 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



Corina Casanova
Member of the **CVP**
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	SVP	BDP	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.

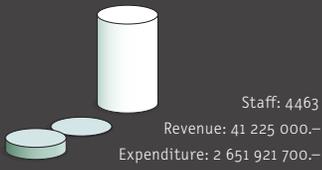
Concordance, does not, however, imply that everyone in parliament and in the government is (or should be) in complete agreement, but rather that all opinions are represented and carry a weight that reflects closely the level of support that they enjoy among the electorate.

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 35 800-strong federal staff work



Head of Department:
Micheline Calmy-Rey

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA



Head of Department:
Didier Burkhalter

Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA



Head of Department:
Simonetta Sommaruga

Federal Department of Justice and Police FDJP



Head of Department:
Ueli Maurer

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 Public International Law DPIL

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

Directorate of Corporate Resources DCR

Swiss Meteorological Institute MeteoSwiss

Federal Gaming Board FGB

Armasuisse

Swiss diplomatic and consular missions abroad

Federal Office of Public Health FOPH

Swiss Institute for Comparative Law SICL

Federal Intelligence Service

Federal Statistical Office FSO

Federal Arbitration Commission for the Exploitation of Copyrights and Related Rights

Federal Social Insurance Office FSIO

Federal Audit Oversight Authority FAOA

State Secretariat for Education and Research SER

National Commission for the Prevention of Torture NCPT

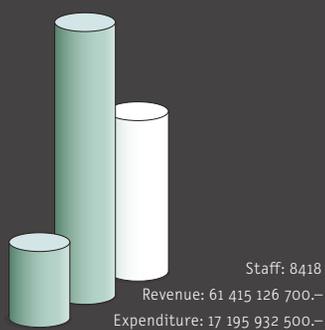
Federal Institutes of Technology Group ETH Domain

Federal Institute of Intellectual Property IIP

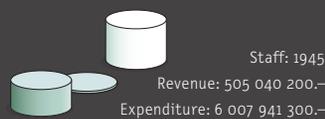
Swiss Agency for Therapeutic Products Swissmedic

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



Head of Department:
Johann N. Schneider-Ammann



Head of Department:
Doris Leuthard



Federal Chancellor:
Corina Casanova

Federal Department of Finance FDF

Federal Department of Economic Affairs FDEA

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

Federal Chancellery FCh

General Secretariat GS-FDF

General Secretariat GS-FDEA

General Secretariat GS-DETEC

Federal Data Protection and Information Commissioner

State Secretariat for International Financial Matters SIF

State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

Federal Office of Transport FOT

Federal Finance Administration FFA

Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology OPET

Federal Office of Civil Aviation FOCA

Federal Office of Personnel FOPER

Federal Office for Agriculture FOAG

Swiss Federal Office of Energy SFOE

Federal Tax Administration FTA

Federal Veterinary Office FVO

Federal Roads Office FEDRO

Federal Customs Administration FCA

Federal Office for National Economic Supply FONES

Federal Office of Communications OFCOM

Federal Office of Information Technology, Systems and Telecommunication FOITT

Federal Housing Office FHO

Federal Office for the Environment FOEN

Federal Office for Buildings and Logistics FOBL

Office of the Price Supervisor

Federal Office for Spatial Development ARE

Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority FINMA

Competition Commission COMCO

Swiss Federal Nuclear Safety Inspectorate ENSI

Swiss Federal Audit Office SFAO

Commission for Technology and Innovation CTI

Swiss Alcohol Board SAB

Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training SFIVET

Federal Pension Fund Publica

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 this year many expatriate Swiss will be able to take part in votes and 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, neutral and comprehensive information on Federal Council 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 motivated employees working in a modern infrastructure, many of whom are highly qualified specialists. A new, complex electronic business management system is currently being introduced which will make it possible to trace document history 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 main 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 prepared prior to the meeting. During meetings Federal Council Spokesman Simonazzi, who is responsible for communications, passes hand-written notes on the decisions being made to the information service of the Federal Chancellery, which then coordinates the written press releases. 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 Chancellor:
Corina Casanova
 Vice-Chancellors: Thomas Helbling, André Simonazzi
 Federal Palace West Wing, 3003 Bern
 031 322 37 91
 Information officers: Hansruedi Moser, Claude Gerbex
www.bk.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 in German, French and Italian. 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.

Divergent thinking – new perspectives

In a team headed by the Federal Chancellor, 12 strategy specialists from the seven government departments and the Federal Chancellery are currently compiling an overview of the key challenges that will face Switzerland in the years to come. This new project is called 'Perspectives 2025' and is backed by the Centre for Security Studies CSS at the ETH Zurich.

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. According to analyses of federal votes, readers think very highly of this little booklet. About 70 per cent of voters use it as a source of information. 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. Visitors to the Käfigturm can also stock up on information leaflets, and political parties and other organisations can hold meetings and small-scale events there.

Creating transparency and protecting privacy



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

The Federal Data Protection and Information Commissioner monitors data processing activities by federal agencies and private individuals and organisations. In addition, he provides advice to private individuals, federal agencies and the cantons. He makes recommendations to the federal offices and departments on how to apply the principle of freedom of information, which facilitates access to official documents. The Commissioner also conducts mediation proceedings in the event of conflict between those applying for access to information and the offices concerned.



Washington Post

Twice a week the post is dispatched to the American capital and to several other cities of particular importance in Switzerland's foreign affairs.

Most of the other 164 destinations – principally Swiss embassies and consulates around the world – receive post from Freiburgstrasse 130 in Bern just once a week.

Rudolf Bigler and Reto Amstutz, an apprentice in the Logistics department, and around a dozen other staff, deal with all the post sent between Switzerland and its diplomatic representations abroad – an average of about seventy items dispatched and delivered each day.

As well as correspondence and other documents, 'articles intended for official use' – anything ranging from ink pads to security cabinets – are sent in bags of all different shapes and sizes.

Family members are also allowed to send private items, free of charge up to a weight of 500 grams, the addressee paying the postage for anything heavier.

Once the mail bag has been packed, it is closed using a metal strap thread through eyes along the top of the bag and sealed by a member of the courier services. After all, under international law diplomatic luggage and post is guaranteed immunity, just like the diplomats themselves. It therefore cannot be tampered with, either by customs or any other domestic or foreign authority.

Rudolf Bigler and Reto Amstutz work in the courier section of the Directorate for Resources and are just two of the approximately 4900 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 the independence and welfare of Switzerland
- 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: Roberto Balzaretti	Staff: 97	Revenue: –	Expenditure: 4 126 200.–
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The General Secretariat supports and advises the head of the FDFA in her daily work. In particular it

- coordinates business within the department for parliament and the Federal Council (strategic controlling, risk management and internal controls)
- informs the public about the activities of the department
- ensures the achievement of equal opportunities within the FDFA
- assesses the effectiveness of internal steering and controlling systems across all areas of the department's activities.

Presence Switzerland and the *Cultural Foreign Policy Centre* also report to the General Secretariat.

State Secretariat



State Secretary: Peter Maurer	Staff: 230	Revenue: –	Expenditure: 286 525 100.–
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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*, a joint office of the FDFA and the FDEA, 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 two geographical and four thematic divisions:

- *Political Affairs Division I* (Europe and Central Asia, Council of Europe, OSCE)
- *Political Affairs Division II* (Africa/Middle East, Asia-Pacific, America)
- *Political Affairs Division III* (United Nations and other international organisations)
- *Political Affairs Division IV* (human security)
- *Political Affairs Division V* (sectoral policy coordination)
- *Political Affairs Division VI* (service for the Swiss Abroad and policy on the Swiss Abroad, consular protection, travel advice and crisis management)
- *Secretariat of Political Affairs* (international security policy, arms control and disarmament, conference service, historical service, documentation).

Directorate of Public International Law DPIL



Director: Valentin Zellweger	Staff: 43	Revenue: 430 000.–	Expenditure: 5 603 400.–
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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 of Public International Law 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 DPIL deals with a wide range of topics, including neutrality, human rights and international humanitarian law, the legal aspects of cross-border cooperation, dealing with the issue of proceeds of corruption, and shipping on the Rhine and other inland waterways. The DPIL also coordinates foreign policy measures for combating terrorism and is responsible for relations with the Principality of Liechtenstein.



Head of Department:
Micheline Calmy-Rey

Federal Palace West Wing, 3003 Bern
031 322 31 53
Information officer: Lars Knuchel
www.eda.admin.ch

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC

www.deza.admin.ch



Director: **Martin Dahinden** Staff: **496** Revenue: **-**
Local staff: **823** Expenditure: **1 719 147 000.-**

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:

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

Regional cooperation runs development programmes in 17 partner countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa. It is responsible for cooperation with the regional finance institutions in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

Global cooperation supports the activities of the United Nations (UN), the World Bank and other global funds and networks. It contributes to resolving global problems through three global programmes (climate change, food security and migration).

Cooperation with Eastern Europe supports reform in countries in the West Balkans and the Community of Independent States of the former Soviet Union (CIS) and also entails the enlargement contribution to the new EU countries.

Humanitarian aid saves lives and alleviates suffering. During armed conflicts and in the aftermath of natural disasters, the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit provides help and supports partner organisations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the World Food Programme (WFP). In addition to relief aid it provides reconstruction assistance and is involved in disaster protection and prevention.

The work of the SDC includes 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.

Directorate of Corporate Resources DCR



Director: **Helene Budliger Artieda** Staff: **398** Revenue: **-**
Expenditure: **261 344 455.-**

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: **876** Revenue: **40 795 000.-**
Local staff: **1500** Expenditure: **375 175 545.-**

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



1850 serum samples ...

... from blood donors all over Switzerland are tested by Judith Jenny-Burri at the laboratories of the Federal Office of Public Health in Liebefeld. How much selenium do they contain? Less than the samples tested in a study first carried out in 1993?

Selenium is a trace element essential to life which we absorb via our food and store in our bodies. It is suspected that selenium intake may have declined over the last two decades as there has been a change in the nature of grain imports since the 1990s.

Twenty years ago, a large proportion of the wheat used for bread and other baked goods was imported from Canada and the USA. Now it mainly comes from Europe, where the soils – and therefore everything that is grown in them – tend to contain much lower amounts of selenium.

But there is no real cause for concern. Having evaluated all the samples, chemical engineer Judith Jenny-Burri concludes that the Swiss population's selenium status is as good as it ever was.

This is thanks to their varied diet, in particular their love of meat and pasta. Both are a rich source of selenium; animal products because cattle fodder is often enriched with the trace element, and pasta produced in Switzerland because it is still made from North American durum wheat.

In short: if you are healthy and eat more or less healthily, you will have enough selenium in your diet. But because the countries we source our plant products from frequently change, it's worth keeping an eye on developments.

Judith Jenny-Burri works at the Federal Office of Public Health in the Consumer Protection Directorate, Food Safety Division, Chemical Risks Section, and is one of around 2400 federal employees in the Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA.

Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA

General Secretariat GS-FDHA

www.edi.admin.ch



Secretary-General: Benno Bättig	Staff: 63	Revenue: 1 010 000.–	Expenditure: 88 086 900.–
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The General Secretariat is responsible for planning, coordination and controlling, acts as a hub between the federal offices and the head of 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: –	Expenditure: 8 237 000.–
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Equal rights in the workplace and at home are the office's main concern. The FOGE now provides financial assistance to promote company projects to improve in-house equal opportunities and, together with social partners, plays an active role in implementing equal pay for women and men. 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: 88	Revenue: 1 438 900.–	Expenditure: 194 426 800.–
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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 supports creative work in the fields of film, the visual arts and design. Its tasks also include supporting and promoting the interests of the country's various linguistic and cultural communities. It supports umbrella organisations that represent cultural interests. 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 some valuable collections, including the federal art collection.

Swiss National Library NL

www.nb.admin.ch



Director: Marie-Christine Doffey	Staff: 131	Revenue: 345 000.–	Expenditure: 37 849 400.–
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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 also 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: 57	Revenue: 520 900.–	Expenditure: 19 832 600.–
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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 12 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 (as of 1 May)	Staff: 301	Revenue: 35 760 400.–	Expenditure: 89 816 500.–
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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: 453	Revenue: 28 345 000.–	Expenditure: 2 476 691 000.–
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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:
Didier Burkhalter

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031 322 80 33

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

Federal Statistical Office FSO

www.statistik.admin.ch



Director: Jürg Marti	Staff: 579	Revenue: 990 000.–
		Expenditure: 167 468 900.–

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: Yves Rossier	Staff: 255	Revenue: 19 804 600.–
		Expenditure: 12 964 415 000.–

Switzerland has an effective and solid social insurance system, which is an important element in upholding social peace. As such it 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 on national service and women on maternity leave, and family allowances in the agricultural sector. 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 the area of 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: Mauro Dell'Ambrogio	Staff: 97	Revenue: 1 823 300.–
		Expenditure: 2 321 736 500.–

The SER is responsible for drafting and implementing federal policy in the areas of higher and university education, research and space affairs. The most important education dossiers are the academic baccalaureate, the promotion of cantonal universities and preparation for and assessment of the implementation of the federal performance mandate in the ETH Domain. The SER invests in the quality of Switzerland as a research location with 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: Fritz Schiesser	Staff: 14 412	Revenue: –
		Expenditure: 2 248 625 000.–

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 17 000, 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. This supervisory body is elected by the Federal Council and its role is to approve and supervise development plans, carry out control activities and ensure good coordination between the institutes. 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: Jürg Schnetzer	Staff: 326	Revenue: 81 500 000.–
		Expenditure: 83 000 000.–

Swissmedic is the Swiss agency for the authorisation and supervision of 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: Andreas Spillmann	Staff: 133	Revenue: 3 900 000.–
		Expenditure: 28 800 000.–

Three museums – the National Museum Zurich, the Castle of Prangins and the Forum of Swiss History 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.



How much Switzerland does it really contain?

Whether it's the Swiss cross on pocket knives or 'Swiss Made' on watch dials – Swiss products usually have a good reputation, both in Switzerland and around the world.

And they can fetch a good price. Because typical Swiss products are considered to be of a high quality, consumers are often prepared to pay more for them. This added value sometimes accounts for as much as 20% of the total price, and is even higher in the case of watches and luxury goods.

Some manufacturers who have little or nothing to do with 'Swissness' also want to be able to take advantage of this, giving their goods a Swiss touch so that they can be marketed at a higher price. A revised law on the protection of indications of provenance aims to prevent such abuses and define clearly how Swiss a product has to be before it can be labelled as such.

Last year an exhibition entitled 'Branded as Swiss...genuinely Swiss?' brought this issue to the attention of the broader public. The exhibition was held at the Political Forum of the Confederation in the Käfigturm in Bern, accompanied by a series of well attended talks and podium discussions on the subject.

The exhibition organiser, communications specialist Barbara Mögli shares her satisfaction at the positive echo from the public with Michael Fritsche, head of the Käfigturm. More than seven thousand people visited the exhibition and learnt about the importance of protecting the Swiss trademark better in future.

Barbara Mögli works in the Communications and Language Service of the Legal and International Affairs Division at the Institute of Intellectual Property. She is one of around 2900 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:	Staff: 105	Revenue GS:	5 795 300.-
vacant	ISC: 170	Expenditure GS:	61 317 700.-
Head of ISC:		Revenue ISC:	74 664 900.-
Christian Baumann		Expenditure ISC:	85 899 700.-

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 for the areas of justice, the police services and migration which are used nationally, such as search systems or the register of criminal records. Post and telecommunications surveillance services also come under the administration of the *ISC-FJPD*.

Federal Office of Justice FOJ

www.bj.admin.ch



Director:	Staff: 211	Revenue:	15 480 000.-
Michael Leupold		Expenditure:	152 237 600.-

The Federal Office of Justice prepares decrees related to the main areas of law, including the civil code, criminal code, 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 enforcement of sentencing and criminal records. 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:	Staff: 753	Revenue:	1 825 000.-
Jean-Luc Vez		Expenditure:	241 753 200.-

Fedpol employees carry out tasks in a range of areas to protect the population and the Swiss constitutional state. For example, each year under the supervision of the Office of the Attorney General they investigate several hundred cases in which the Confederation is responsible for prosecution. Fedpol also supports the cantonal police in numerous procedures, such as the fight against internet child pornography.

It is also responsible for organising the protection of hundreds of foreign nationals who must be protected according to international law, of local government officers and of federal buildings. They see to all the necessary steps involved in issuing passports and also issue entry bans.

Fedpol provides services to national and international partners, such as database operations to search for persons or property and to identify persons and leads. Finally, Fedpol also formulates the necessary agreements for international police cooperation.

Federal Office for Migration FOM

www.bfm.admin.ch



Director:	Staff: 745	Revenue:	41 850 000.-
Alard du Bois-Reymond		Expenditure:	1 030 687 100.-

A German citizen wants to work as an engineer in Switzerland... what requirements do they and their employer have to meet? A refugee from Eritrea applies for asylum in Switzerland... under what conditions will the application be approved? A family from the Bernese Oberland wants to emigrate to Canada... what do they need to know?

The Federal Office for Migration (FOM) determines the conditions under which people may enter, live and work in Switzerland, and it decides who receives protection from persecution. It also provides information and advice to Swiss citizens interested in living abroad.

It is not always easy for people of different cultures to live side by side. That is why the FOM plans measures for the peaceful coexistence of the Swiss and foreign population and implements them in conjunction with the cantons and other partners. It coordinates integration policy, placing particular emphasis on the areas of language, education and employment.

Federal Office of Metrology METAS

www.metas.ch



Director:	Staff: 123	Revenue:	13 616 000.-
Christian Bock		Expenditure:	39 186 300.-

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: 411 291 200.–
		Expenditure: 424 379 100.–

The Federal Gaming Board supervises the 19 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 Board also has the task of levying gaming tax on casinos, the revenues from which mainly flow into the Old Age and Survivors compensation fund so that at some point they benefit the whole population. The FGB also has the task of determining the legal status of a game if there is doubt regarding its nature. In such cases it has to determine whether the game concerned is one of luck or skill. In Switzerland only casinos are entitled to offer games of chance. The FGB is also responsible for addressing unlawful gaming.

Swiss Institute for Comparative Law SICL

www.isdc.ch



Director a.i.: Christina Schmid	Staff: 35	Revenue: 1 441 100.–
		Expenditure: 7 570 000.–

'Other countries, other customs' is a German saying which is particular pertinent in Switzerland, a small nation with a wide network of relations with foreign countries. In mixed nationality families or economic relations 'other customs', i.e. foreign law, can be of relevance. But how does one find out about a certain law in Kazakhstan or a judicial decision in Mongolia? Swiss Institute for Comparative Law (SICL) provides information on foreign legal systems mainly to the courts, authorities and lawyers. So that Switzerland can benefit from experience gained in other countries, the SCIL provides reference models and sources of inspiration for the legislative process. It has a large library (360 000 works in over 60 languages) and holds events on topical subjects, with which it supports the research community.

Federal Arbitration Commission for the Exploitation of Copyrights and Related Rights

www.eschk.admin.ch



President: Laura Hunziker Schneider	Staff and budget included in the General Secretariat figures
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The task of the Arbitration Commission is to examine and approve the tariffs set for the exploitation of copyright and other related rights which are under the supervision of the federal government. These tariffs are agreed between the five licensed collecting companies on the one hand and the associations of users concerned on the other. The tariffs determine the remuneration to be paid by the user for the use of a work which is protected by copyright or of a service protected by a related right. For example, the organisation SUISA is responsible for managing the rights of authors of musical compositions and thus for drawing up the associated tariffs.

Federal Audit Oversight Authority FAOA

www.revisionsaufsichtsbehorde.ch



Director: Frank Schneider	Staff: 18	Revenue: 5 600 000.–
		Expenditure: 5 600 000.–

The Federal Audit Oversight Authority (FAOA) ensures that auditing services in Switzerland are conducted correctly and are of high quality. 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.

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 Institute of Intellectual Property IIP

www.ige.ch



Director: Roland Grossenbacher	Staff: 208	Revenue: 41 202 000.–
		Expenditure: 46 487 000.–

The Institute of Intellectual Property (IIP) is responsible for all matters relating to the protection of intellectual property. Creative minds can register their inventions and creations with the Institute to protect them from being copied: new technical inventions can be patented, catchy names can be trademarked and original 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 all matters relating to intellectual property and represents Switzerland in this field abroad and in international organisations.



Mise en place

'Mise en place' is the term used in a restaurant or hotel kitchen for getting everything ready that is required for cooking; and just as it is useful and practical to prepare well for your work in civilian life, so it is in the army.

Staff Warrant Officer Fritz Lehner carefully notes down on an assessment form how well the aspiring army chefs know the different components of a detachment field kitchen and how good they are at helping their fellow cooks.

The head instructor of the chef apprenticeship command at the military training ground in Thun does not instruct total beginners; in the main, the young men taking this eight-week course are already trained chefs or have a qualification in the food industry, for instance as a baker or butcher.

In the military they can build on their theoretical and practical knowledge and learn how to work with the mobile catering system (MCS), introduced three years ago, which comprises a kitchen on a trailer and a unit containing all additional material, which can be transported by truck.

Whether catering for a whole battalion or using the tried and tested detachment field kitchen for just a dozen men, the soldiers' task is always the same: their catering must be conducive to the welfare, motivation and morale of the army – in other words good, healthy and sufficient.

And ideally to that standard every single time – army chefs prepare no fewer than thirteen million meals a year.

Staff Warrant Officer Fritz Lehner works in the Logistics Training Unit as head instructor of the Chef Apprenticeship Command and is one of around 12 000 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-DDPS



Secretary-General: Brigitte Rindlisbacher	Staff: 443	Revenue: 4 668 000.-	Expenditure: 96 976 000.-
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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 Library Am Guisanplatz, translation services, the DDPS Damage Compensation Centre and Information Security and Facility Protection (ISFP).

For administrative purposes, the Security Committee of the Federal Council (Staff SecCom) is affiliated to the GS. The Security Committee comprises three federal councillors (defence minister, justice minister and foreign minister) whose business is first examined by the Security Steering Group. Both committees are supported by the Staff of the SecCom by means of regular situation assessments and assistance in crisis management at federal level.

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 legislative.

Defence

www.armee.ch



Chief of the Armed Forces: Lieutenant General André Blattmann	Staff: 9535	Revenue: 323 135 400.-	Expenditure: 5 549 583 200.-
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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: 288	Revenue: 13 473 000.-	Expenditure: 155 598 200.-
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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.



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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 particularly for 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 specialist institute for protection from nuclear, biological and chemical threats and hazards. Its services are often called on by the UN and other international organisations.

Sport

www.baspo.ch



Director: Matthias Remund	Staff: 332	Revenue: 16 287 000.-	Expenditure: 192 915 800.-
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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 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 the FOSPO runs state-of-the-art education, training and course centres open to universities, associations, clubs and schools.

Armasuisse

www.armsuisse.ch



Chief of Defence Procurement: Jakob Baumann	Staff: 924	Revenue: 1 312 230 200.-	Expenditure: 877 165 700.-
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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 Federal Office of Topography (swisstopo), the Central Services 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: Markus Seiler	Staff and budget confidential
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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.

Take-off in eight minutes

Although Catherine Chammartin may not particularly like paying taxes herself, she deals with issues relating to taxation every day, both in her office in Bern and, perhaps more frequently, in capital cities abroad – and on the flight there.

As a lawyer and economist at the State Secretariat for International Financial Matters, she is always present at negotiations about taxation agreements with other countries or the EU. The varying viewpoints are expressed and possible compromises discussed behind closed doors.

In this haggling process over proposals and counterproposals, an exact knowledge of the rather dry dossiers is required, as well as a large dose of creativity. “And sometimes the solution does not arise until we are having lunch afterwards – totally spontaneously,” explains Catherine Chammartin.

What she really loves about her work is the challenge of coming up with sets of rules which keep our country and its businesses competitive, are recognised internationally and at the same time enjoy support within Switzerland itself.

For instance, Switzerland must now ensure that existing assets held here and new assets entering the country are properly declared; in exchange, Swiss companies are to receive greater ease of access to foreign financial markets.

Does this mean that banking secrecy will be abolished? “No”, counters the financial expert – it is part of Swiss law and will remain so. However, under a series of double taxation agreements our country will in future aid authorities abroad whenever there is reason to believe that tax fraud or tax evasion has taken place.

Because even though no one really likes paying taxes, Switzerland does not want to be a haven for tax evaders.

Catherine Chammartin is a lawyer and economist working at the State Secretariat for International Financial Matters SIF in the Taxation Policy Section and is one of around 9200 federal employees in the Federal Department of Finance FDF



Federal Department of Finance FDF

General Secretariat GS-FDF



Secretary-General: Jörg Gasser	Staff: 125	Revenue: 4 100.-	Expenditure: 88 194 900.-
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On a Tuesday evening in the Bernerhof, all the lights are burning and the offices are a hive of activity. The departments are submitting their final comments on the items of business concerning the FDF for the next morning's Federal Council meeting. In the General Secretariat, the finishing touches are being made to the proposals.

The GS plans the FDF items of business and supports Federal Councillor Widmer-Schlumpf. The general public is informed through the department's communications. Improvisation would be out of place here; all information regarding Federal Council affairs is provided simultaneously in German, French and Italian. The Federal Strategy Unit for Information Technology is also affiliated to the GS. It draws up the principles for the further development of information technology in the federal administration and coordinates cooperation between the federal government, the cantons and the communes in the field of e-Government.

State Secretariat for International Financial Matters SIF

www.sif.admin.ch



State Secretary: Michael Ambühl	Staff: 32	Revenue: -	Expenditure: 15 766 400.-
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Too big to fail, G20 summits, banking secrecy, fat cats, withholding tax... The issues that the State Secretariat for International Financial Matters SIF deals with are currently hot topics in politics and the media. Founded in 2010, the SIF defends the interests of Switzerland in international finance, monetary and tax matters and represents Switzerland – along with the National Bank – in influential bodies such as the Financial Stability Board or the International Monetary Fund. The SIF draws up national framework conditions to ensure that Switzerland can be a secure, competitive and globally recognised financial centre and business location. It heads 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: 180 excl. Swissmint (27) and the Central Compensation Office (623)	Revenue: 2 595 132 900.-	Expenditure: 7 462 329 200.-
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The FFA is the custodian of the federal coffers. The old rule 'not to spend more than you earn' applies here more than elsewhere. In 2001, voters instructed 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. This financial plan lists all the agreed and envisaged expenditures.

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 Swiss financial centre and draws up empirical analyses which provide a foundation for political decision-making.

Federal Office of Personnel FOPER

www.epa.admin.ch



Director: Barbara Schaeerer	Staff: 109	Revenue: 9 740 600.-	Expenditure: 202 461 900.-
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A country owes its success first and foremost to individuals, and this also applies in the federal administration. As a large employer with well qualified and motivated staff, it has to stand out through its expertise and know-how, but also through its creativity and breadth of vision. Around 35 800 people work within the federal administration, which offers innovative working conditions often in unique positions.

As a modern and attractive employer, the federal administration also contributes to the country's strong standing as an attractive location among the international competition. In order for that to remain the case, FOPER continuously adapts its human resources policy to ensure that the federal administration can continue to attract and retain the best people for the job.

Federal Tax Administration FTA

www.estv.admin.ch



Director: Urs Ursprung	Staff: 988	Revenue: 45 860 602 000.-	Expenditure: 6 926 679 700.-
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The FTA raises a major part of the Confederation's revenues and makes an important contribution to the financing of public activities. It ensures that VAT, direct federal tax, withholding tax and other duties are levied efficiently. On the international level, the FTA seeks to negotiate the most beneficial conditions for avoiding double taxation. These double taxation agreements are of great importance to the economy and set out rules on administrative assistance in tax matters. The FTA prepares legislative amendments in the field of tax law and implements the formal harmonisation of direct taxes levied by the Confederation, the cantons and the communes. It contributes to the healthy functioning and development of the taxation system.

Federal Customs Administration FCA

www.ezv.admin.ch



Director: Rudolf Dietrich	Staff: 4519	Revenue: 11 659 600 000.-	Expenditure: 1 426 984 400.-
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Switzerland generates every second franc abroad. The Swiss customs authorities have the task of operating what is almost the only customs border in western and central Europe so that import and export businesses and regular travellers notice



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as little as possible. Swiss businesses should be able to operate on the single European market with as few disadvantages as possible compared to their European competitors. At the same time the customs authorities check that the legal requirements are being respected. The FCA levies a series of consumption taxes such as VAT and taxes on mineral oil and tobacco.

The Border Guard is the uniformed and armed section of the FCA and is the largest national civilian security organisation. Besides carrying out customs services and customs-related policing activities, its duties include conducting searches for people, vehicles and other objects, fighting drug smuggling and document forgery and performing identity checks.

Federal Office of Information Technology, Systems and Telecommunication FOITT

www.bit.admin.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	374 936 300.-
Marius Redli	1148	Expenditure:	376 368 500.-

The times when the federal administration was able to function without computers and telecommunications are long gone. Websites, legislation online, customs declarations, tax forms – everything is done electronically. The FOITT is the central service provider in the administration for efficient, modern, secure, and user and public-friendly services. It supports processes in the administration, installs standard workplace and administration systems and makes sure telecommunications function well in the federal offices at home and abroad. The FOITT now also provides services to the Federal Criminal Court and the Federal Administrative Court.

Federal Office for Buildings and Logistics FOBL

www.fbl.admin.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	915 110 800.-
Gustave E. Marchand	667	Expenditure:	697 147 500.-

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

Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority FINMA

www.finma.ch



Director:	Staff:	Expenditure (with reserve funds):	110 400 000.-
Patrick Raflaub	385		

Switzerland has one of the world's leading financial markets. The financial sector is therefore extremely important for the country's economy. In view of the dynamic developments in the financial markets and the ever-increasing complexity of financial market supervision, there was a need to improve the institutional structure of the existing supervisory authorities. Since the beginning of 2009, supervision of the core areas of the financial sector (banks, insurance companies, stock exchange, etc.) is undertaken by a single body, the Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority *Finma*.

Swiss Federal Audit Office SFAO

www.efk.admin.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	1 130 000.-
Kurt Gräter	90	Expenditure:	21 070 600.-

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 from a critical distance. It achieves improvements in the performance of federal activities by convincing staff of its expert recommendations. The SFAO relies on dialogue because its recommendations are more likely to be accepted.

Swiss Alcohol Board SAB

www.eav.admin.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	311 579 000.-
Alexandre Schmidt	163	Expenditure:	33 987 000.-

The SAB regulates the market for alcohol by means of taxes, controls and restrictions on trading and advertising. Alco-suisse, 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 by removing the federal monopoly, and the taxation and monitoring system will be revised. With the aim of creating a coherent alcohol policy, the revision aims to draw up uniform provisions for the trade in all alcoholic drinks which take account of the protection of minors.

Federal Pension Fund Publica

www.publica.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	33 525 000.-
Werner Hertzog	125	Expenditure:	31 737 000.-

The federal pension fund, Publica, is an independent public federal institution. It is one of the largest pension funds in Switzerland and manages about 34 million Swiss francs of retirement savings. The staff at Publica advises around 55 000 active insured persons and 45 000 pensioners on all aspects of their pension. In the light of these figures, at Publica quality is also an expression of the fund's sense of responsibility towards its clients. Because of the emphasis placed on quality, Publica is one of the leading pension funds in Switzerland.

A close inspection

Cécile Brabant examines each individual grain of corn very closely: Does the new strain fulfil expectations? Is it less susceptible to plant disease? And above all: does it contain the expected high amounts of gluten? For only flour with sufficient gluten content can be used for baking loaves of bread; if there is too little, the dough does not rise and all that comes out of the oven is unleavened bread.

Brabant is an expert for wheat breeding at the Agroscope Changins-Wädenswil ACW research station, whose role is to examine agricultural practices in general; hence its name, which is composed of two Greek words, 'agros' meaning field, and 'skopein' which means 'observe'.

In its research and development activities the ACW deals with practically everything that Swiss farmers grow: field crops such as grain and vegetables; fruit, vines, berries; medicinal plants, herbs and spices and decorative plants. It also fulfils the legal tasks of the federal government, such as the testing of herbicides.

The work of the research station contributes significantly to making agriculture competitive and environmentally friendly, meaning it can provide us with healthy foodstuffs and good fodder for the country's herds.

So when Cécile Brabant tests a new strain of wheat in Changins near Nyon, she inspects everything very closely: is it suitable for our soil and climate, is it resistant to disease, does it produce high yields, is it cheap and straightforward to produce, and finally, does it meet all the quality criteria required by the market.

Cécile Brabant is an expert for wheat breeding for the Federal Office for Agriculture at the Agroscope Changins-Wädenswil ACW research station and is one of around 2400 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: 208	Revenue: 30 526 100.-	Expenditure: 118 077 100.-
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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, finances and logistics, accounting and translation services for the whole department, as well as IT services.

For administrative purposes, the Federal Consumer Affairs Bureau and the Central Office for Civilian Service are also affiliated to the General Secretariat. The *Federal Consumer Affairs Bureau* takes account of the interests of consumers and of the economy as a whole. In order to publicise consumer concerns, it also promotes access to objective information. It is also responsible for implementing the ordinance on the Declaration of Wood and Wood Products. In 1996 civilian service was introduced in Switzerland for young men who object to doing military service on grounds of conscience. The *Central Office for Civilian Service*, which has regional centres in seven locations throughout Switzerland, ensures that there are enough civilian service positions available.

State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

www.seco.admin.ch



Director: Jean-Daniel Gerber	Staff: 445	Revenue: 243 582 500.-	Expenditure: 775 635 100.-
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SECO is the federal administration's central office for all core issues of economic policy. Its stated aim is to promote sustainable economic growth by creating an appropriate regulatory and economic 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 relatively 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: 125	Revenue: 1 952 000.-	Expenditure: 1 242 798 300.-
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Education, research and innovation are essential for the economic, societal and social development of our country. The OPET deals with all three areas: It is the federal government's competence centre for vocational and professional education and training, universities of applied sciences and innovation promotion. In this way, the OPET plays its part by 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 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: Manfred Böttsch	Staff: 939	Revenue: 202 812 400.-	Expenditure: 3 702 958 100.-
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Switzerland has 1 055 684 hectares of farmland, 1 597 484 head of cattle in its pastures and 166 722 people employed in the agricultural sector. Each year, the federal government provides agriculture with financial support of around CHF 3.6 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.

Federal Veterinary Office FVO

www.bvet.admin.ch



Director: Hans Wyss	Staff: 155	Revenue: 4 728 100.-	Expenditure: 64 793 300.-
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A tourist carrying 200 kilos of ape meat is stopped at the airport and another tries to illegally import souvenirs made of tortoise shell. Bluetongue has spread to Switzerland and has triggered the need for a vaccination campaign for cattle, sheep and goats. Animal rights activists are calling for stricter laws governing livestock farming while farmers are opposed to the costs this would involve. The tabloid press calls for 'effective measures against fighting dogs', whilst many dog owners complain that they are being



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harassed by 'dog haters' even though they behave properly. 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 checks at border points 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, for a federal office works for people – and we also work for animals.

Federal Office for National Economic Supply FONES

www.bwl.admin.ch



Delegate:	Staff:	Revenue:	99 100.–
Gisèle Girgis-Musy	31	Expenditure:	7 523 000.–

Switzerland sources virtually 100 per cent of its raw materials, 80 per cent of its energy, around 40 per cent of its food, and a large proportion of its medicinal products from abroad. All kinds of incidents, from technical disturbances to political tensions in the source countries, can disrupt 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 don't go out should a power shortage occur.

Federal Housing Office FHO

www.bwo.admin.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	21 340 000.–
Ernst Hauri	42	Expenditure:	96 156 400.–

At Switzerland's latitude it is impossible to survive without accommodation. Housing is therefore a basic need. However, an apartment is also a capital asset. Each year around CHF 24 billion is invested in housing construction. Living costs are the greatest items of expenditure for households. Tenants pay some CHF 28 billion a year in rent and around CHF 20 billion is paid by house 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 ageing population, changing family and household structures and new lifestyles and forms of work also have an impact on housing. 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:	2 902 900.–

People used to worry about the cost of a cup of coffee. Now it tends to be doctors' or hospital bills, gas and 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 market conditions.

Competition Commission COMCO

www.weko.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	282 000.–
Rafael Corazza	48	Expenditure:	10 630 400.–

Consumer goods in Switzerland are frequently more expensive than abroad, businesses often put pressure on their suppliers and there are regular mergers between companies. Such business transactions can have an adverse effect on consumers and other companies. COMCO monitors these transactions, 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.

Commission for Technology and Innovation CTI

www.kti-cti.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	760 000.–
Klara Sekanina	21	Expenditure:	120 387 000.–

The CTI's core task is to promote scientific innovation. This involves research projects with partners from the business sector and higher education; Entrepreneurship and start-ups; Knowledge and technology transfer between higher education and industry.

Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training SFIVET

www.ehb-schweiz.ch



Director:	Staff:	Revenue:	–
Dalia Schipper	158	Expenditure:	31 520 700.–

The SFIVET is the competence centre for basic and continuing training of VET/PET professionals and conducts research and development in the professional training field. It runs training courses, updating its range of continuing professional development courses each year. The SFIVET helps its partners in vocational education and training to introduce and implement reforms.

Every year more than 700 VET/PET professionals obtain a diploma or certificate, and about 7000 exam experts undertake further training. The SFIVET monitors about 100 new education ordinances and carries out about 30 research projects annually.



Teamwork

The Uri Corporation takes great care of its young woodland on the Haldi near Schattdorf; Erica Zimmermann, a forest engineer with a degree from the ETH Zurich, can form a good impression of its work.

At this on-site visit in early summer, Erica Zimmermann represents the federal administration, area forester Roland Wüthrich is here for canton Uri, whilst forest manager Hubert Gamma (left) demonstrates what is done to make forest re-growth more resistant.

Forest covers about a third of Switzerland's surface area and is of great importance to the economy; the exploitation of this natural resource provides sixteen thousand people with jobs in forestry management and about ten times as many in the wood processing trade.

It provides protection against natural hazards, is the habitat of thousands of plant and animal species, purifies the air and drinking water and provides a place of recreation and relaxation for walkers, joggers, hunters, dog owners, scouts and mushroom gatherers. Because it is such an important place for us humans, the UN has designated 2011 as International Year of Forests.

According to the Constitution, the State "ensures that the forests are able to fulfil their protective, commercial and public amenity functions", but this cannot be done by the State alone. The latter works with the cantons and forest owners in the form of programme agreements. These set out what needs to be done and how much money the state will make available to the cantons to perform these tasks.

Erica Zimmermann works in the Forestry Division of the Federal Office for the Environment, where she is responsible for 14 cantons. She is one of around 2100 federal employees in 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: 76	Revenue: 136 000.-	Expenditure: 69 160 600.-
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DETEC's federal offices are located in Ittigen and Biel. The office directors meet at the General Secretariat (GS) in Bern several times a year as it is not uncommon for several offices to have an interest in ongoing business at the same time. The meeting provides an opportunity to discuss these issues at the highest level.

The GS serves as the staff office for the head of department. It plans and coordinates all departmental activities. In addition, it acts as owner of 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 Investigation Bureau for Railway, Funicular and Boat Accidents, the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau, and the Postal Services Regulation Authority (PostReg) are all affiliated to DETEC.

Federal Office of Transport FOT

www.bav.admin.ch



Director: Peter Füglistaler	Staff: 265	Revenue: 6 503 000.-	Expenditure: 4 747 422 300.-
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In a series of popular votes the Swiss population has repeatedly approved measures to transfer transalpine heavy goods traffic from road to rail. Switzerland completed the first stage of this process with the opening in 2007 of the Lötschberg base tunnel. The tunnel is now fully operational. Together with the Gotthard and Ceneri base tunnels, which are still under construction, it forms part of the New Rail Link through the Alps NRLA. It is the cornerstone of the traffic transfer policy.

The huge NRLA project is coordinated by the Federal Office of Transport. It carries out the tasks set by the Federal Council and parliament, monitors compliance with cost and deadlines and issues the necessary authorisations.

The FOT is the federal office for public transport. Switzerland has a comprehensive and reliable transport network ranging from intercity trains to trams, buses, cable cars and paddle steamers. The FOT makes sure that the network continues to be modernised and is operated safely.

Plans to expand the network are in preparation. Journey times between Geneva and St. Gallen should be reduced by half an hour by 2030. Public transport timetables will be further improved with additional services. Targeted line extensions and more railway hubs will result in even better connections for many public transport users.

Federal Office of Civil Aviation FOCA

www.aviation.admin.ch



Director: Peter Müller	Staff: 260	Revenue: 11 750 100.-	Expenditure: 152 270 600.-
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'Safety first' is the FOCA's overriding principle. The FOCA uses a system of certifications and inspections to ensure the implementation of rigorous safety standards which compare favourably with those of other European countries. In order to further improve air safety, Switzerland operates 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 by the FOCA. This approach places greater emphasis on learning from incidents that compromise safety than on penalising those at fault. The FOCA's system of non-punitive reporting is pioneering: only a few countries in Europe operate this type of system.

Swiss Federal Office of Energy SFOE

www.bfe.admin.ch



Director: Walter Steinmann	Staff: 171	Revenue: 17 035 500.-	Expenditure: 181 043 100.-
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The Federal Council's energy policy concentrates on four main areas: improving energy efficiency, promoting renewable energy sources, replacing existing large-scale power stations and increasing international cooperation. The SFOE has the task of putting these energy policy principles into practice, and draws up appropriate frameworks and measures to achieve this. The aim is to ensure that our country will still have sufficient, affordable, safe and environmentally friendly energy supplies in the future. Some of the necessary measures are set out in action plans on energy efficiency and renewable energies, such as regulations on the energy consumption of household appliances, consumer electronics, light bulbs and electric motors.

Federal Roads Office FEDRO

www.astra.admin.ch



Director: Rudolf Dieterle	Staff: 433	Revenue: 155 107 000.-	Expenditure: 3 123 616 600.-
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The traffic on Swiss roads should flow. FEDRO is mandated by the Federal Council and parliament to solve the following problems: which national road sections need to be extended? Which road sections need to be resurfaced? Which tunnels still need to be brought in line with the latest safety standards?

FEDRO is hard at work on Via sicura, the federal action programme to improve road safety. The aim of the programme is to significantly reduce the number of people killed or injured in road accidents. Only well-trained drivers with safe, environmentally friendly vehicles should be driving on safe roads. This is why FEDRO sets the requirements that drivers of 40-tonne trucks need to fulfil to ensure they transport their cargo safely and as ecologically as possible. FEDRO also modifies technical requirements affecting car design to reduce the risk of injury to pedestrians and cyclists.



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



Director: Martin Dumermuth	Staff: 253	Revenue: 54 479 100.-	Expenditure: 92 911 700.-
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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 infrastructure with ever greater capacity. In order to ensure that everyone in Switzerland can benefit, OFCOM follows all the important steps at the political level. At present, OFCOM, the Communications Commission (ComCom) and the communications industry are examining how households can be connected to the fast glass-fibre network.

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: 405	Revenue: 38 875 000.-	Expenditure: 1 413 457 500.-
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We all want to live safe and healthy lives. We also want to be able to enjoy the beautiful countryside and mountains with their flora and fauna. 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, especially in an Alpine country like Switzerland, where nature itself can 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 occur.

Habitats and ecosystems also provide further benefits. They clean the water, pollinate crops and regulate the climate. Furthermore, they provide us with food, raw materials and other goods. One of the core tasks of the FOEN is to preserve the diversity of life – in a word, biodiversity – over the long term.

By helping to safeguard the sustainable use of water, soils and the air, the FOEN contributes to a healthy economy.

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



Director: Maria Lezzi	Staff: 64	Revenue: 20 100.-	Expenditure: 17 727 400.-
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Globalisation marches on. The countries of Europe are moving closer together. 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 as well as varied and well-preserved countryside and 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. At the same time, the need for housing grows and valuable recreation and productive land is lost. Settlements and transport are not yet optimally attuned. Spatial planning in Switzerland is therefore not quite as sustainable as demanded by the Federal Constitution and the Spatial Planning Act.

Swiss Federal Nuclear Safety Inspectorate ENSI



Director: Ulrich Schmocker	Staff: 127	Revenue: 58 900 000.-	Expenditure: 55 100 000.-
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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. The ENSI took over from the Federal Nuclear Safety Inspectorate HSK, which used to be part of the Federal Office of Energy. This also involved transferring the HSK staff and responsibilities. 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. The 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 are operated safely and there is sufficient protection against radioactivity. The ENSI assesses the safety aspect of applications for alterations to existing nuclear facilities and applications for the construction of new nuclear facilities. It 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



In one of the court rooms of the listed Federal Supreme Court building, Lorenz Meyer has settled in one of the judges' seats. As the President of the Federal Supreme Court he heads the plenary court and the Administrative Commission and represents the courts to the public. In addition, Lorenz Meyer spends about half of his time judging cases before the Federal Supreme Court.

In the interview on the following page he tells us about his work and that of the Federal Supreme Court and the Swiss judicial system.

The Federal Supreme Court has its main seat in Lausanne, in the 'Mon Repos' park, with a second seat in Lucerne. The wide steps which lead up to the temple-like entrance of the court building in Lausanne are well known from press photos

and television images. The sweep of one hundred steps continues inside the building, taking those seeking justice up to the doors of the three court rooms, whose furniture and interior have been left in their original condition from 1927 and are under a preservation order.

We can deal with cases promptly and effectively

Mr Meyer, you are the first Federal Court judge to offer his services as president for a second term. Why is that?

The law has only allowed for the president of the Supreme Court to stand for a second term of office since 2007. This new rule is designed to create a degree of continuity in the leadership of the court. This was one of my reasons for standing for a second term; another was, of course, because I enjoy the job.

You mentioned 2007. That was the year in which the 'justice reform' measures were implemented, which had been approved by the people in 2000. Why was this reform necessary?

The Federal Supreme Court was becoming increasingly overworked; it was having to deal with an ever larger number of more and more complex cases. Even professional legal representatives were finding it difficult to find their way in the jungle of different rights of appeal and procedural regulations and to bring a case successfully before the Supreme Court. The reform was designed to reduce the burden on the Court and to strengthen its role as the highest court in the land. It was also intended to increase legal protection for those seeking justice and streamline and simplify the appeal process.

Were these goals achieved?

The Federal Council is currently investigating this issue in a large-scale study. The findings are not yet available, but the interim results are positive in the main. The Federal Supreme Court and the other federal courts largely share this impression. Take, for example, the simplification of the right of appeal. There used to be

a range of different ways of appealing. If you didn't choose the correct procedure for your particular case, your chances of having your case dealt with by the Supreme Court were doomed from the start. Under the current system you can now only appeal against a ruling to the Federal Supreme Court in the 'single appeal' process or, in some specific cases, with the 'subsidiary constitutional appeal'. This makes the appeal process in the Supreme Court easier.

What is the workload of the Supreme Court like now?

We are now able to deal with cases promptly and effectively. There has been a noticeable improvement, even though it is not as marked as we had originally hoped. We would prefer to have fewer cases, and only the really important ones. Then we would have more time to reach a verdict. To give you an idea of the amount of work we do: 38 Federal Supreme Court judges still handle 7000 cases each year, supported in their work by 130 clerks of court.

The rulings of the Federal Supreme Court are often discussed in the public sphere. Why is that?

The Federal Supreme Court is the highest judicial authority in Switzerland. It examines complaints against final decisions of the cantonal courts, and some Federal Criminal Court and Federal Administrative Court decisions can be taken to the highest court. The decisions of the Federal Supreme Court set a precedent for the lower courts. Controversial decisions may spark off political debate and lead to parliament reformulating legislation or addressing new issues.

Is there a current example of such a case?

In January 2010 the Federal Supreme Court ruled on the fate of the financial assets which had been deposited in Switzerland by the ex-dictator of Haiti, Jean-Claude Duvalier. The Republic of Haiti had requested that Switzerland return the money to Haiti rather than to the Duvalier family, since the money had been acquired by illegal means. The Federal Supreme Court had to reject Haiti's request as the statute of limitations on the ex-dictator's crimes had expired. However, the Federal Supreme Court specified in its ruling that the law was unsatisfactory in such cases. The legislature, that is to say parliament, immediately acted to change the law. The money can now be returned to the people of Haiti.

The Judiciary

The Federal Supreme Court is the highest court in Switzerland. Along with the federal courts of first instance – the Federal Criminal Court, the Federal Administrative Court and, in the future, the 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. The decisions of the Federal Supreme Court and the final decisions of the Federal Criminal Court and Federal Administrative Court can be referred to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

The 38 federal judges and the 19 part-time judges carry out their duties in one of the seven divisions of the court in Lausanne or in Lucerne.

The United Federal Assembly appoints federal court judges according to linguistic, regional and party-political criteria; they serve a term of office of six years. They are assisted in their work by a staff of 250.

The federal court judges

President of the Federal Supreme Court:



Lorenz Meyer
SVP

Vice-President of the Federal Supreme Court:



Gilbert Kolly
CVP

First Public law division



Jean Fonjallaz
SP President



Heinz Aemisegger
CVP



Bertrand Reeb
FDP



Niccolò Raselli
SP



Thomas Merkl
GPS



Ivo Eusebio
CVP

Second Public law division



Andreas Zünd
SP President



Peter Karlen
SVP



Hans Georg Seiler
SVP



Florence Aubry Girardin
GPS



Yves Donzallaz
SVP



Thomas Stadelmann
CVP

First Civil law division



Kathrin Klett
SP President



Bernard Corboz
FDP



Vera Rottenberg Liatowitsch
SP



Gilbert Kolly
CVP



Christina Kiss
FDP

Second Civil law division



Fabienne Hohl
FDP President



Elisabeth Escher
CVP



Lorenz Meyer
SVP



Luca Marazzi
FDP



Nicolas von Werdt
SVP



Christian Herrmann
SVP

Criminal law division



Dominique Favre (until 30.4.2011)
SP President



Roland Max Schneider
SVP



Hans Wiprächtiger
SP



Hans Mathys
SVP



Laura Jacquemoud-Rossari
CVP

First social law division



Rudolf Ursprung
SVP President



Susanne Leuzinger
SP



Jean-Maurice Frésard
SP



Martha Niquille
CVP



Marcel Maillard
CVP

Second social law division



Ulrich Meyer
SP President



Aldo Borella
FDP



Yves Kernen
SVP



Brigitte Pfiffner Rauber
GPS



Lucrezia Glanzmann
FDP

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 decision by a cantonal court of final instance or by the Federal Criminal Court, the Federal Administrative Court or, in the future, the Federal Patent Court has been made. The Federal Supreme Court is the highest court of appeal in Switzerland in 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.) or 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 decisions of the Federal Criminal Court.

Social law

The Federal Supreme Court, in particular the two divisions for social law, 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.admin.ch
www.bger.ch

The Federal Criminal Court is the general criminal court of the Confederation, and has its seat in Bellinzona. It 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, which appoints the judges of the Federal Criminal Court. There are currently seventeen such judges, who enjoy a term of office of six years. Around 40 members of staff assist the judges in their work.

The Court is currently organised into one criminal chamber and two appeals chambers. 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.

First and Second Appeals Chambers

The *First Appeals Chamber* hears appeals against decisions 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 prosecution authorities and/or the federal prosecution authorities.

The *Second Appeals Chamber* rules on matters relating to international mutual assistance in criminal cases. 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

The Federal Administrative Court was set up in 2007 and has its seat in Bern and Zollikofen. In mid-2012 it will be moved to a permanent location 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, by whom the judges are appointed. These have a term of office of six years.

Organisation

The Federal Administrative Court employs 75 judges and a further 320 members of staff.

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.

- The *First Division* is responsible for appeal proceedings in various areas including the environment, transport, energy and taxes.
- The *Second Division* focuses on proceedings relating to education, competition and the economy.
- The *Third Division* deals mainly with proceedings in the field of immigration, social security and health.
- The *Fourth and Fifth Divisions* operate exclusively in the field of asylum law, in particular in relation to questions of refugee status and deportation orders.

In most of these fields, an appeal can be brought before 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
Schwarztorstrasse 59, PO Box, 3000 Bern 14
058 705 26 26
www.bvger.ch

Office of the Attorney General OAG

The Office of the Attorney General OAG is neither part of the legislature, nor of the executive or judiciary. It answers to a supervisory authority which is elected by the United Federal Assembly, as is the Attorney General and his two deputies. As Switzerland's prosecuting authority it is responsible for investigating and prosecuting criminal offences that are directed against or substantially affect the interests of the Swiss Confederation.

One of the key tasks of the OAG is *national security*. 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 also contributes substantially to the fight against cross-border *serious crime*, for example in cases of organised crime and terrorism, money laundering, bribery and corruption, and white-collar crime with major international or intercantonal implications. Investigating these crimes constitutes the bulk of the OAG's work. Such cases are usually exceedingly complex and therefore require specialist knowledge and intensive cooperation with foreign agencies. They are also very costly to conduct and therefore require considerable resources.

The OAG is also responsible for investigating criminal acts against the interests of the *international community*. In peace times it is involved principally in prosecuting acts of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The tasks of the OAG also include responding to mutual assistance applications from foreign prosecuting authorities and promoting international and intercantonal cooperation in fighting crime. Mutual assistance involves interviewing people, conducting house searches and obtaining and making available evidence and assets.

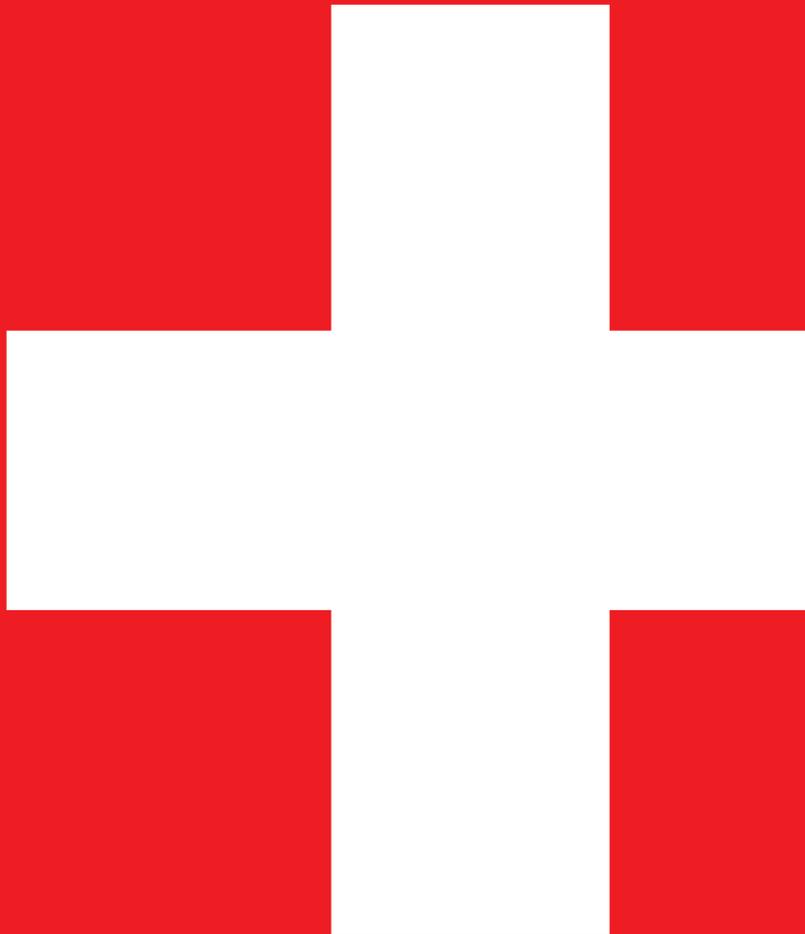
The OAG also has *administrative tasks* in the area of criminal law and criminal procedural law. These include e.g. helping to draw up federal legislation in these areas.

About 150 people are employed at the OAG headquarters in Bern and its branches in Zurich, Lausanne and Lugano.

The Federal Criminal Police and to a lesser extent the cantonal police authorities aid the OAG in its investigations. Cases are brought before the Federal Criminal Court in Bellinzona.

www.bundesanwalt.ch

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www.stelle.admin.ch