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## Comparative Study of Electoral Systems

### Module 2: Macro Report

Version 2002-10-23

Country (Date of Election): *Switzerland (October 19, 2003)*

NOTE TO THE COLLABORATORS: The information provided in this report contributes to an important part of the CSES project- your efforts in providing these data are greatly appreciated! Any supplementary documents that you can provide (i.e. electoral legislation, party manifestos, electoral commission reports, media reports) are also appreciated, and will be made available with this report to the CSES community on the CSES web page.

#### Part I: Data Pertinent to the Election at which the Module was Administered

1. Report the number of portfolios (cabinet posts) held by each party in cabinet, *prior* to the most recent election. (If one party holds all cabinet posts, simply write "all".)

| Name of Political Party | Number of Portfolios |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>FDP</i>              | <i>2</i>             |
| <i>CVP</i>              | <i>2</i>             |
| <i>SP</i>               | <i>2</i>             |
| <i>SVP</i>              | <i>1</i>             |

1a. What was the size of the cabinet before the election?...*7 Minister*.....

2. Report the number of portfolios (cabinet posts) held by each party in cabinet, *after* the most recent election. (If one party holds all cabinet posts, simply write "all").

| Name of Political Party | Number of Portfolios |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>FDP</i>              | <i>2</i>             |
| <i>CVP</i>              | <i>1</i>             |
| <i>SP</i>               | <i>2</i>             |
| <i>SVP</i>              | <i>2</i>             |

2a. What was the size of the cabinet after the election? ...*7 Minister* .....

3. Political Parties (most active during the election in which the module was administered and receiving at least 3% of the vote): Party Name/Label; Year Party Founded; Ideological Family; Int Party Organizational Memberships; (European Parliament Political Group (*NOT applicable*))

- A. FDP/PRD 1894 Liberal Parties
- B. CVP/PDC 1912 (1970) Christian Democratic
- C. SP/PS 1888 Social Democratic
- D. SVP/UDC 1971 (1937) national, conservative and agrarian
- E. GPS/PES 1983 Ecology Parties

3a. Were there any significant parties not represented in parliament *before* the election?  
 NO

3b. Were there any significant parties not represented in parliament *after* the election?  
 NO

3c. Were there any other non-represented parties or independent actors whom you believe to have had a significant effect on the election?  
 NO

4a. Ideological Positions of Parties

Please indicate Parties A-F's positions on a left-right dimension (in the expert judgment of the CSES Collaborator). If this dimension is not appropriate, please provide an explanation of the salient cleavages, and parties' relative positions.

| Party Name     | LEFT                          | RIGHT |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------|
| A. FDP.....    | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 <u>7</u> 8 9 10 |       |
| B. CVP.....    | 0 1 2 3 4 5 <u>6</u> 7 8 9 10 |       |
| C. SP.....     | 0 1 2 <u>3</u> 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |       |
| D. SVP.....    | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 <u>8</u> 9 10 |       |
| E. Gruene..... | 0 1 <u>2</u> 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |       |

4aa. Do you believe there would be general consensus on these placements among informed observers in your country?  
 YES

4b. If you have asked respondents to rank political parties on an alternative dimension, other than the left-right dimension, please also provide your own rankings of the parties on this dimension.  
 Name of dimension: *Opinion on EU-membership (Openness vs Tradition/ Alleingang in foreign policy matters)*

Label for left hand position: *stay out*

Label for right hand position: *Join EU*

| Party Name     | LEFT                          | RIGHT |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------|
| A. ...FDP..... | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 <u>8</u> 9 10 |       |
| B. ...CVP..... | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 <u>7</u> 8 9 10 |       |
| C. ...SP.....  | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 <u>10</u> |       |
| D. ...SVP..... | <u>0</u> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 |       |

E. ...Grünen..... 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4bb. Do you believe there would be general consensus about these placements among informed observers in your country

*I think so.*

*But the position of the moderate right-wings parties (FDP, CVP) is not very clear and tend to change more or less according to polls results: four years ago, the CVP called itself "European party", 2003 it called itself "the swiss party" and the European question is now taboo (not any mention of the EU in the election programm 2003!). Inside the FDP fraction its no consensus about this topic, the official position of the party is to carry on with the bilateral way in the relationship with the European Union (EU membership is also taboo).*

*But the opinion on the European union is among respondents a strong explanans for electoral behaviour: being against EU membership correlate strong with SVP-vote while beeing in favor of an EU Membership correlate either with SP – vote.*

5. In your view, what are the five most salient factors that affected the outcome of the election (e.g. major scandals; economic events; the presence of an independent actor; specific issues)?

Most often discussed issues in the media (salient issues) were:

1. *Social security, pensions (discussions about raising pension age)*
2. *Finances und Taxes (debts, budget deficit and tax reduction program)*
3. *European Integration, EU (this topic was quite present in medias, but most parties avoided the debate on it)*
4. *Issues concerning Immigration- and Integration-policies for foreign inhabitants*
5. *Issues concerning the political system as such were also widely discussed:*
  - *like changes in the composition of the governing composition (end of the magic formula "Zauberformel" after forty year without changes!),*
  - *concern about the increasing polarisation of political life and the weakness of the parties in the middle of the political spectrum ("Krise der Mitte")*

5a. Do you believe there would be general consensus about the importance of these factors among informed observers in your country? *yes*

6. Electoral Alliances:

Sometimes, electoral alliances are made at the constituency level as, for example, in Finland. Documenting who is allied with whom, and how, in each constituency is a large task and we do not expect you to do more than make some general reference to the existence of constituency level alliances. Sometimes, electoral alliances are made at the national level -- these are the alliances that we would like you will identify. Information is sought on who is allied with whom and on the nature of the electoral alliance.

a) Were electoral alliances permitted during the election campaign?

Yes ....., and the following alliances were formed:

Alliance Name Participant Parties (please indicate dominant members '\*')

*Alliances were formed at cantonal level, in **different** combinations (usually between different left-wing parties and between right-wing parties)*

## 7. Party Leaders and Presidential Candidates

In legislative elections, please report the leader of each party.

In presidential elections, list presidential candidates and their parties. If candidates were endorsed by more than one party, please indicate this below.

Party of Candidate Name of Party Leader: (Presidential Candidate: not applicable)

A. FDP Langenberger Christiane

B. CVP Stähelin Philipp

C. SP Brunner Christiane

D. SVP Maurer Ueli

E. Greens Genner Ruth and Mugny Patrice (copresidency)

→ In Switzerland party leaders are NOT candidates for the office of the head of government!

## Part II: Data on Electoral Institutions

If possible, please supplement this section with copies of the electoral law, voters' handbooks, electoral commission reports, and/or any other relevant materials. (*See added documents*)

### A. QUESTIONS ABOUT ELECTORAL DISTRICTS.

**Definitions:** An electoral district is defined as a geographic area within which votes are counted and seats allocated. If a district cannot be partitioned into smaller districts within which votes are counted and seats allocated, it is called primary. If it can be partitioned into primary districts, and during the counting process there is some transfer of votes and/or seats from the primary districts to the larger district, then the larger district is called secondary. If a district can be partitioned into secondary districts (again with some transfer of votes and/or seats), it is called tertiary.

In some electoral systems, there are electoral districts that are geographically nested but not otherwise related for purposes of seat allocation. In Lithuania, for example, there are 71 singlemember districts that operate under a majority runoff system, and also a single nationwide district that operates under proportional representation (the largest remainders method with the Hare quota). Neither votes nor seats from the single-member districts transfer to the nationwide district, however. The two processes are entirely independent (with voters having one vote in each district). In this case, the nationwide district, although it contains the 71 single-member districts, is not considered to be secondary. It is primary. One might say that there are two segments to the electoral system in such cases.

1. How many segments (as just defined) are there in the electoral system?

*1 segment ...X...The National Council (=lower house).*

*Elections for the second chamber, the council of states, take place at the same time, but are ruled by cantonally laws, so we admit here that the swiss electoral system has only one segment . 1999 the Swiss CSES collaborators answered 2 segments which is wrong and also answered the*

*following questions for the council of State. For your information and at request of Bojan Todosijevic I answered those questions about electoral district for the Council of State too but you will find them in annex 2 with some other complementary informations (annex 2-4).*

Please answer the following questions (questions 2 through 11) for each segment of each directly elected house of the legislature:

### ***The National Council (Nationalrat)***

2. How many primary electoral districts are there? 26 (=cantons and half cantons, see annex for details).

3. For each primary electoral district, how many members are elected from each district? ...see 3a..... (If district variation exists, answer 3a)

3a. If districts elect varying number of members, please list the districts, indicating the number of members elected from that district. (Attach separate sheets, as required).

→See separate sheet (Annex 1)

4. How many secondary electoral districts are there? .0....

5. How many tertiary electoral districts are there? ...0.....

### **B. QUESTIONS ABOUT VOTING.**

6. Exactly how are votes cast by voters?

*Voters can cast their ballot in the ballot box or vote by postal vote.*

*(According the law it's newly also allowed to vote by electronic way, but it is not yet everywhere possible). (see BPR Art. 1-9)*

6a. How many votes do they or can they cast? *They have as much votes as the number of seats in their district (between 1 and 34 depends of the cantons)*

6b. Do they vote for candidates, for lists, or for both?

*Both.*

*- Each voter get by mail all official Lists, that's mean all accredited Party Lists with the name of the candidates of his/her district (canton) and one (official) empty List.*

*Voters can choose one of the party lists.*

*- They also have the possibility to create their own list by filling the empty list in with the candidates they want .*

*- They can modify a list (e.g. add candidates from other parties instead of some candidates of the list (panachage), delete candidates, vote twice for a candidate (cummulation).*

*- Voters are not allowed to vote for more candidates than the number of seats in their district. If they vote for less candidates (than district seats), the remaining votes go to the party indicated on the list. In the case no party is indicated the remaining votes are lost.*

*- All candidates belong a party, so that if voters cast a single vote for a candidate, this vote automatically count for that's candidate party list. The amount of seats in the national council is shared between parties proportionally to the results of the ballot. Then within parties the candidates who gets the highest amount of votes get the seats.*

7. Are the votes transferable? *NO*



cast for individual candidates.

**Please repeat questions 2 through 11 of this section for each segment of each directly elected house of the legislature.**

#### D. QUESTIONS ABOUT THE POSSIBILITIES OF ELECTORAL ALLIANCE.

**Definitions:** A joint list refers to one on which candidates of different parties run together. Apparentement refers to a legal agreement between two or more lists to pool their votes for the purposes of an initial seat allocation, with seats initially allocated to the alliance then reallocated to the lists in the alliance.

12) What are the possibilities of alliance in the system?

*For elections in the national council (Nationalrat), list alliances, joint list and apparentements, are allowable (Art. 31, 42 BPR). For the Council of States (Ständerrat) joint lists are allowable.*

12a. Can parties run joint lists? *Yes*

12b. Is there apparentement or linking of lists? *Yes (national council)*

12c. Can candidates run with the endorsement of more than one party? *No (Art. 27 BPR)*

12d. Do parties withdraw their lists or candidates in some constituencies, urging their supporters there to vote for an ally's list or candidate? *No (except sometimes in the second run for the council of the state (majority system!))*

12e. Other? –

13. Are joint lists possible? *YES*

13a. If joint lists are possible, are they subject to different regulations than single-party lists? For example, higher thresholds, different numbers of candidates that may appear on the list, etc. *NO*

14. If apparentement is possible, what lists can participate in such agreements:

lists of the same party in the same constituency? *yes.*

lists of the same party from different constituencies? *no*

lists of different parties in the same constituency? *yes*

#### **Part III: Data on Regime Type**

Below are various questions about the type of regime--presidential, parliamentary, semipresidential--in your country. There are two potential problems with these questions that should

be noted at the outset. First, in some countries there may be a discrepancy between the *de jure* (or legal) situation and the *de facto* (or practical) situation. For example, in Great Britain the Queen still possesses a legal right to veto legislation, but this right has not been exercised since 1707. In the case of such obviously obsolete powers, please answer according to the *de facto* situation. Otherwise, describe the *de jure* situation. A second potential problem is that the questions may not be phrased optimally for the situation in your particular country. In such cases, please answer as best you can, providing some indication of the difficulties as you see them.

**A. QUESTIONS REGARDING THE HEAD OF STATE.**

**Definitions:** The Head of State is typically the highest ranking official in the executive branch of government. Often, this position is held by a president or a monarch, and may be more ceremonial than effective. The Head of Government is usually the highest ranking official in the legislative branch of government. In some systems, this may be someone other than the Head of State (i.e. the prime minister in the Westminster systems), while in other cases, the roles of the Head of State and Head of Government are combined (i.e. in the United States, the president serves as both the Head of State and the Head of Government).

1. Who is the Head of State?

..... President

..... Monarch

..... Prime Minister serves as ceremonial head of state

.....X. Other (please specify) ..*the President of the federal council is both, Head of the State and of the government , the latter as primus inter pares.*

2. How is the head of state selected?

..... Direct election

X.... *Indirect election*

..... Birth right

..... Divine right

X... *Other (Explain) . De facto according to length of service/ seniority*

2a. If by direct election, by what process?

..... Plurality election

..... Run-off or two-ballot system

..... Other (Explain) .....

If by run-off system, how are the candidates selected for the final round?

..... The ..... (#) candidates with the highest vote totals advance to the second round

..... Any candidate with at least .....% of the popular vote advances to the second round

2b. If by indirect election, by what process?

..... Electoral college

..X.. *Selection by the legislature*

..... Other (Explain) .....

If by electoral college, how are electors chosen?.....

.....

Does the electoral college deliberate? ..... Yes ..... No

What is the voting procedure used by the electoral college?

If by the legislature, by which chamber(s) of the legislature? What is the voting procedure used?

3. Does the Head of State have the following powers? [Check all that apply.]

3a. Introduce legislation? *No*

3b. Require expedited action on specific legislation? (i.e., set a deadline by which the legislature is required to act on the bill)? *No*

**Definitions:** A Head of State possesses a partial veto when he or she can target specific clauses of a piece of legislation for veto, while promulgating the rest. In the U.S., such vetoes are sometimes called line item vetoes. A Head of State possesses a package veto when he or she can veto the entire piece of legislation submitted by the legislature, but cannot veto some parts and accept others.

3c. Package veto? *No*

3d. Partial veto? *No*

3e. Issue decrees with the power of law? *No*

3f. Emergency powers? *Yes (Art. 26 Abs 1 and 2 RVOG)*

3g. Negotiate treaties and international agreements? *No*

3h. Commander of the armed forces? *No*

3j. Initiate referenda or plebiscites? *No*

3k. Refer legislation to the judicial branch for review of constitutionality? *No*

3m. Convene special legislative sessions? *No*

## B. QUESTIONS ABOUT THE HEAD OF GOVERNMENT.

**Definitions:** In some countries, the Head of Government is directly elected, in elections that may or may not occur concurrently with legislative elections. In these cases, the Head of Government is said to be elected independently of the legislature. In others, the Head of Government is the leader of the governing party or governing coalition in the legislature, and so, the selection of the Head of Government depends upon the distribution of seats in the legislature. In these cases, the Head of Government is not elected independently of the legislature.

1. Is the Head of Government elected independently of the legislature? *No*

1a. Is the Head of Government also the Head of State?

*Yes and No: Head of government is composed of 7 federal councilors (Bundesräte), each year one of them is elected Head of State.*

1b. If the Head of Government is not elected independently of the legislature, how is the Head of Government selected?

..... Appointed by the head of state alone

*.X .. Appointed by the legislature alone*

..... Nominated by the head of state, and approved by the legislature

..... Nominated by the legislature, and approved by the head of state

..... Other (Explain):

2. What authorities does the Head of Government have over the composition of the cabinet?

[Check all that apply.]

..... Names ministers and assigns portfolios alone

- ..... Nominates ministers for approval by the president
- ..... Reviews and approves ministerial nominations made by the president
- ..... Dismisses ministers and reassigns portfolios at own discretion
- .....X.. *Other (Explain): after being (re)elected by the legislature they decide by consensus and in secret who gets which portfolio. The number of portfolios is fixed (7).*

3. What authorities does the Head of Government have over the policy making process?

[Check all that apply.]

- ..... Chairs cabinet meetings
- ..X... *Determines schedule of issues to be considered by the legislature*
- ..... Determines which alternatives will be voted on by the legislature, and in which order
- ..X.. *Refers legislative proposals to party or legislative committees*
- ..... Calls votes of confidence in government
- ..... Other (Explain):

### C. QUESTIONS REGARDING THE CABINET

1. By what method(s) can the cabinet be dismissed? [Check all that apply.]

- ..... By the head of state **acting** alone
- ..... By the prime minister **acting** alone
- ..... By majority vote of the legislature where a majority of all legislators is required
- ..... By majority vote of the legislature where a majority of those legislators voting is required
- ..... By some combination of the above, acting in concert (Explain)
- ..X... *Other (Explain): Only if the decision over an entire modification of the federal constitution (Totalrevision der Bundesverfassung) is approved in a referendum (Art. 193 Abs. 3 BV), a new Federal Government and a new Legislature will be elected before the usual end of the period of office. There is no other possibility. But its never happened in the Swiss history.*

### D. QUESTIONS REGARDING THE LEGISLATURE

1. Can the legislature be dissolved prior to regularly scheduled elections? *Yes,*

- ..... By the head of state **acting** alone
- ..... By the prime minister **acting** alone
- ..... By majority vote of the legislature
- ..... By some combination of the above, acting in concert (Explain):
- ..X... *Other (Explain): Only if the decision over an entire modification of the federal constitution (Totalrevision der Bundesverfassung) is approved in a referendum (Art. 193 Abs. 3 BV), a new Federal Government and a new Legislature will be elected before the usual end of the period of office. There is no other possibility. Its never happened in the Swiss history.*

2. If the legislature can be dissolved prior to regularly scheduled elections, are there restrictions on when and how the legislature can be dissolved?

[Check all that apply.]

- .....On the timing of dissolution (e.g. not within one year after a legislative election) (Explain)
- .....As a response to action/inaction by the legislature (e.g. only when the legislature has censured the cabinet; only if the legislature fails to pass the budget) (Explain)
- X... *Other (Explain): → see D1*

3. Is there a second chamber of the legislature? *Yes, it is:*

- ..X... *directly elected*

..... indirectly elected through the following process

3a. If there is a second chamber and it is indirectly elected, are those who choose its members:

..... wholly regional and/or local officials?

..... partly regional and/or local officials?

..... not necessarily regional and/or local officials?

3b. If there is a second chamber, does it have specific and exclusive legislative powers (i.e. the power to reject the executive's proposed budget)? *No*

3c. If there is a second chamber, does it have the power to remove the cabinet or censure its ministers? *No*

## E. FEDERALISM

1. Is there a constitutionally guaranteed division of power between the central government and regional and/or local governments? *Yes (see Art. 42-135, 186f BV)*

2. Does the central government have the power to remove elected officials of regional and/or local governments? *No*

## F. REFERENCES

Please list any resources that were consulted in the preparation of this report, or that the CSES community may find especially helpful in understanding the political system described here.

### ***Primary sources (printed version in the file folder)***

*Federal Constitution of Switzerland: Bundesverfassung der Schweizerische Eidgenössenschaft vom 18.4.1999. (BV). Stand 2003.*

*Federal law about the organisation of Government and Administration: Regierungs- und Verwaltungsorganisationsgesetz (RVOG) vom 21.3.1997. Stand 2003.*

*Federal law an ordinances about political rights:*

- *Bundesgesetz über die politischen Rechte (BPR) vom 1976. Stand 2003.*
- *Verordnung von 26.5.1978 über die politischen Rechte.*
- *Verordnung von 3.7.2002 über die Sitzverteilung bei der Gesamterneuerung des Nationalrates.*
- *Verordnung der Bundesversammlung vom 13.12.2002 über das Parteienregister.*

### ***Other relevant primary sources***

*Federal law about the Parliament: Bundesgesetz über den Geschäftsverkehr der Bundesversammlung, die Bekanntmachung und das Inkrafttreten ihrer Erlasses (Geschäftsverkehrsgesetz) vom 23.3.1962. Stand 2003.*

## **References**

- Ulrich Häfelin, Walter Haller (2001). *Schweizerisches Bundesstaatsrecht. Die neue Bundesverfassung*, (5., völlig neu bearb. Aufl.). Zürich: Schulthess.
- Walter Haller, Alfred Kölz (1999). *Allgemeines Staatsrecht*, (2.Aufl.). Basel: Helbing und Lichtenhahn.
- Georg Lutz, Dirk Strohmann (1998). *Wahl- und Abstimmungsrecht in den Kantonen/ Droits politiques dans les cantons*. Bern, Wien, Stuttgart: Haupt.
- Georg Lutz (forthcoming). *Electoral Reform from below: the Introduction of Proportional Representation in Switzerland 1918*. In: Josep M. Colomer (ed.) forthcoming: *the handbook of electoral System design*, London: Macmillan / New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Official homepage of the Swiss administration: <http://www.admin.ch>
- Official homepage of the Swiss parliament: <http://www.parlament.ch>

## **More**

<http://www.swisspolitics.org/en/#>

*The Swiss Confederation, a brief guide, 2004 (see file folder)*

*Nationalratswahlen 2003 (Voter's Handbook) (see file folder)*