



Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

SWISS CONFEDERATION

FEDERAL ELECTIONS

23 October 2011

OSCE/ODIHR NEEDS ASSESSMENT MISSION REPORT

5-8 July 2011



Warsaw
19 August 2011

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OSCE/ODIHR Needs Assessment Mission Report

I. INTRODUCTION

Following an invitation from the Delegation of Switzerland to the OSCE to observe the 23 October 2011 federal elections, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) undertook a Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) from 5 to 8 July. The NAM included Nicola Schmidt, OSCE/ODIHR Senior Election Adviser, Robert Krimmer, OSCE/ODIHR Senior Adviser on New Voting Technologies, and Richard Lappin, OSCE/ODIHR Election Adviser.

The purpose of the mission was to assess the pre-election environment and the preparations for the elections. Based on this assessment, the NAM should recommend whether to deploy an OSCE/ODIHR election-related activity for the forthcoming elections, and if so, what type of activity best meets the identified needs. Meetings were held with representatives of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the Federal Chancellery, the Federal Supreme Court, the Federal Office of Communications, the Independent Complaints Authority, the Federal Commission on Women's Issues, the Cantonal Chancelleries of Aargau and Geneva, as well as with representatives of political parties, the media, and civil society. A list of meetings is included as an annex to this report.

The OSCE/ODIHR would like to thank the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the Delegation of Switzerland to the OSCE for their assistance and co-operation in organizing the NAM. The OSCE/ODIHR would also like to thank all of its interlocutors for taking the time to meet with the NAM.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 23 October, Swiss voters will elect members to both houses of the Federal Assembly for a four-year term. The 200 members of the National Council are elected through a proportional system. Most of the 46 members of the Council of States will be elected through a majoritarian system.

Switzerland is a federal state composed of 26 cantons, with each canton enjoying considerable autonomy. While federal legislation provides minimum conditions for National Council elections, the cantons are responsible for implementing regulations and organizing the election process. The Council of States elections are under the full competence of the cantons.

The administration of elections is highly decentralized, involving the Federal Chancellery, the cantonal chancelleries, and the communes; responsibilities and procedures vary considerably across the country. Switzerland has a longstanding experience with democratic elections and all interlocutors met during the NAM expressed a high level of trust in the election administration.

Swiss citizens can vote through a wide variety of methods, including in person, by post, and, for some 22,000 out-of-country voters, via the internet. The use of internet voting will be introduced for the first time for federal elections on a trial basis in four cantons using two different systems. Postal voting is estimated to be used by some 90 per cent of voters. OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors indicated that postal and internet voting enjoy a high level of trust and acceptance in Switzerland.

Approximately 5.1 million Swiss citizens will be eligible to vote in these elections. Swiss citizens residing abroad have the possibility to vote in the National Council elections. However, only 11 cantons allow voting in the Council of States elections. Almost 22 per cent of the population is resident non-citizens. Although there is a growing trend to allow non-citizens to vote in local elections, cantonal rules vary and the issue is divided along party lines.

Campaign financing is largely unregulated in Switzerland. Parties can receive unlimited funds from any source and there are no limits on campaign expenditure. With the exception of the cantons of Geneva and Ticino, there are no requirements for the disclosure of the sources and amounts of donations. However, the current political discourse reflects a widespread view that party and campaign financing should be addressed.

The media landscape is pluralistic and structured primarily along linguistic lines. There is no specific federal regulation on media coverage of the campaign period. Coverage of the election campaign is largely self-regulated with the possibility to appeal to media supervisory bodies. Political advertising is prohibited in electronic media.

Complaints and appeals are regulated at the federal and cantonal level and ensure a timely right to judicial review for all aspects of the election process. The cantonal governments are the body of first instance and their decisions can be appealed to the Federal Supreme Court.

Women remain underrepresented in Swiss politics and voter turnout is significantly lower among women as compared to men. Federal authorities have taken steps to increase women's political participation and some parties indicated that they would implement specific measures to increase the number of women candidates.

Federal legislation does not include specific provisions for international or domestic observers. However, a possible OSCE/ODIHR election observation activity was welcomed by all OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors, recognizing that electoral processes can always be improved and that an external assessment and recommendations by the OSCE/ODIHR may contribute to this.

Since the 2007 OSCE/ODIHR Election Assessment Mission (EAM) to Switzerland, some recommendations have been addressed by the Swiss authorities. Nevertheless, several issues could benefit from closer attention, including the implementation of internet voting for some 22,000 out-of-country voters, the under-regulation of party and campaign finance, non-citizen voting rights, as well as cantonal variations in electoral practices. For this reason the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the deployment of an EAM for the upcoming 23 October federal elections.

III. FINDINGS

A. BACKGROUND

Switzerland is a federal state that has longstanding experience with democratic elections. Swiss institutions reflect a complex federal structure that takes into account cantonal authority, linguistic diversity, and a tradition of direct democracy as exercised through regular referenda and popular initiatives. Its three-tiered political system comprises the federal authorities, 26 cantons, and 2,516 communes. The cantons enjoy broad autonomy and have their own constitutions, laws, parliament, and courts.

On 23 October, Swiss voters will elect members of both houses of the Swiss Parliament for a four-year term. The 200 members of the National Council represent the overall population and the 46 members of the Council of States represent the cantons. Both chambers exercise equal power and, together, constitute the Federal Assembly.

The Federal Council is the executive branch of government and its seven members are elected by the Federal Assembly every four years at the beginning of a new legislature. The Federal Council is a collegial body which traditionally acts by consensus rather than through majority voting. Each Federal Councillor shares the duties of Head of State and every year a different Federal Councillor assumes the ceremonial role of President.

Seats on the Federal Council are allocated according to the proportional strength of the main parties in parliament. From 1959 to 2003, an arrangement between the four major political parties, known as the “magic formula”, resulted in a stable distribution of seats which roughly corresponded to their share of the vote. However, an increase in the vote for the Swiss People’s Party (SVP) and the formation of new parties has challenged how the Federal Council is formed. As a result, several OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed concerns about the continuing viability of a consensus-based government. There is also some debate about introducing direct elections of Federal Councillors.

Currently five parties are represented in the Federal Council: the Social Democratic Party (SP) and the Radical Free Democratic Party (FDP), with two members each; and the SVP, the Christian Democratic People’s Party (CVP), and the Conservative Democratic Party (BDP), with one member each.¹ A further seven parties are represented in parliament, among which the Swiss Green Party (GPS) is the largest party outside of government.

Previously, OSCE/ODIHR deployed an Election Assessment Mission for the 21 October 2007 federal elections.² The mission concluded in its final report that the elections reflected Switzerland’s “long-standing democratic tradition” and were “conducted with a high degree of public confidence.” Several recommendations were made in the final report, some of which have been addressed at the federal as well as cantonal level.

¹ The BDP was founded on 1 November 2008 as a breakaway party from the SVP.

² All reports are available on the OSCE/ODIHR website:
<http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/switzerland>.

B. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The legal framework governing the upcoming federal elections consists primarily of the 1999 Federal Constitution, the 1976 Federal Act on Political Rights (as amended), the 1978 Federal Decree on Political Rights (as amended), as well as corresponding constitutions, laws, and decrees at the cantonal level. While federal legislation provides minimum conditions for National Council elections, the cantons are responsible for implementing regulations and providing detailed instructions. The Council of States elections are under the full competence of the cantons.

The 200 seats of the National Council are allocated to the cantons according to their relative population as recorded in the last census. Each of the 26 cantons forms a single constituency and elects at least one member. The number of seats per canton varies from one in 6 cantons to 34 in the canton of Zurich. Elections are carried out by proportional representation, except in the cantons that return only one member to the National Council where a majoritarian system is used.

For cantons that return several members of the National Council, voters choose among candidate lists provided by political parties. Parties may present a joint list with another party. Parties also often present “sub-lists” of candidates representing women, youth, or geographical areas within a canton.

In cantons with more than one seat in the National Council, voters have several options of how they can cast their vote. Voters may use a pre-printed ballot paper with the list of a particular party and vote for all the candidates on the list. However, voters can also modify a pre-printed ballot paper by deleting candidates, adding candidates from other lists within the same constituency (vote splitting or “panachage”), or entering the name of one candidate twice (accumulation). Voters may also compose their own ballot paper by combining candidates from different lists within the constituency.

In two of the cantons with only one seat, a candidate may be elected unopposed (a tacit election) if only one valid nomination is submitted by the thirtieth day prior to the election.

Elections to the Council of States are conducted by a majoritarian system, with the exception of the cantons of Jura and Neuchatel, which use proportional representation. Twenty cantons elect two members each and six cantons elect one member each.

Complaints and appeals are regulated by Part 6 of the Federal Act on Political Rights, ensuring a timely right to judicial review for all aspects of the election process. The cantonal governments are the body of first instance and an appeal must be filed by registered mail within three days of the grounds for the appeal being ascertained. The canton must then issue timely decision and, if there have been irregularities, provide for appropriate remedies. In line with Article 189.1 of the Federal Constitution, appeals of cantonal decisions may be filed with the Federal Supreme Court within 30 days of the original decision.

Federal legislation does not regulate key aspects of elections, including the election administration bodies, the campaign, campaign financing, and the conduct of the media. In addition, despite prior OSCE/ODIHR recommendations, federal legislation does not include

specific provisions for international or domestic observers. This is not consistent with paragraph 8 of the 1990 OSCE Copenhagen Document.

C. ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

The administration of elections is highly decentralized, involving the Federal Chancellery, the cantonal chancelleries, and the communes. While the Federal Chancellery establishes broad parameters for the conduct of elections, the administration of elections rests primarily with the cantons.

The Federal Chancellery assumes a co-ordination role for elections and is responsible for ensuring that federal standards are respected. It provides information on candidate registration to parties, checks candidate eligibility, and ensures that no candidate is registered in more than one canton. It is mandated to provide voter information and, for these elections, has stated its intention to encourage a turnout in excess of 50 per cent. It also publishes the final nationwide results.

The cantonal chancelleries are responsible for organizing federal elections in their jurisdiction and perform key tasks such as composing election boards for the canton and communes (i.e. at polling stations), preparing voter lists, registering candidate lists, and aggregating the cantonal election results. In addition, cantons are responsible for preparing, printing, and delivering voting materials by post to all their registered voters, including those registered abroad, at least ten days prior to election day. Voters receive a personalized voting card, ballot papers for all electoral lists, a blank ballot paper, information material, and a return envelope for postal voting. Voting materials are provided in the official language/s of the canton.

Significant responsibilities are also often delegated by the cantons to the communes, particularly for the preparation of voter lists and the set-up of polling stations. The Federal Chancellery informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM of the difficulty of harmonizing election procedures, as previously recommended by OSCE/ODIHR,³ due to the legal autonomy that each canton possesses in this area.

All interlocutors met by the OSCE/ODIHR NAM expressed high confidence in the election administration and their ability to organize elections professionally and transparently.

D. VOTING METHODS

The legal framework provides voters with a wide variety of voting methods, including in person, by post, and, in federally approved trials, via the internet.

The traditional way for voters to cast their ballot is in person at their registered polling station upon presentation of their voting card. Cantons regulate the opening hours of polling stations which are generally open between 10:00 and 12:00 on election day, with some open for only 30 minutes; this is mainly due to the decreasing numbers of citizens voting in person at polling stations. The number of polling stations in communes varies and, due to the

³ See 2007 OSCE/ODIHR EAM Final Report recommendations on the publication of electoral 'sub-lists' (p.5), campaign (p.9), postal voting (p.17), transport of election materials (p.20), and counting procedures (p.22).

increasing use of postal voting, their number has decreased in recent years. In addition, cantons are obliged to provide for early voting at polling stations for a minimum of two of the four days immediately prior to election day.

A distinctive feature of Swiss elections is the high number of ballots cast by post. The Federal Act on Political Rights requires all cantons to provide a postal voting option, including to their citizens living abroad, and it is now estimated to be used by some 90 per cent of voters. If a voter uses the postal option they must send their voting card with the ballot (in a separate envelope to ensure secrecy of the vote), in order to prevent the possibility of voting additionally at a polling station. Several OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors noted that the short timeframes for postal voting, as well as the varying quality of foreign postal services, could lead to the late delivery and return of ballot papers for out-of-country voters and, thus, their effective disenfranchisement. The OSCE/ODIHR NAM was informed that several cantons have recently adopted measures to harmonize procedures for postal voting for out-of-country voters.

For the first time in federal elections, remote internet voting will also be instituted on a trial basis in these elections for some 22,000 out-of-country voters in four cantons.⁴ The partial implementation of internet voting reflects a gradual approach which began in 2000.⁵ The trials are considered by the Swiss authorities to be an important milestone in deciding whether its use should be expanded further. The Federal Chancellery stated its intention to provide internet voting to the great majority of out-of-country voters by the 2015 federal elections and, ultimately, to all eligible voters for federal elections. It is also viewed as an important means of facilitating voting for Swiss citizens living abroad who often face difficulties with postal voting. The Federal Chancellery conceives the introduction of internet voting as an additional method of voting and not as a replacement of traditional methods.

The minimum standards for internet voting trials are provided for by Article 8a of the Federal Act on Political Rights and are regulated in more detail by Article 27 of the Federal Decree on Political Rights. These provisions place special emphasis on the verification of voter eligibility and the secrecy of the vote, as well as the necessity to prevent systematic abuse. The technical equipment, software, organization, and procedures for internet voting trials must be tested and approved by the Federal Council before their use. Internet voting trials are currently restricted to a maximum of 10 per cent of the country's electorate and 20 per cent of the cantonal electorate.

For these elections, two different systems have been approved by the Federal Council for internet voting trials. The "Consortium System", which was originally developed by the private company Unisys for the canton of Zurich, will be used in the cantons of Aargau, Graubünden, and St. Gallen. The "Geneva System" will be used by the canton of Basel Stadt, but the system will continue to be hosted in Geneva. The OSCE/ODIHR NAM met with representatives from the cantonal chancelleries of Aargau, Basel Stadt and Geneva, all of whom expressed their interest in co-operating with a possible OSCE/ODIHR election-related activity.

⁴ The cantons of Aargau, Graubünden, St. Gallen, and Basel Stadt.

⁵ Although internet voting will be introduced for the first time in these federal elections, it has previously been tested in 18 federal referenda, as well as other cantonal elections and referenda.

Both systems provide for positive voter identification by using a voting card which includes a sealed unique voting number. This number must be entered with other details in order to vote via the internet. The systems do not allow voters to cast an invalid vote nor can voters change their vote via the internet. Measures for voters to check the authenticity of the server, such as pictorial symbols and response codes, are also incorporated. In principle, the secrecy of the vote is protected by the separate storage of personal data and the unique voting number following the generation of the voting cards and before votes are cast.

Certain issues applicable to both systems deserve further attention, including: source code transparency; access to and security of the servers; general procedures, especially in the event of a security breach; access to the voting cards (so as to prevent anyone other than the intended voter from casting a vote); the security of the voter's computer; and ease of use in considering complex voting options in federal elections. The system also remains reliant on the timely postal delivery of voting cards to overseas residents.

Voting by post and internet enjoy a high level of trust and acceptance in Switzerland. While challenges to the verification of voter eligibility and the secrecy of the vote were acknowledged by some interlocutors, no fundamental objections were raised about their use in the upcoming elections.

E. VOTING RIGHTS AND VOTER REGISTRATION

All Swiss citizens over the age of 18 who are registered in a commune and are not deprived of their voting rights by a court order due to mental incapacity are eligible to vote.⁶ Switzerland has a passive voter registration system whereby lists are compiled by the communes or cantons based on population registers. Of a permanent resident population of some 7.7 million, around 5.1 million Swiss citizens will be eligible to vote for these elections. All OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed confidence in the accuracy of the voter lists.

Swiss citizens who are residing abroad have the possibility to vote in, and be elected to, the National Council. To do so, they must register in either their commune of origin or the commune where they last resided in Switzerland. Only 11 cantons provide for their citizens living abroad to vote in elections to the Council of States.⁷ Approximately 136,000 of the estimated 695,000 Swiss citizens abroad are registered to vote.

As the law grants the right to vote to Swiss citizens, many of the estimated 1.7 million resident non-citizens (21.7 per cent of the population) are prevented from participating in federal elections. While citizenship is widely recognized as an admissible restriction on suffrage for national elections, there is an emerging trend to grant voting rights for local elections to long-term residents who are not citizens.⁸ In Switzerland, the authority to grant

⁶ The canton of Glarus allows citizens to vote from the age of 16 in Council of States elections.

⁷ The cantons of Basel-Landschaft, Bern, Fribourg, Geneva, Graubünden, Jura, Neuchâtel, Schwyz, Solothurn, Ticino, and Zurich.

⁸ The UN Human Rights Committee in its General Comment 25 confirms the existence of an emerging trend to grant voting rights to permanent non-citizens at local elections, see: <http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/0/d0b7f023e8d6d9898025651e004bc0eb?Opendocument>. In addition, the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe states, "it would be advisable for foreigners to be allowed to vote in local elections after a certain period of residence", see point 1.1.b.ii.:

these rights rests with the cantons. Currently 5 of 26 cantons allow long-term non-citizens to vote in local elections,⁹ with the canton of Jura also allowing non-citizens to vote in Council of States elections. A recent report from the Federal Commission for Immigration Issues encouraged cantons to introduce local voting rights where possible.¹⁰ The canton of Vaud will vote on 4 September on whether to extend voting, as well as candidacy, rights to non-citizens for Council of States elections. However, a series of recent cantonal initiatives to introduce voting rights for non-citizens have failed and the issue is divided along party lines.

F. CAMPAIGN AND CAMPAIGN FINANCING

Switzerland has a diversified political landscape with 12 political parties currently represented in the Federal Assembly. Together with major interest groups, they are instrumental in setting the political agenda. In addition to federal elections, parties campaign throughout the year for cantonal elections, referenda, and popular initiatives.

Political party structures are often decentralized and regional branches have significant independence in determining campaign issues and strategies. Nevertheless, an increased focus on federal rather than cantonal issues is expected, with immigration, the environment, and the economy expected to be key themes. Parties typically campaign through face-to-face methods but are increasingly using the internet, particularly social media. Advertisements in the press and campaign posters are allowed. However, political advertisements in the electronic media are prohibited by Article 10.1 of the Federal Law on Radio and Television.

There are no federal regulations on party or campaign financing and only limited cantonal rules. The issue has been reported on by a number of organizations and has gained increasing public attention in recent years.¹¹ Although there is no official data, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM was informed that campaign costs have increased substantially in recent years, with the trend expected to continue in these elections.

Although political parties do not receive direct funding from the federal state, parliamentary groups do receive some public funding.¹² Some cantons, such as Geneva and Fribourg, provide public subsidies to parties and/or partial reimbursement of campaign expenditures. Political parties and their campaign expenditures are funded primarily through individual and company donations, membership fees, and mandatory contributions from elected party representatives. Parties can receive unlimited funds from any source and there are no limits on campaign expenditure. With the exception of the cantons of Geneva and Ticino, there are no requirements for the disclosure of the sources and amounts of donations.

[http://www.venice.coe.int/docs/2002/CDL-AD\(2002\)023-e.pdf](http://www.venice.coe.int/docs/2002/CDL-AD(2002)023-e.pdf).

⁹ The cantons of Fribourg, Geneva, Jura, Neuchâtel and Vaud. In addition, the cantons of Appenzell Ausserrhoden and Graubünden authorize their communes to decide on the matter.

¹⁰ Federal Commission for Immigration Issues, 2010, "Citizenship - Redefine Participation", http://eudo-citizenship.eu/docs/Swiss_recom.pdf

¹¹ See the 2007 OSCE/ODIHR EAM Final Report, pp.6-7. In addition, the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) recently carried out an evaluation of party and campaign financing in Switzerland and its report is expected in October/November 2011.

¹² A parliamentary group comprises members of the same party or parties which share similar political views. At least five members from the same parliamentary chamber are required to establish a parliamentary group. Parliamentary groups are paid a fixed allowance of CHF 144,500 per year (approx. EUR 132,700), and each of their members receives an additional CHF 26,800 (approx. EUR 24,400).

The current political discourse reflects a widespread view that party and campaign financing should be addressed, especially with respect to enhancing transparency through disclosure of sources. While Geneva has recently adopted more extensive regulations at the cantonal level,¹³ attempts to regulate this at the federal level have so far failed. OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed concerns about regulations being imposed from a federal level, that disclosure may lead to a decline in donations, and that any regulations would have to take account of Switzerland's political system, which is characterized by campaigning throughout the year for referenda and popular initiatives.

G. MEDIA

The media landscape is pluralistic and structured primarily along linguistic lines. There is a variety of public and private television channels and radio stations, as well as a broad range of regional daily and weekly newspapers. The internet is also increasingly becoming a key source of information.

While freedom of expression and freedom of the media are guaranteed by the Swiss Constitution, there is no specific legislation covering the role of the media during an election. However, the 2006 Federal Law on Radio and Television provides guidance to electronic media for coverage of political events, emphasising the need for diversity, equality, and objectivity. Balanced coverage of the election campaign is primarily ensured through self-regulation founded on a culture of professionalism.

The public service broadcaster Swiss Broadcasting (SRG SSR) is the main national broadcaster. It is not a federal institution, but a non-profit association entrusted with a public service mandate. It broadcasts throughout the country via 8 television stations and 18 radio stations in the 4 official languages. As it has done for previous elections, SRG SSR has issued internal instructions for the allocation of election related coverage on a proportional basis according to party representation at federal and cantonal level, as well as the number of candidate lists submitted in different cantons. The SRG SSR has made these rules available to parties and the public.

A number of supervisory bodies provide for an effective complaints system. In the first instance, complaints related to programmes broadcast on electronic media can be addressed to Ombudspersons who are assigned to specific broadcasters and act as mediators. If no resolution is reached, a complaint can be filed with the Independent Complaints Authority (ICA), whose decisions can be appealed to the Federal Supreme Court. In turn, the Federal Office of Communications (OFCOM) supervises advertising on broadcast media, including violations of the ban on political advertising. Finally, the Press Council deals with complaints regarding journalistic ethics and professionalism.

ICA and OFCOM informed the OSCE/ODIHR NAM of increased co-ordination between their institutions, as well as with other media supervisory bodies, thereby addressing a prior OSCE/ODIHR recommendation. Although noting a changing media landscape, including a concentration of media ownership and the emergence of free newspapers, all OSCE/ODIHR

¹³ These regulations will be implemented from 2012 onwards.

NAM interlocutors expressed overall satisfaction with media coverage of elections and the complaints mechanisms.

H. WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

Although the current Federal Council has a majority of women (4 out of 7 Councillors), women remain underrepresented in Swiss politics. Approximately 29 per cent of the seats in the National Council are occupied by women, while for the Council of States the figure is below 22 per cent. Voter turnout among women is also significantly lower than that of men, and is at its lowest among young women.

In line with a previous OSCE/ODIHR recommendation, the Federal Chancellery and the Federal Commission for Women's Issues have taken steps to increase women's political participation. A special event was held to mark the fortieth anniversary of the introduction of women's suffrage at a federal level, and political parties and citizens have received specific information on how to promote women candidates. There is no legal requirement for women's participation and few parties use internal quota systems. Most parties met by the OSCE/ODIHR NAM indicated that they would seek to increase the quantity of women candidates. However, many also considered the use of women-only sub-lists as an ineffective means for increasing women's representation.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

All OSCE/ODIHR NAM interlocutors expressed high confidence in the election administration and their ability to organize elections professionally and transparently. No fundamental concerns were raised in relation to alternative voting methods such as postal voting and remote internet voting, both of which enjoy considerable trust among stakeholders. Nevertheless, most interlocutors indicated that they would welcome a potential OSCE/ODIHR observation activity for these elections, recognizing that electoral processes can always be improved and that an external assessment and recommendations offered by the OSCE/ODIHR may contribute to this.

While some of the recommendations from the 2007 OSCE/ODIHR EAM have been addressed, closer attention to a number of remaining issues could be beneficial. This relates primarily to longer-term issues such as the implementation of internet voting for some out-of-country voters, as well as the under-regulation of campaign finance, non-citizen voting rights, and cantonal variations in electoral practices. On this basis, the OSCE/ODIHR NAM recommends the deployment of an Election Assessment Mission for the upcoming 23 October federal elections.

ANNEX: LIST OF MEETINGS

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

David Best, Head of Council of Europe and OSCE Section, Directorate of Political Affairs
Esther Iseli, Deputy Head of Swiss Expert Pool for Civilian Peacebuilding, Directorate of Political Affairs
Marianne Gerber, Focal Point for Election Observation, Swiss Expert Pool for Civilian Peacebuilding, Directorate of Political Affairs
Adrienne Schnyder, OSCE Desk Officer, Directorate of Political Affairs
Thomas De Rocchi, OSCE Desk Officer, Directorate of Political Affairs

Federal Chancellery

Corina Casanova, Federal Chancellor
André Simonazzi, Vice-Chancellor, Spokesperson of the Swiss Government
Barbara Perriard, Head of Political Rights Section
Anina Weber, Head of Project Vote Électronique
Ardita Driza Maurer, Project Member, Vote Électronique

Federal Assembly

Andreas Gross, National Councillor, Social Democratic Party
Maximilian Reimann, State Councillor, Swiss People's Party

Aargau Cantonal Chancellery

Peter Grünenfelder, State Chancellor
Urs Meier, General Secretary
Thomas Wehrli, Head of Project Vote Électronique

Basel Stadt Cantonal Chancellery

Daniel Orsini, Head of Elections and Votes Section

Geneva Cantonal Chancellery

Michel Warynski, Head of Elections Support and Operations Department
Michel Chevallier, Deputy Secretary General of the Cantonal Chancellery
David Hofmann, Deputy Director, Department of Legal Affairs

Geneva Central Election Commission

Michel Bertschy, Lawyer

Federal Supreme Court

Gerold Steinmann, Clerk and Scientific Counsellor

Federal Commission for Women's Issues

Etiennette J. Verrey, President

Federal Office of Communications

Oliver Gerber, Media Lawyer

Independent Complaints Authority

Pierre Rieder, Head of Secretariat

Political Parties

Stefan Brupbacher, Secretary General, Radical Free Democratic Party
Peter Hug, International Secretary, Social Democratic Party
Min Li Marti, Co-Director of Communication and Campaigns, Social Democratic Party
Alexandra Perina, Secretary of the Parliamentary Group, Christian Democratic Party
Iwan Schauwecker, Political Secretary, Green Party

Media

Michael Schweizer, Legal Services, SRG SSR Swiss Broadcasting Corporation
Davide Vignati, Journalist, Corriere del Ticino
Katharina Fontana, Journalist, Neue Zürcher Zeitung
Bernard Wuthrich, Journalist, Le Temps

Civil Society

Kathrin Balmer, Board Member, Swiss National Youth Council
Eva Belser, Professor at Department of Public Law, University of Fribourg
Lukas Golder, Senior Project Manager, GfS – Association for Social Research
Georg Lutz, Project Director of Swiss Electoral Studies, Swiss Centre for Expertise in the Social Sciences

Unisys

Michael Pflughart, Project Manager
Daniel Mohni, System Developer