Module S1
"Microeconomics & Accounting"

Sociopolitics

II. The Swiss political system (first part)

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Some basics

Source: Walter Studer

Some basics

Fundamental political rights

- Right to vote;

- Right of election;

- Right to be elected.

https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/how-popular-votes-made-switzerland-a-global-democracy-leader/47688106

https://www.ch.ch/en/political-system/political-rights/right-to-vote/

- Right to referendum;

- Right of initiative;

- Right to petition.

Some basics

Elections

- Majority vote:

    - Uninominal;

    - Plurinominal.

- Proportional representation

Some basics

Example: Elections - Majority vote, 2 rounds (5 seats to be filled)

Possibilities:

- complete an official blank ballot;

- insert a printed ballot into the ballot box without changing it;

- amend the printed ballot (by striking out the name of one or more candidates; by adding to a printed ballot the name of one or more candidates appearing on another ballot).

Ballots shall not contain more candidates than there are members to be elected.

➢ 1st round: the ballot papers must not contain more than five candidates (1 name = 1 vote)
Are immediately elected: the candidates having obtained the absolute majority of the votes (50% + 1);

➢ 2nd round: the ballot papers must not contain more names than there are people to be elected (depends on the 1st round)
Elected: Simple majority (the X candidates with the highest scores).

Some basics

Example: Elections - Proportional representation (4 seats to be filled)

	Liste 2: Parti B	Liste 3: Parti C	Liste 4: Parti D
1.1 Alain	2.1 Sandra	3.1 Emmy	4.1 Armelle
1.2 Nathan	2.2 Elodie	3.2 Lorraine	4.2 Robin
1.3 Axelle	2.3 Colin	3.3 Aurélien	4.3 Véronique
3.4 Raphaël	2.4 Claude	3.4 Raphaël	3.3 Aurélien

Remplir un bulletin blanc officiel
Les suffrages accordés aux candidats que vous avez choisis sont attribués à leurs partis respectifs. Les suffrages non attribués sont considérés comme suffrages blancs et ne bénéficient à aucun parti. Si vous avez inscrit en haut du bulletin le nom d'un parti, les suffrages complémentaires lui sont attribués.

Prendre un bulletin imprimé sans le modifier
Chaque candidat de cette liste obtient un suffrage. Le parti concerné obtient autant de suffrages qu'il y a de sièges à pourvoir dans votre district.

Modifier le bulletin imprimé

Biffer
Biffer les noms des candidats figurant sur le bulletin imprimé. Les candidats dont le nom a été biffé n'obtiennent aucune voix. Toutefois, les suffrages correspondant restent acquis au parti C.
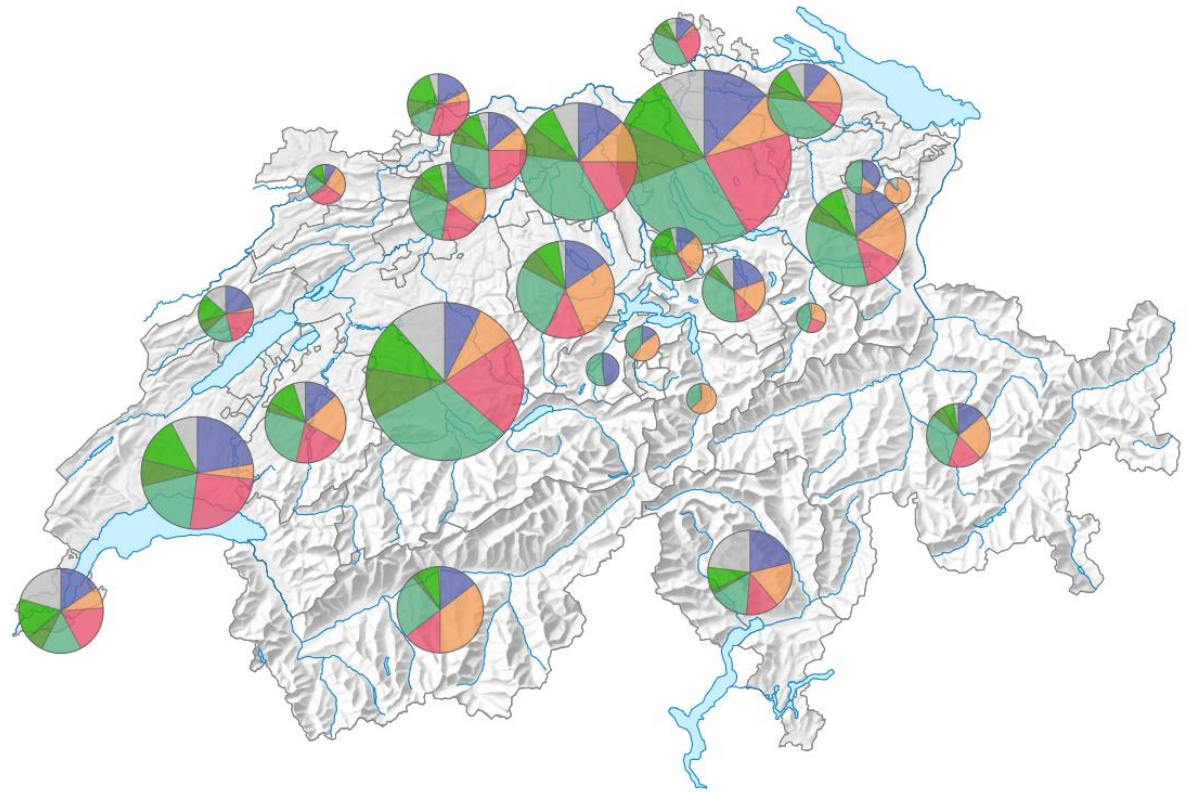
Panacher
Inscrire sur le bulletin imprimé les noms de candidats figurant sur d'autres bulletins. Le parti D perd une voix qui va au parti du candidat ajouté
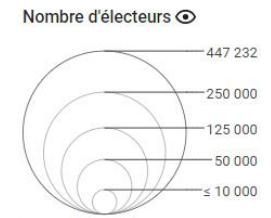
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6y5EvvX4PYg

Some basics

Political parties

- 4 major historical parties: The Liberals (FDP-PLR), The Centre (CVP-PDC), Social Democratic Party (SPS-PSS), Swiss People's Party (SVP-UDC);

- 2 "big recent parties": Green Party (GPS-PES), Green Liberal Party (GLP-PVL);

- Other, smaller or more "local" parties sometimes have representatives in Bern (*Lega dei Ticinesi,* Evangelical People's Party EVP-PEV, Geneva Citizens' Movement MCG, Swiss Party of Labour PdA-PST etc.).

- No absolute majority ➔ consensus democracy

Office fédéral de la statistique
Atlas politique de la Suisse

Elections au Conseil national (chronologiques) / Elections au Conseil national de 2023 / Résultats en 2023 / Survol 2023
Part de suffrages des partis les plus importants, en 2023

DE FR

INFORMATIONS | **LÉGENDE** | COUCHES

Nombre d'électeurs 👁

447 232
250 000
125 000
50 000
≤ 10 000

Total: 2 554 482

Pour des raisons de lisibilité, la taille des symboles ayant une valeur inférieure à ±10 000 a été augmentée.

Parti

- 🟪 PLR*
- 🟧 Le Centre**
- 🟥 PS
- 🟩 UDC
- 🟩 PVL
- 🟩 VERTE-E-S***
- ⬜ Autres

– = sans indication

* En 2009, fusion du PRD avec le parti libéral suisse (PLS) au plan national sous la dénomination de "PLR.Les Libéraux-Radicaux".
Bâle-Ville: 1 mandat PL.

** Le centre. Depuis 2021, fusion du PDC (Parti démocrate-chrétien) et du PBD (Parti bourgeois-démocratique).

***Anciennement PES, jusqu'en mars 2021

Source:
https://www.atlas.bfs.admin.ch/maps/12/fr/14579_14573_14572_242/23149.html

Some basics

Neutrality

- "ne uter" ("neither one nor the other")

- Features

    - Permanent neutrality;

    - Armed neutrality;

    - Prohibition on entering into alliances or participating in sanctions.

- Active neutrality

- Element of inner cohesion

https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/swiss-government-sanctions-u-turn/47388822

Some basics

Neutrality

- Historical reasons (Bonjour, 1978):

    - Guarantee local autonomy (federated states);

    - Avoiding the break-up of the Swiss Confederation;

    - Helped to stabilize Europe (external function of neutrality, recognized at the Congress of Vienna 1815);

    - Geographic location (between the great powers).

- Political closure but economic opening;

- Super-integral neutrality or pragmatic neutrality?

- Good Offices of Switzerland;

- Important marker of Switzerland's image;

- Still relevant? Does neutrality still have a meaning?

Direct democracy

Chappatte (21 May 2013), "Des Conseillers fédéraux qui font campagne ?"

The institutions of Swiss "direct" democracy

- Referendum:

  - Optional;

  - Mandatory.

  https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/direct-democracy_what-s-a-referendum-/41381242?utm_campaign=teaser-in-video&utm_content=o&utm_medium=display&utm_source=swissinfoch

- Popular initiative

  https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/direct-democracy_what-s-a-people-s-or-citizens--initiative-/41229350

➔ Switzerland is not a direct democracy, but it has elements of direct democracy in its political system!

Direct democracy

- Mandatory referendum

    - For the revisions of the Constitution (1848);

    - For federal decrees of general application brought into force as a matter of urgency which derogate from the Constitution (1949);

    - For membership of collective security organizations or supranational communities (1977).

- Optional referendum (50,000 signatures in 100 days)

    - In the matter of laws (1874);

    - For long-term, non-terminable international treaties (1891);

    - For federal government orders of general application brought into force on an emergency basis (1949);

    - For international treaties which provide for accession to an international organization or entail a multilateral unification of law (1977).

- Popular initiative (100'000 signatures in 18 months)

    - For the total revision of the Constitution (1848);

    - For the partial revision of the Constitution (1891).

Direct democracy

Logics and functions (Kriesi, 1996)

- Referendum:

    - Only at the end of the decision-making process;

    - Valve when the people are unhappy;

    - Sword of Damocles of the political system;

    - Transformed the Swiss system into a negotiating democracy (threat of referendum);

    - Influenced the establishment of a concordance system (composition of the Federal Council).

Direct democracy

Logics and functions (Kriesi, 1996)

- Initiative:

    - At the beginning of the process,

    - An impulse

    - Forcing the elites to think about a problem

    - But it implies a decision of all citizens (voting)

    - Not so open (financial resources): authorities still have control over the system (control of the political agenda) and can propose a counter-project

    - Once the initiative has been accepted, it frequently undergoes further changes until it is implemented (example of the Lex Weber)

    - Integrative function

    - But often exhaustion of movements (finances and organization)

Direct democracy

Discussion

- Introduces too much instability (in relation to the framework conditions that the economy requires).

- Opportunity costs have fallen sharply (population is increasing).

- Referendum prevents innovation.

- Are we informed enough to make the right decisions?

- Constitutional Court to control initiatives?