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Parliamentary elections 2019: electoral assistance for citizens

The parliamentary elections are drawing closer: on 20 October 2019, the Swiss people will elect the members of the National Council and the Council of States for the legislative period 2019–2023.

Can Swiss Abroad also vote? What do I need to do to participate in the elections? The answers are to be found alongside other voting information at [ch.ch/en/elections2019](https://www.ch.ch/en/elections2019).

On 20 October 2019, the Swiss people will elect the 200 members of the National Council as well as 45 members of the Council of States. Whether you are a newbie or an old hand, the official platform [ch.ch/en/elections2019](https://www.ch.ch/en/elections2019) provides detailed information and explanations to help you fill out your ballot paper.

All the graphics, illustrations, interactive cards and explanatory videos at [ch.ch/en/elections2019](https://www.ch.ch/en/elections2019) take the guesswork out of voting. Terms such

as accumulating, splitting the vote, deleting a name and blank ballot paper are not only explained in the texts but also in the films and the election glossary.

The portal has dedicated a separate section to the Swiss Abroad, which makes it even easier for the “Fifth Switzerland” to access the necessary information to exercise their voting rights.

The official explanations of the Federal Chancellery that are available on the portal [ch.ch/en/elections2019](https://www.ch.ch/en/elections2019) supplement the information from the public authorities that voters receive together with their voting papers. The lists of all the can-

didates who are standing for the Federal Assembly will be published several weeks before the elections.

All the results of the federal elections plus the information on the strengths of the parties and voter turnout will be published on 20 October 2019 at [ch.ch/en/elections2019](https://www.ch.ch/en/elections2019). The voting results will also be posted on the [ch.ch](https://www.ch.ch/en/elections2019) twitter account.

The portal is available in five languages: German, French, Italian, Romansh and English. All the explanatory videos are also available in sign language, which allows deaf and hearing-impaired people to follow the election explanations. The content is also adapted to the needs of blind and visually impaired people. [ch.ch/en/elections2019](https://www.ch.ch/en/elections2019) is an official website of the Federal Chancellery, and was jointly created together with the cantons and the Federal Office for Statistics.

<https://www.ch.ch/en/elections2019/>

What do I need to do after Brexit?

What does Brexit mean for me if I'm already living and working in the United Kingdom (UK)? What do I need to do if I want to live and work there after Brexit? What entry requirements will apply after Brexit? – The new publication “Swiss citizens in the UK after Brexit”, available in German, French and Italian, answers these questions. The publication issued by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) combines the existing information on the topic of Brexit and migration in one place. The main sources used are the websites of the Swiss Embassy in London, the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) and the relevant pages of the UK Home Office.



Short link to the Brexit publication: ogd.de/flyer-brexit

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Travel advice

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www.twitter.com/travel_edadfae

itineris

Online registration for Swiss citizens travelling abroad
www.fdfa.admin.ch/itineris



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Federal votes

The Federal Council determines voting proposals at least four months before the voting date. National Council elections take place on 20 October 2019.

For information about the National Council elections, visit www.ch.ch/en/elections2019. Everything you need to know about voting proposals (voting pamphlets, committees, recommendations by Parliament and the Federal Council, electronic voting, etc.) is available at www.admin.ch/votes or via the Federal Chancellery's VoteInfo app.

The Federal Council has decided not to hold a federal popular vote on 24 November 2019. The next voting date is 9 February 2020.

Popular initiatives

The following federal popular initiatives have already been launched at the time of going to press (deadline for the collection of signatures in brackets):

- 'For a pensions system that respects all generations (Yes to pensions – but make the system fair)' (02.10.2020)
- 'Yes to ending seasonal time changes' (09.10.2020)
- 'For a healthy climate (Glacier Initiative)' (30.10.2020)

The list of pending popular initiatives is available in German at www.bk.admin.ch > Politische Rechte > Volksinitiativen > Hängige Volksinitiativen



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THE SWISS ABROAD ON INSTAGRAM



'No worries' for Swiss family in New Zealand

Even though she'd never been there before, Eva Hefti took the chance and moved with her family to New Zealand. It's the pleasant climate the 39-year-old from Bern loves most about New Zealand.

My job: I don't have a paid job, I spend most of my time with our children. However, together with some of my friends, I am still working on our online family magazine Kleinstadt.ch which helps me find a good balance.

My New Zealand: Our everyday life is not that different from in Switzerland, apart from the fact that my husband's working hours are much shorter. This enables us to spend more time together and go to the beach or venture out into the outdoors. We really like the vastness and the empty beautiful beaches as well as the pleasant climate. The mentality of the people is generally more relaxed than in Switzerland. 'No worries' is a typical Kiwi saying.

My Switzerland: We are planning to stay here for about two years and then go back to Switzerland. The low population density, the lack of public transport and the remoteness are probably the biggest differences to Switzerland. I have realized that the Swiss are often too perfectionist and that some things could also be done with less effort.

My heart: Although I speak English fluently, I have noticed that especially deep and meaningful conversations are not as easy for me as in my mother tongue, which I find sometimes inhibiting. And even though we have made friends, it's somewhat different to spend time with people who have only known you for a short period of time.

The original interview was published on swissinfo.ch, the online service of the Swiss Broadcasting Company, which is available in ten languages. Do you live abroad too? Then tag your Instagram photos [#WeAreSwissAbroad](https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/weareswissabroad/).