



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

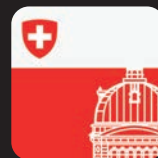
Federal Chancellery FCh

The Swiss Confederation a brief guide 2023

**didactic materials
for the publication**



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CH info

Preface

How does Switzerland with its institutions work? The free brochure '*The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023*' gives clear and descriptive information.

The didactic material guides you through the most important parts of the brochure and you as the reader have to comment and describe illustrations, texts and graphs.

Based on these 'transfers', content is more efficiently conveyed compared to reading alone, hence the learning effect is significantly increased. I wish you – despite the complexity of the content – great fun while working through the didactic materials.

Bernhard Scheidegger, Rüegsauschachen, February 2023

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Material needed:



The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023

Brochure of the Federal Chancellery,
including an overview of the political institutions of the Swiss Confederation.

Can be obtained free of charge at:
www.bundespublikationen.admin.ch
Search term: *Swiss Confederation a brief guide 2023*



The brochure '*The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023*' is available as an **app** for your tablet or smartphone. Download it in five languages (iOS/Android): '**CH info**'



Internet: **ch.ch**

Official website of the Confederation, cantons and communes with a lot of additional information. The website has a handy search function for terms you need to look up.


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Imprint

hep Verlag | Bernhard Scheidegger, on behalf of Swiss Federal Chancellery | **The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023: didactic material** | Illustrations: Andreas Busslinger (p. 5), Carolina Piasecki (p. 12 and 18), Monika Flückiger (p. 19), Schweizerische Bundeskanzlei (p. 25), Yokisho Kusano (p. 32). | 14th edition 2023 | all rights reserved © 2023 hep Verlag AG, Bern | Gutenbergstrasse 31 | CH-3001 Bern | hep-verlag.ch

Didactic Material ‘The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide’ – Method of Work

This didactic material will guide you through the publication ‘*The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023*’. You work in a self-organised manner – only in case of an ultimate lack of clarity, ask the teacher for help. There is a high probability that you will encounter unknown terms or terms you have already heard but you are not able to clearly define. It is of great importance that you not only translate the term with the help of the glossary but read a definition in an online encyclopaedia (www.ch.ch/en) to understand the entire meaning of the term. The symbol  means you should look up the respective term.

Upon finishing a unit, complete the respective lines in your work pass. Only then, discuss your results with the teacher.

Learning pace and mode of work You work at your own pace according to your capability. Always read all the texts in the brochure ‘*The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023*’ or the definitions on terms in the Internet, which are indicated in the unit of the didactic material.

Help In case you cannot progress you may find the key to success on preliminary pages, or use the brochure or the Internet. Only ask the teacher for help if you are unable to solve the problem yourself.

Workpass Here, you note down how well you have performed in the respective tasks, where you have encountered problems and what experiences you have made while working in a self-organised manner.

Self-assessment per unit Do not use *any* help or material to work through these self-assessments.

Workspace and attitude You may work in the classroom or in another appropriate (quiet) room.

Unit 1

FACTS – Switzerland

Learning objectives

- You know key figures about the Swiss population and you practice reading graphs and figures.
- You gain a brief historical overview about the origin of the Swiss Confederation.
- You know about the federal composition of Switzerland with its political levels of the Swiss Confederation, the cantons, the communes and are knowledgeable about which duties and competences they have.



A) Switzerland in figures

Learning objective

- You know key figures about the Swiss population and finances and you practice reading graphs and figures.

Material: *The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023*, pages 8–9

Task Complete the cloze with the help of the figures on pages 8 and 9 (___ = 1 letter).

Figures Switzerland is home to around ___ . ___ million people, of whom around 2.2 million, or about ___ percent, are foreign nationals. Of these, more than half were born in Switzerland or have lived here for at least ___ years. The largest group of foreigners comes from _____ followed by people from _____ and Portugal.

Switzerland has _____ national languages. Almost two thirds of all people living in Switzerland have _____ as their mother tongue, almost one quarter speak _____, 8 percent speak Italian, and only one in two hundred has _____ as their main language.

Italian as a mother tongue is not only spoken in Ticino, but also in areas of the canton of _____. 25 percent of the people living in Switzerland speak another main language.

The proportion of people in Switzerland who claim affiliation to Christianity has fallen sharply in recent years. In 1970, 96 percent of the population were still Catholic or Protestant. Today, Christianity still accounts for about 60 percent of the population, with the majority of 35 percent being _____. About every fourth person living in Switzerland is not a member of any _____.

On average, women in Switzerland get ___ years older than men. The life expectancy has _____ over the past seventy years. The population group of the over 64s has grown compared to 1959, that of the young has strongly _____.

B) The history of Switzerland

Learning objective

- You gain a brief historical overview about the origin of the Swiss Confederation.

Material: *The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023*, pages 10–11

Task Complete the cloze with the help of the figures on pages 10 and 11 (___ = 1 letter).

A brief historical overview

In ____, the original forest cantons of Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden entered into the first documented alliance, with which the 'official' history of the Confederation began. In the following centuries, the Confederation continuously grew through _____ and territorial _____.

In 1798, Napoleonic troops invaded the Confederation, conquered and occupied the territory. The _____, ruled by Paris, was installed. The cantons lost their independence within this centralised state. With the Act of Mediation of 1803, _____ restored some _____ for the cantons and set up the cantonal _____.

After the defeat of Napoleon, the wheel of time ran backwards. With the Federal Treaty _____, the Helvetic Republic develops into a _____. _____, the cantons are reempowered to independently decide about almost everything. The Swiss _____ was recognised by the great European powers.

In 1847, the diverging views between the liberal and the Catholic conservative cantons led to the _____.

It was a war from which liberal forces emerged victorious. Hence the foundation for a Swiss Democratic Federal State was given.

With the acceptance of the Federal Constitution in _____, the modern Switzerland with its institutions, as we know them today, arose. Military, tolls, coins and the postal service were _____ and transferred to the federal government, known as the Swiss Confederation.

Switzerland receives a _____ with a National Council and a Council of States. The right to vote and be elected is introduced, but only for _____. In 1874 the constitution is completely revised for the first time. The Confederation is given more tasks and the _____ is introduced. In the first half of the last century, the composition of the Federal Council gradually adapts to the changed electoral behaviour of the Swiss in the first half of the last century. Until 1918 only Free Democrats (today FDP. The Liberals) are represented in the Federal Council. In _____, two Catholic Conservatives are elected, in 1929 a member of today's _____ and in 1943 the first Social Democrat.

In 1959, the four main political parties decided to form the Federal Council according to the number of votes they had received: 2 FDP, 2 Mitte / CVP, 2 SP and 1 SVP. The "_____ " was born and remained in place until 2003.

The women's suffrage was implemented at Federal level in _____. In 2000, Switzerland gives itself the ____ Federal Constitution and 2002, Switzerland joined the _____ (_____) after a vote.

C) Federalism

Learning objective

- You know about the federal composition of Switzerland with its political levels of the Swiss Confederation, the cantons, the communes and are knowledgeable about which duties and competences they have.

Material: *The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023*, pages 12–13, **Website** [ch.ch](https://www.ch.ch)

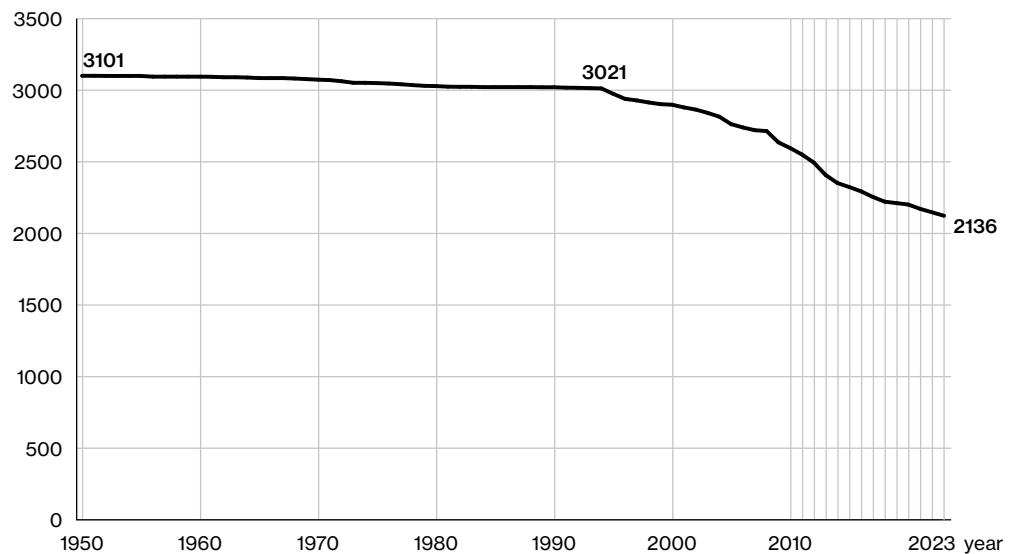
- Task** 1. The text uses the terms 'federal' and 'federalism'. What do they mean? Look up these two terms.

federal ➤  federalism:

2. On 1 January 2023, Switzerland had 2136 communes. These communes have merged with other communes.

Development of the number of communes in Switzerland

number of communes



Describe how the number of communes has developed since 1950.

3. Read the three texts about communes, cantons and the Confederation on pages 12–13, and summarise them with complete sentences in your own words.

Confederation:

Cantons:

Communes:

4. The smaller communes do not have their own parliament. The communes' voters assemble several times a year to vote and to discuss communal policies. In that manner, this is a traditional direct democratic way to deal with those issues. What is the correct term for these assemblies, often taking place in school auditoriums or multi-purpose halls?

5. Is it true that communes levy taxes alongside the Confederation and the cantons?

6. Assign the fields of responsibility to their respective level within the federal state.

	Federal roads	Police	National defense	Fire brigade	Local planning	Nuclear energy
Confederation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Canton	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commune	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Task



Short link:

[bit.ly/
Foederalismus](https://bit.ly/Foederalismus)

7. Watch the film “Föderalismus” from 1:42 and then complete the cloze. (Video duration: 4 min. 42 sec.)

Federalism means that all three levels of the state, the Federal government, the cantons and _____, have their own political competences. The communes act independently until they can no longer fulfil certain tasks. These tasks are taken care of by the _____. The Confederation only takes over those tasks that the cantons cannot perform themselves. At all three levels, citizens can have a say in politics through votes and _____. In the case of major projects such as the construction of new railway lines or motorways, compromises are needed so that as many _____ as possible benefit from them. Federalism promotes _____. Innovative cantons can implement ideas and projects that serve as models for the other cantons. To support economically weaker cantons, they receive _____ from the financially stronger cantons thanks to a system of _____ equalisation. The division of tasks between the Federal government, the cantons and the communes is constantly _____ to new circumstances.

D) International Agreements and Memberships

Learning objective

- You know the most important memberships of Switzerland and the cooperation with the EU.

Material: *The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023*, pages 14 – 15

- Task** With the help of the texts, you solve the double puzzles. To help you, all the letters of the term you are looking for are mixed up as placeholders. What is the solution?

Switzerland, which is (1) **TNO** a member of the European Union (EU), maintains close relations with the EU. Generally known are the (2) **BIALTLERA** (two-sided, Swiss-EU) agreements. In 2000, the Swiss electorate voted in favour of the Bilateral Agreements I. These are about (3) **ECOONMIC** cooperation and rules between the EU and Switzerland. Should one of these (4) **XSI** agreements be terminated by Switzerland or the EU, all the other agreements automatically cease to apply. Therefore, one also speaks of the (5) **GILLIUTONE** clause. The Bilateral Agreements II comprise a further 9 agreements, but also political such as coordination in the field of (6) **ALYMSU** procedure. Free trade between Switzerland, The Principality of Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway is promoted by (7) **TFAE**. The (8) **CUCNOLI FO EUPORE**, of which Switzerland has been a member since 1963, is primarily concerned with the protection of (9) **HMUAN RGISHT**. Like all other countries in the world, Switzerland is a member of the United Nations (10) **ONU**. It has its headquarters in (11) **ENW OYKR**. In a referendum in 2002, the Swiss electorate voted in favour of membership. In (12) **GNVAEE**, where many international organisations have their headquarters, the UNO has one of two European headquarters. Switzerland is not a member of (13) **NOAT**, as this is a military defence alliance and Switzerland is (14) **NETRALU**. However, it does participate in the Partnership for (15) **PAEEC**. The WTO promotes and regulates (16) **WLROD TADRE**. Switzerland is one of its (17) **FNOUNDIG MERSBME**. Peacebuilding and mediation in conflicts is not only a matter for the UNO. The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, (18) **SOCE**, is also active here. Contrary to what its name suggests, not only states from Europe are members, but also from North America (USA, Canada) and from (19) **AASI**.

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Unit 2

FOUNDATION – Direct Democracy

Learning objectives

- You study the organs of Switzerland, are knowledgeable about how and by whom they are elected and about which functions and duties they have.
- You know the term 'separation of powers' and its meaning.
- You study the democratic rights at federal level.
- You understand what a party is, know its duties and functions, and you know the four strongest Swiss parties.
- You know the political spectrum from left to right-wing and its significance.



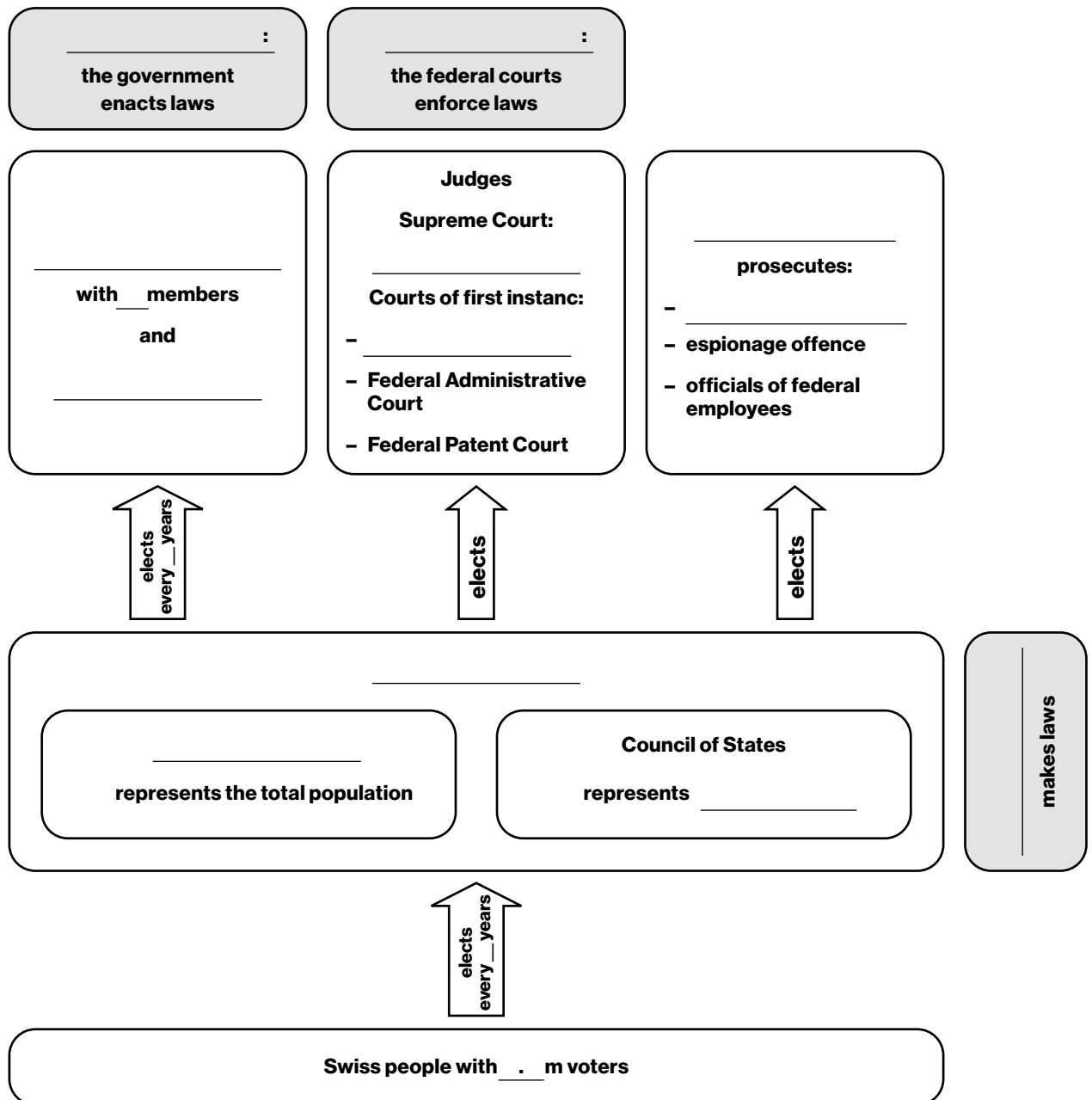
A) Separation of powers and elections

Learning objectives

- You study the organs of Switzerland, are knowledgeable about how and by whom they are elected and about which functions and duties they have.
- You know the term 'separation of powers' and its meaning.

Material: *The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023*, pages 18–21;

Tasks 1. Complete the diagram below.



- The political power in Switzerland is divided into the three branches of state, the L_____, the E_____ and the Judiciary.
- No single person can belong to more than one of the three branches of state at _____ time. For example, if a member of the National Council is elected as Attorney General of Switzerland or as a federal councillor, he or she has to with _____ from his or her position as National Council mandate.

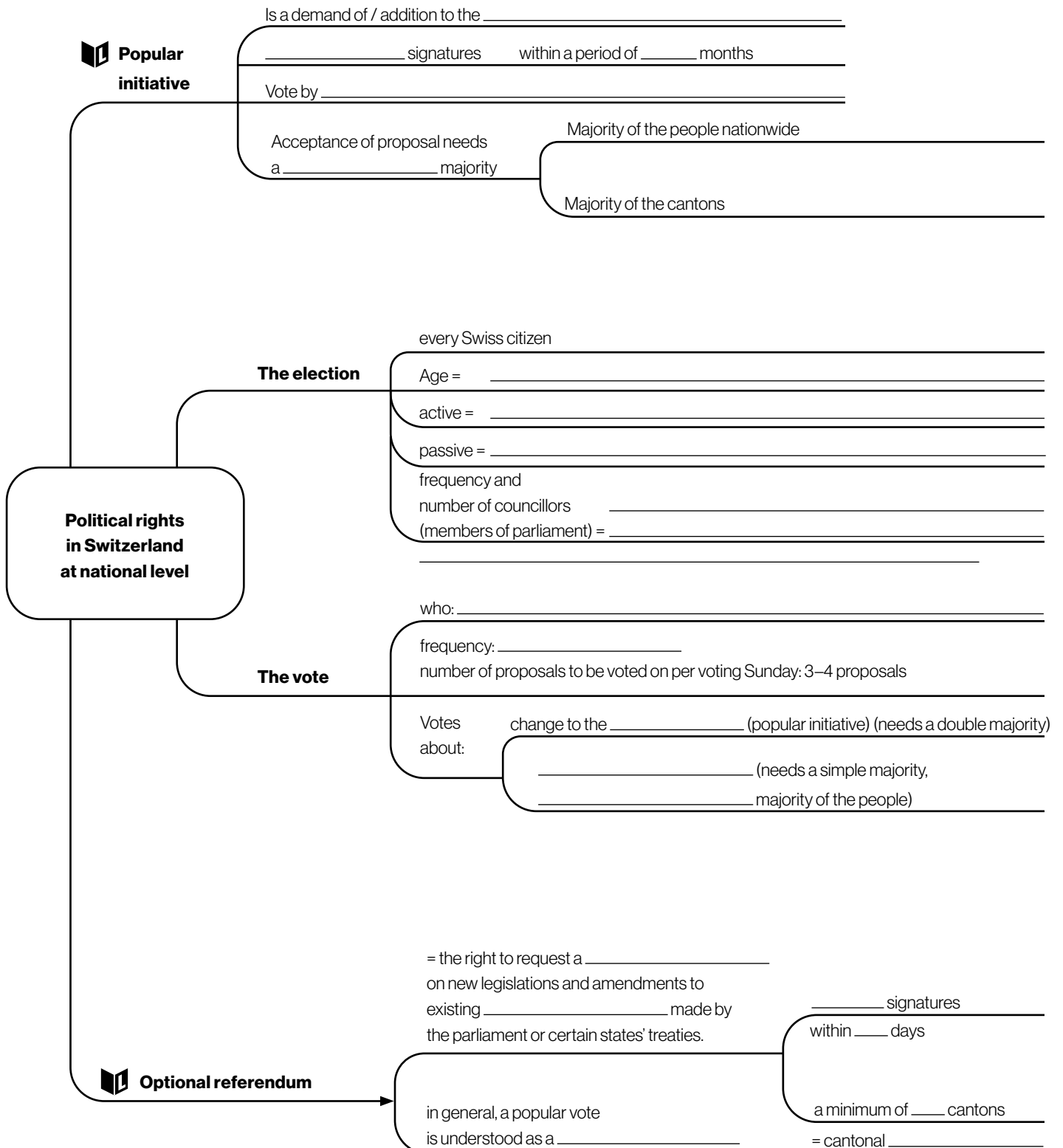
B) Political rights – elect and vote

Learning objective

- You study the democratic rights at federal level.

Material: *The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023*, pages 22–24, [Website ch.ch](http://Website.ch.ch)

Task Complete the mind map using the information about direct democratic instruments on pages 22–24. If you need more information, go to www.parlament.ch/en for further research.



C) Parties in Federal Council and Parliament

Learning objectives

- You understand what a party is, know its duties and functions, and know the four strongest Swiss parties.
- You know the political spectrum from left to right-wing and its significance.

Material: *The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023*, pages 25–27, **Website** [ch.ch](https://www.ch.ch)

Task 1. What is a party? Describe using the text on page 25.

2. Which parties are represented in the Federal Council with how many seats?

3. Which two parties gained the most seats in the National Council elections of 2019?

4. Which party has the most National Councillors, which has the most Councillors of States, and how many are there?

5. a) The brochure 'The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide' is explained what political «left» means and what political «right» means. Match the parties to the correct orientation. Where are SVP, SP and The Centre situated?

SVP: _____

SP: _____

The Centre: _____

b) What are the concerns of the right-wing parties and of the left-wing ones? Name 3 each.

Left-wing: _____

Right-wing: _____

6. What percentage of voters within the United Federal Assembly do the four parties of the Federal Council SVP, SP, FDP and The Centre hold?

7. How many parties are represented in the National Council and how many in the Council of States

Self-assessment for units 1 and 2

Direct democracy at cantonal level, where citizens discuss proposals and afterwards vote by raising their hand to show their approval or to reject it, only exists in the rural municipalities of Appenzell Innerrhoden and Glarus. Every other canton has a parliament, which is elected by its people. If the citizens' approval is demanded, it is evaluated by votes. Nevertheless, the form of direct democratic decision-making is still widely used at communal level in about 80 percent of communes.

1. What is the name of the institution of direct democratic decision-making at communal level?

2. Switzerland is divided into three federal political levels. What are they called?

3. What are the three terms regarding the 'separation of powers' translated from Latin, and what are their meanings?

4. Explain the meaning of the term 'separation of powers'?

5. Note down the right term and authority next to the democratic bodies:

National Council	legislature	legislative authority
Federal Supreme Court		
Council of States		
Federal Council		

6. How often are the National Council and the Council of States elected?

7. How many valid signatures are needed for an optional referendum, and which deadline has to be met?

8. Is it true that every canton has its own constitution?

9. What is an active and a passive right to vote?

active:

passive:

10. Switzerland is a F_____ state, in which the cantons and communes have a high level of sovereignty. It consists of ____ cantons, and its current form as federal state originated in _____, when the cantons gave part of their independence (= _____) to the Confederation, for example military, t _____, coins or foreign affairs.

11. What does the term 'double majority' refer to?

12. Sixty-three percent of the seats in the National Council and the Council of States are taken by members of political parties. Those are also the parties represented in the Federal Council. Which are the four strongest parties in Switzerland?

13. What is wrong? Correct the false parts of the sentence.

With the launch of a popular initiative, it is possible to change the Constitution. If you can raise 100 000 signatures within 18 months, the Constitution will be changed by the Federal Council.

14. Tick the box if the popular initiative is accepted or rejected. The six half cantons have only half a cantonal vote.

	Total votes of the People		Results in the cantons		Accepted	Rejected
	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Var. A	1.4 m	1.1 m	11.5	11.5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Var. B	1.5 m	1.1 m	19.5	3.5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Var. C	1.1 m	1.2 m	13	10	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Var. D	1.28 m	1.29 m	8.5	14.5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. Name two direct democratic instruments the citizens can influence politics with.

a. _____

b. _____

► Complete the learning journal and have the unit verified.

Unit 3

LEGISLATUR – The Parliament

Learning objectives

- You know the Swiss parliament and are knowledgeable according to what criteria the seats are allocated.
- You know the terms 'committee' and 'parliamentary group' and what their functions are within the parliamentary mechanisms.
- You know the composition of the National Council and the Council of States and are knowledgeable about when both chambers unite for the United Federal Assembly.
- You know the mechanisms of the National Council and the Council of States, their parliamentary instruments to raise issues and how new laws come about.



A) The Roles of Parliament

Learning objective

- You will learn some facts about the Swiss Parliament.

Material: *The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023*, pages 30–33

- Tasks** With the help of the texts, you solve the double puzzles. To help you, all the letters of the term you are looking for are mixed up as placeholders. What is the solution?
- The age distribution in Parliament does not correspond to the proportion of the population. For example, the age group of 50–59 years is strongly overrepresented in parliament, while the group of 18–29-year-olds and those over 70 are massively (1) **unseedeeernptrrd**.
- The male/female ratio is also unequal. (2) **Wemon** are less represented in (3) **pmlaaniret** than men.
- Since 1972, the proportion of women in the National Council and the Council of States has (4) **isrceeand** but is still far from 50%.
- The Federal Constitution does not speak of Swiss parliament, but of the «Federal (5) **Asb-selmy**».
- In addition to determining the budget and electing the Federal authorities, one of the most important tasks of parliament is (6) **Itisoiglean**.
- Federal acts formulate in detail the provisions of the (7) **Cnoitiotustn**. For example, Art. 8 para. 3 of the Federal Constitution states: «Men and women shall have equal rights. The law shall provide for their equality in law and in fact...». The Equality Act describes this in 18 articles.
- Parliament can draft amendments to the Constitution. For these to come into force, however, they must be submitted to a vote of the (8) **Ppolee** and the Cantons. Only if the (9) **mrjaioty** of the voters and the majority of the cantons agree, the constitution is amended.
- The Federal Budget, i.e. how much and on what the (10) **Conroidetefan** spends money, is under the sovereignty of parliament.

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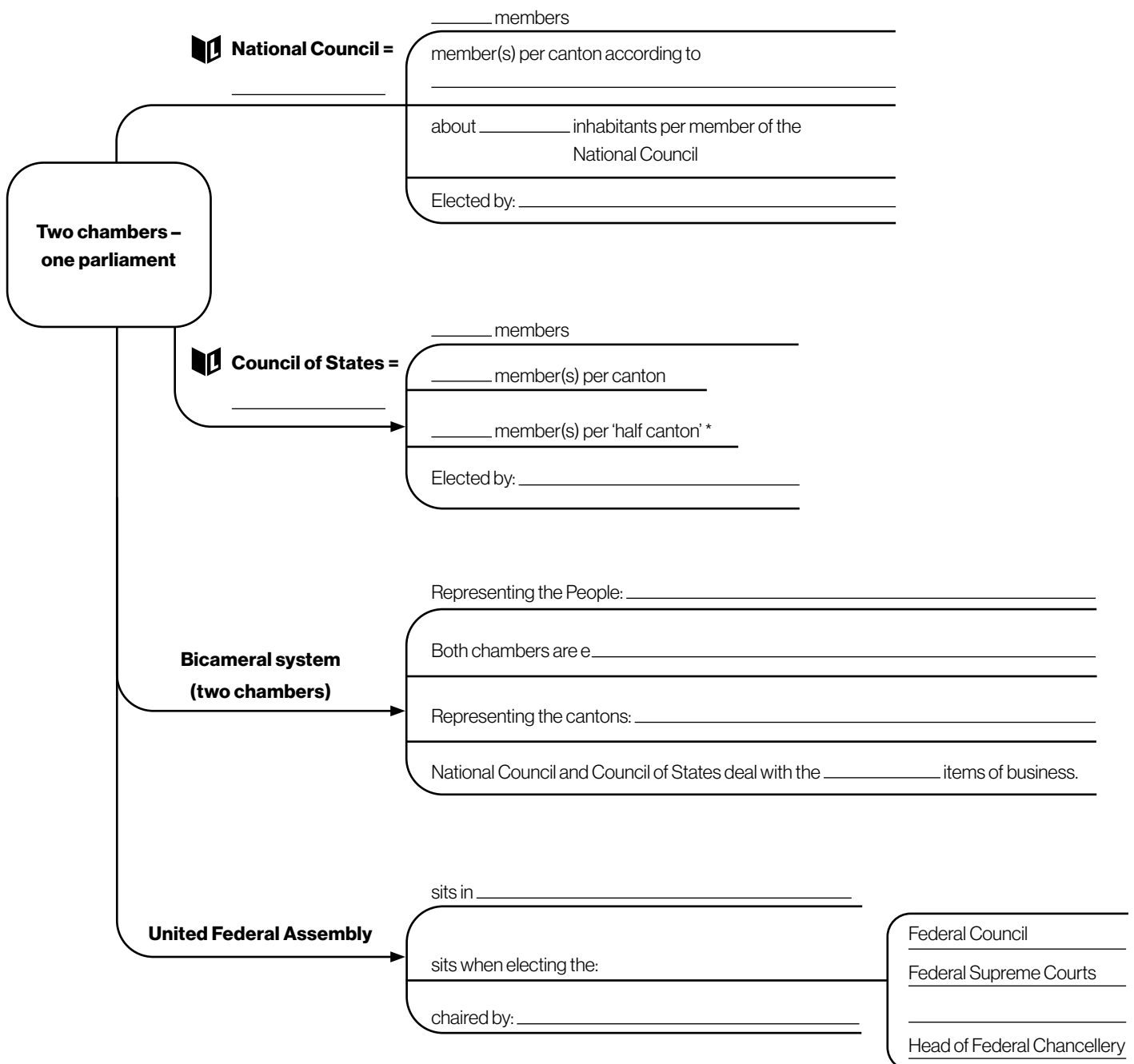
B) Organisation of the parliament

Learning objective

- You know the Swiss parliament and are knowledgeable about how it is elected and according to what criteria the seats are allocated.

Material: *The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023*, pages 34 – 35, [Website ch.ch](https://www.ch.ch/en/Website)

Task Read the two pages in the brochure thoroughly and look up the terms. Then complete the mindmap according to the text.



* 'half canton' is an unofficial term, yet used regularly in everyday language. With the new constitution of 1999, the term 'canton' is the official term for all of the 26 cantons in the country. However, the six previous 'half cantons' still have the limitation of half the number of seats in the Council of States and half the suffrage when it comes to votes on parliamentary initiatives.

Task



Short link:

goo.gl/GWHEPb

Watch the clip "Tell me about Parliament" and then solve the cloze. (_ = 1 letter)

Short link: **goo.gl/GWHEPb** (duration 4 minutes)

The Swiss Parliament, also called the Federal Assembly, is the s_____ legislative authority. Parliament is one of the _____ authorities, in addition to the _____ and the _____. The parliament enacts _____, the Federal Council executes them. The purpose of this division is that nobody becomes too p_____.

National Council and Council of States must be of the same opinion to make decisions.

The Council of States consists of ____ seats. The National Council has ____ members. If it is not a session, the national and state councils participate in committee meetings or work in their _____.

The sessions of the parliament are _____. Anyone who wants can follow the debate from the tribune in the National Council or Council Chamber. It is also possible to follow them live on the W_____.

How is a law enacted?

A legislative proposal can be initiated by the _____, the _____, Cantons or by a _____.

Each draft bill is prepared by the responsible _____ and then discussed in both chambers (National Council and Council of States). Only if b_____ councils agree to the bill can it be enacted. For differences, the law goes back to the other chamber. A maximum of _____ times a bill can go back and forth. If the two chambers still do not agree after that, a re_____ conference will help to find a solution. If the two chambers fail to reach an agreement, the discussed law is rejected.

The Swiss Parliament e_____ and c_____ the members of the Federal Council and the Federal Supreme Court.

C) Parties and parliamentary groups

Learning objective

- You know which parties are represented in parliament and why they form parliamentary groups.

Material: *The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023*, pages 36 – 37

- Tasks**
1. Which parties have a strength of more than 10% in the Swiss parliament?

 2. How many parties are there in the Swiss parliament and how many parliamentary groups have they formed?

 3. What is a parliamentary group and what is the minimum number of members of parliament needed to form one?

 4. The three National Councillors of the EVP have joined the parliamentary group «The Centre». What could be the reasons for this?

 5. What is the advantage of having the three EVP National Councillors in the Centre parliamentary group?

D) Committees and Delegations – Parliamentary Instruments

Learning objective

- You know the mechanisms of the National Council and the Council of States, their parliamentary instruments to raise issues and how new laws come about.

Material: *The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023*, pages 38–39

Tasks Read the two pages in the brochure and then solve the assignments.

1. Is it true that in 2022 the members of the National Council and the Council of States submitted around 11 proposals per member of the Council?

2. What tasks do the committees of the National Council and the Council of States have?

3. How many specialist committees are there and what topics are they responsible for? Give the correct number and list some of the most important ones.

4. Complete the cloze:

The members of the National Council and the Council of States have various instruments to work with, so-called p_____, with which they are capable of initiating new legislation, for example.

With a parliamentary initiative, a council member proposes that Parliament itself enacts a law.

Using a motion, members of the National Council and the Council of States can prompt the F_____ C_____ into drafting legislation. With a postulate, the Federal Council is asked to e_____ whether a new law or decree should be drafted or measures taken. The i_____ is a request to the Federal Council to provide information on significant domestic or international affairs.

5. Watch the film «Zimmer 286» and then complete the cloze. (Video duration: 14 min.)

A crucial part of parliamentary work takes place in the _____. A National Council committee has ____ members. The number of seats in a committee depends on the strength of the parliamentary groups in the National Council. Large parliamentary groups have more members, small ones fewer. Committee meetings are confidential, no audio recordings may be made. Without this confidentiality, it would be very difficult to reach a _____. Committee members speak in their _____, there is no simultaneous translation. The Federal Councillor concerned by the issue is often present, but sometimes he or she is _____, especially in the case of less important or non-controversial business. The standing committees were introduced in 1999. This has _____ the influence of parliament on legislation.

Tasks

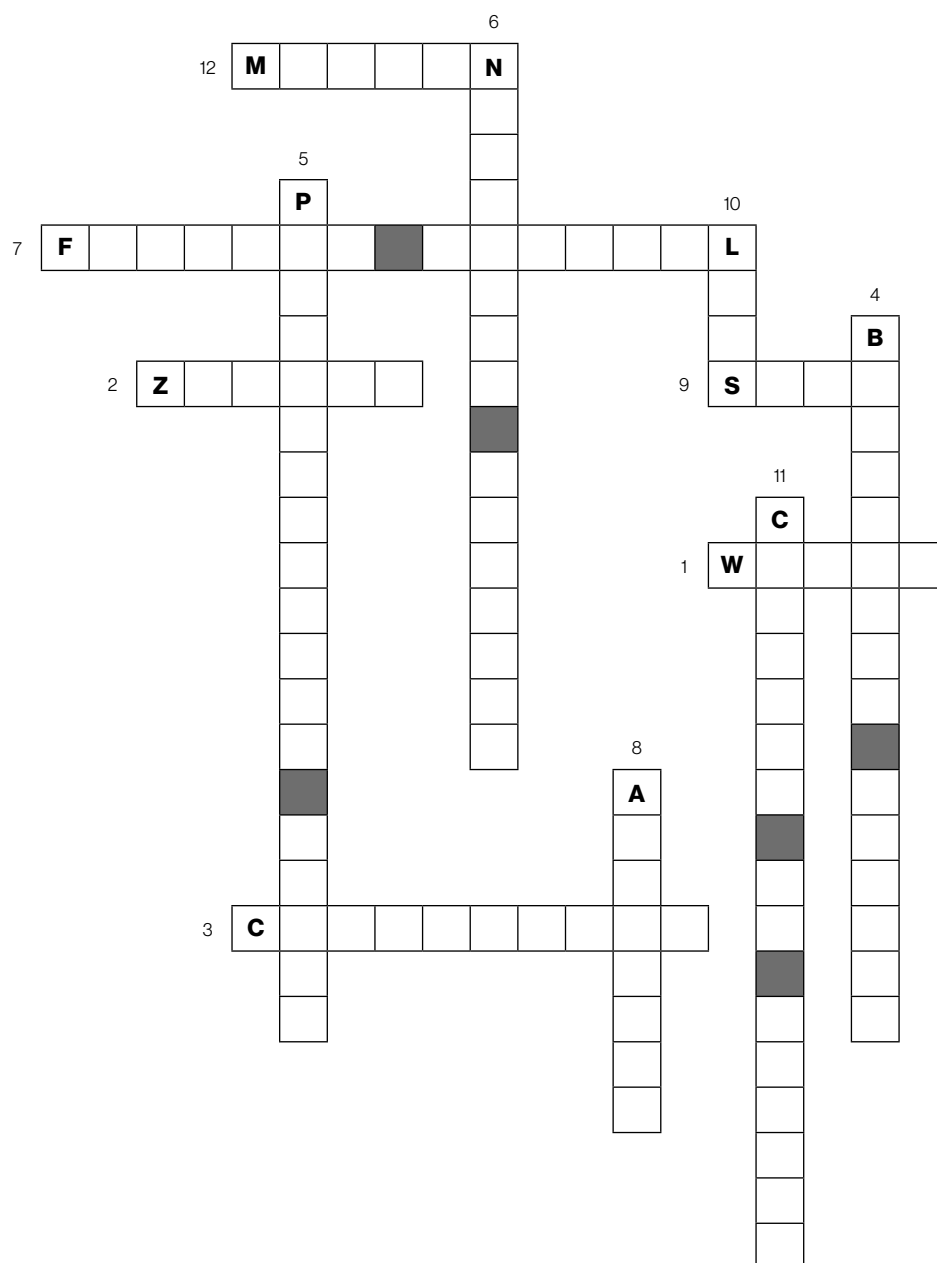


Short link:

[bit.ly/](https://bit.ly/Zimmer286)

Zimmer286

Self-assessment for unit 3, work without brochure and other means of help!



Questions

1. Received the right to vote in 1971.
2. Canton with the most National Councils, i. e. 35.
3. Every three months, they prepare the parliamentary work for their councils and make proposals for the debate in the council, working three to four days outside the official sessions.
4. Like in the USA, the Swiss Parliament is a to balance out the power gap between large and small cantons.
5. Association of members of the National Council and the Council of States of the same party or like-minded parties.
6. Synonym for large chamber.
7. Elected by the United Federal Assembly.
8. Both chambers (National Council and Council of States) sit in the big chamber. That is called United Federal
9. Abroad, to be a member of parliament is a full-time job, i. e. a professional parliament, whereas in Switzerland, the members of the councils also pursue other professional activities besides being politicians. Therefore, the Swiss system is also called a ...-professional parliament.
10. The main task of the parliament is to enact ...
11. Chamber representing the 26 cantons.
12. This is the strongest parliamentary instrument. By using it, members of the councils can prompt the Federal Council into drafting legislation.

Do you need further input to answer all the questions? Then use your documents or the Internet.
Complete the learning journal and have the unit verified.

Unit 4

EXECUTIVE – The Government

Learning objectives

- You know the main tasks of the Federal Council, know the names of all the seven Federal Councillors by heart and are knowledgeable of the terms 'magic formula' and 'collegial body'.
- You can talk somebody through the milestones of the history of the Federal Council from its beginnings in 1848 to the present day.
- You know the tasks of the Departments and the Federal Chancellery.
- You can apply professional presentation techniques.



A) Federal Receipts and Expenditure – Political Party Composition

Learning objectives

- You know the essential revenues and expenditures of the Confederation and know what the debt brake is.
- You know the historical development of the composition of the Federal Council.

Material: The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023, pages 48–49

Task Complete the cloze.

Finances

With a 64% share, the direct Federal tax and the _____ (_____) are the Confederation's main sources of receipts. Withholding tax comes third with a share of 6%. In 2021, the Confederation will have collected a total of 76 billion and spent _____ billion.

In terms of expenditure, the largest item is the _____. 34% of spending goes there. Besides the reduction of health insurance premiums, the _____ and _____ are the big items in this expenditure category. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Confederation has spent a lot of money in the current year to support the _____ and the people. Together with the lower receipts, the Federal accounts 2022 closed with a deficit of _____ billion.

Composition of the Federal Council

After the establishment of the Federal Council in 1848, only Federal Councillors of the current _____, _____ were elected. It was not until 1891 that this monopoly was broken with the first Federal Council of _____, now The Centre. In 1943 the same parties as _____ were represented in the Federal Council.

B) The Federal Administration

Learning objectives

- You know how the Federal Administration is made up and what its main task is.
- You know vocations in the federal administration.

Material: *The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023*, pages 54–55 and the **Youtube Clip**

Task

Complete the cloze with the help of the pages 54 and 55 and the Youtube Clip. Short link: bit.ly/LehreBundesverwaltung, (1:47 Min.) .



Short link:
bit.ly/LehreBundesverwaltung

An apprenticeship in the Federal Administration

Around _____ employees work in the Federal Administration. They work in the Federal Chancellery or in one of the _____ departments. The departments themselves are headed by a _____.

The Federal Chancellery is headed by _____. The Federal Administration is considered one of the largest employers. It trains over 1100 apprentices in around _____ vocations.

Tip

If you would like to find out more about the vocations and apprenticeships offered by the Federal Administration, you can find a lot of divided into 8 categories on the website “Wofür wollen Sie sich einsetzen?”.



Short link:
bit.ly/BerufeBundesverwaltung

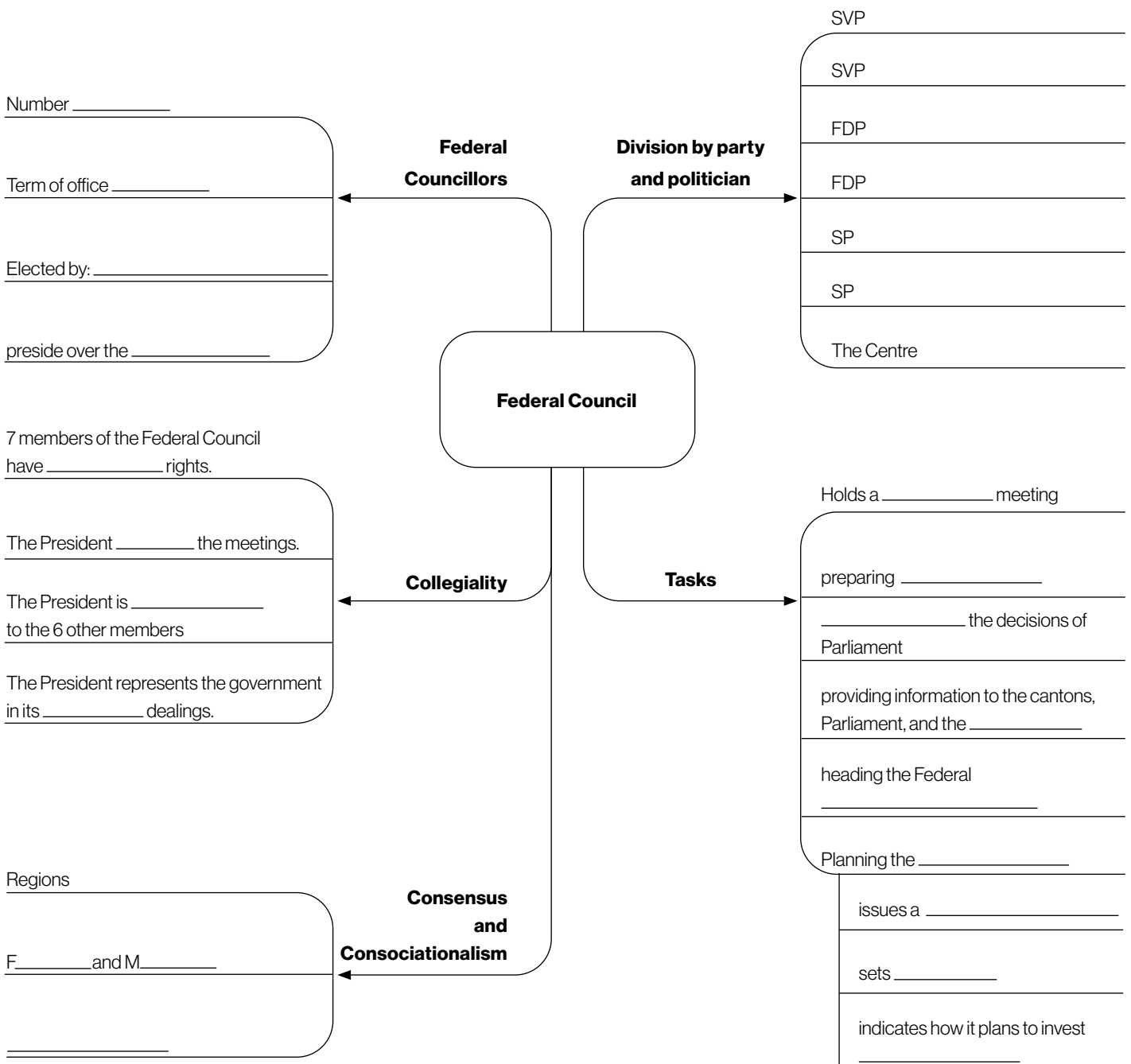
C) The Federal Council

Learning objectives

- You know the main tasks of the Federal Council, know the names of all the seven Federal Councillors by heart and are knowledgeable of the terms 'magic formula' and 'collegial body'.
- You can talk somebody through the milestones of the history of the Federal Council from its beginnings in 1848 to the present day.

Material: *The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023*, pages 50–53, [Website ch.ch](https://www.ch.ch)

Task Complete the mindmap according to the text.



Task Complete the cloze as you watch the three clips.

Short link:

**The Federal Council –
a brief guide**

Part 2: The art of preparing well
<https://bit.ly/2W77ypu>

Part 3: Keeping it formal at meetings
<https://bit.ly/2IKgPM0>

Part 4: Parlez-vous Hochdeutsch?
<https://bit.ly/2wOd4zt>



**The Federal Council
meeting**

The Federal Council meets every W_____ for a joint session. Up to 100 agenda items of business are dealt with at these meetings. This high number can only be managed because these matters have been pre-treated by the Federal A_____ in advance. They are also divided into _____ categories. Uncontested issues and answers to parliamentary requests can be dealt with every m_____. For security reasons, there are no mobile phones or computers on the net during the meeting.

During meetings, the Federal Councillors are on last-name terms, although they are otherwise on first-name terms. This helps to maintain the necessary distance. After a decision has been made, they only support o_____ position, that of the Federal Council. This is the principle of collegiality.

In the Federal Council, German, F_____ and I_____ are used. _____ are also published in the three languages. Many texts are also translated into R_____.

Tasks 1. Is it true that the Federal Council takes decisions on more than 2000 items of business every year?

2. What is the name of the current president, for how long is he or she elected?

3. What is the name and the party affiliation of the Federal Chancellor?

4. Magic formula:

a) In which year was the allocation of seats in the Federal Council introduced according to party strength (2 FDP 2 CVP, 2 SP, 1 SVP)?

b) When was the party-political division of seats in the Federal Council changed for the first time?

c) Which party gained an additional seat in the Federal Council?

Self-assessment for unit 4

1. Which body elects the Federal Council?

2. How long is the term of office of a federal councillor?

3. Name three federal councillors and their party affiliation.

4. Why do federal councillors never give personal statements about issues of business to the public, and why do they never reveal how they positioned themselves during the weekly meetings?

5. What is the current president's name?

6. Is it true that all federal councillors come from the German-speaking part of the country?

7. Is it true that the Federal Chancellor takes part in the weekly meetings of the Federal Council and actually conducts them?

8. Is it true that the magic formula was already applied for the first Federal Council in 1848?

► Complete the learning journal and have the unit verified.

D) Federal Administration

Learning objectives

- You know the tasks of the Departments and the Federal Chancellery.
- You can apply professional presentation techniques.

Material: The Swiss Confederation – A Brief Guide 2023, pages 54–71

Tasks

1. Form eight equally sized groups.
2. Choose one department or the Federal Chancellery. One department can only be taken by one group.
3. Speaker of the class: Write a list with the names of the participants in each group and the department / Chancellery they are working on.

Task

Read the information about your department / Chancellery in the brochure and carry out a research using the webpage of the department / Chancellery. Who is the head of it, what are its tasks and responsibilities?

You need enough interesting aspects for a 7–10 minute presentation in front of the class.

Parameters and criteria of the presentation

- Individual criteria by the teacher.



Learning journal

Complete your learning journal before carrying out your self-assessment.
Write short sentences or keywords.

	Answers	Controlling		
		Insufficient	Please improve	Done
Unit 1	This is what I have learned:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	My problems while working with this unit:			
	Own remarks:			
Unit 2	This is what I have learned:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	My problems while working with this unit:			
	Own remarks:			
Unit 3	This is what I have learned:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	My problems while working with this unit:			
	Own remarks:			
Unit 4	This is what I have learned:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	My problems while working with this unit:			
	Own remarks:			