

# **CULTURE, SOCIETY AND POLITICS IN THE GERMAN-SPEAKING COUNTRIES- IRE214**

**Maya Hadar**

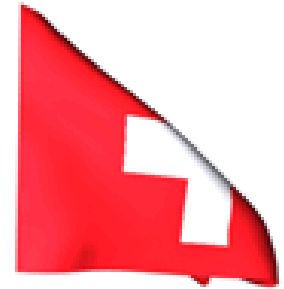
**Fall 2018**

**Session 9: Switzerland**

# Switzerland

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- Important facts
- Political system
- Economy
- Foreign policy
- Referendums and initiatives
- Switzerland and the EU



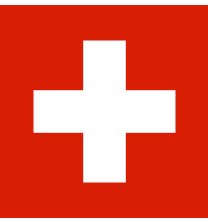


# Switzerland

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- Landlocked alpine country in Western Europe
- 41,285 square kilometres (225 times smaller than the United States)
- Over 7 million people
- Religion
  - Roman Catholic 47.6%
  - Protestant 44.3%
  - other 8.1%

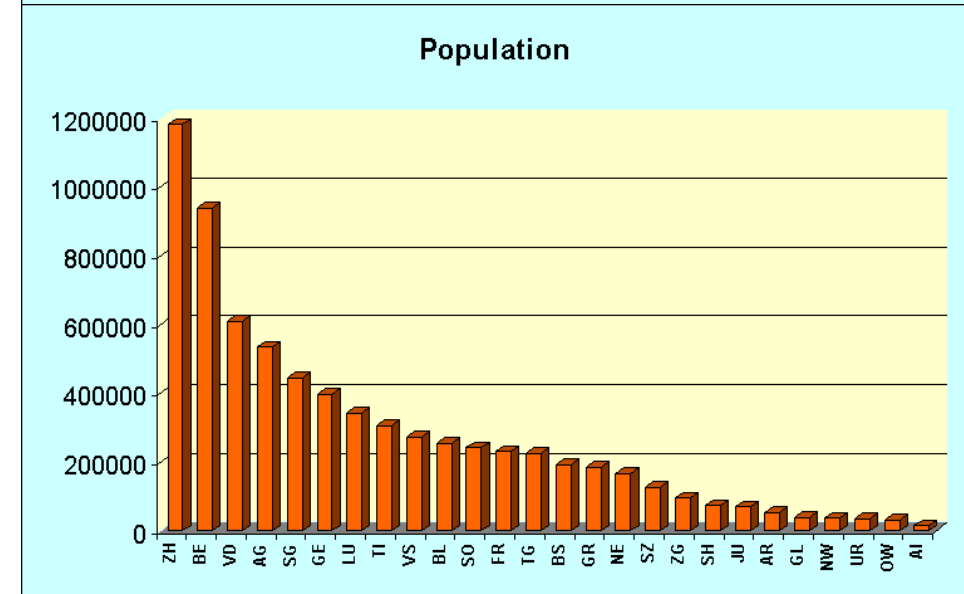
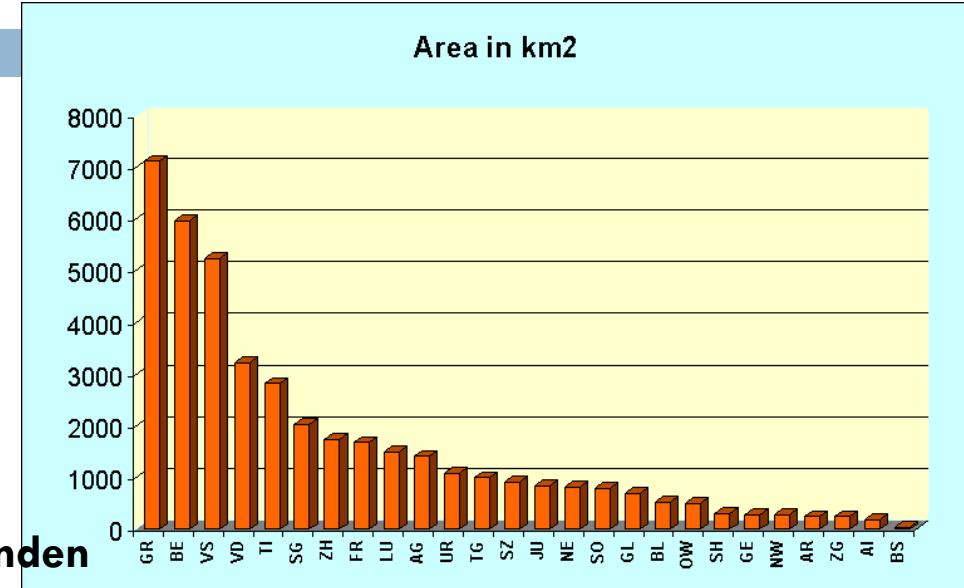




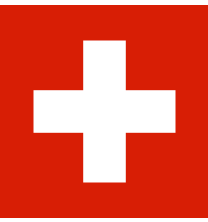
# Switzerland

- Agricultural land 36.9%
- Settlements and urban areas 6.8%
- Unproductive land 21.3%
- Land borders with Austria, France, Germany and Liechtenstein
- Capital: **Bern**
- Swiss Franc *Schweizerfranken* (CHF)
  - 1 EURO = 1.13 Francs

Graubünden

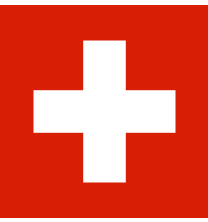


# The Swiss Cantons



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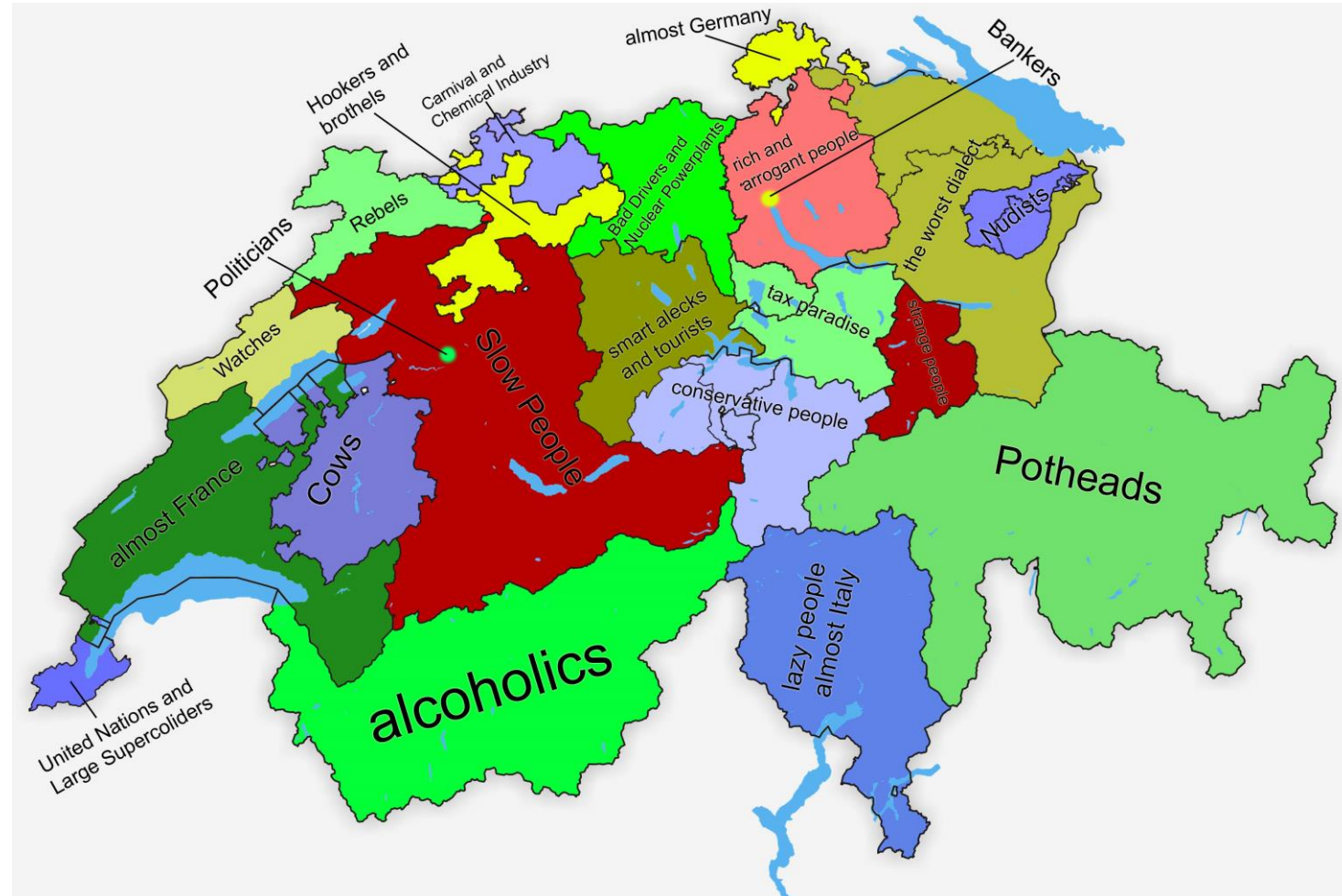
- In **France**, the canton is a **territorial division** rather than a genuine unit of local government
  - It is only a convenient administrative subdivision for purposes of elections, tax collection, and the gendarmerie
- In Switzerland, **canton** is the name given to each of the 23 states comprising the Swiss Confederation
- Three **cantons** (Unterwalden, Basel, and Appenzell) are subdivided into demi-cantons (half **cantons**) which function as full **cantons**

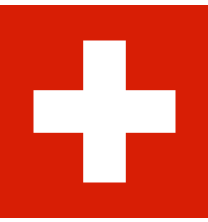


# The Swiss Cantons

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- That's why there is often reference to **26 states** of Switzerland
- Each of the **cantons** and half **cantons** has its own constitution, legislature, executive, and judiciary

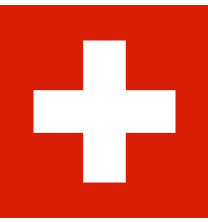




# The Swiss Cantons (23)

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- Zürich (ZH)
- Bern / Berne (BE)
- Luzern (LU)
- Uri (UR)
- Schwyz (SZ)
- Unterwalden (Obwalden (OW) / Nidwalden (NW))
- Glarus (GL)
- Zug (ZG)
- Freiburg / Fribourg (FR)
- Solothurn (SO)
- Basel (Basel Stadt (BS)/ Land (BL))
- Schaffhausen (SH)
- Vaud (VD)
- Valais / Wallis (VS)
- Neuchâtel (NE)
- Genève (GE)
- Jura (JU)
- Ticino (TI)
- Appenzell (Appenzell Ausserrhoden (AR) / Innerrhoden (AI))
- Sankt Gallen (SG)
- Graubünden (GR)
- Aargau (AG)
- Thurgau (TG)



# Switzerland

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- 4 national languages:
  - Swiss German, French, Italian, Romansh
- 3 official ones: German, French Italian
- Swiss don't speak the same German as the Germans/Austrians do => "**Swiss-German**"
- Each state has its own dialect
- There is no written "**Swiss-German**", they use "high German"



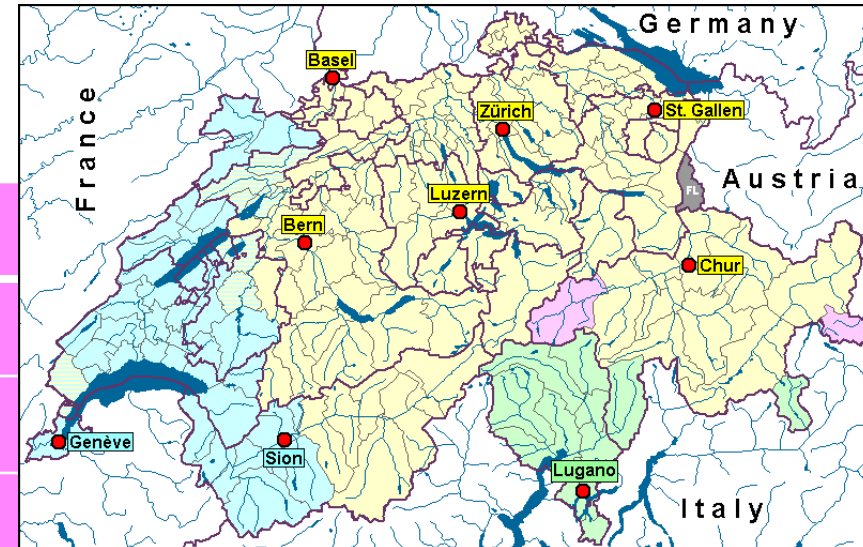


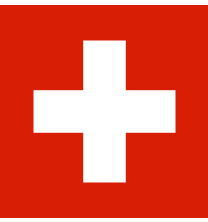


# Switzerland

- 4 national languages

English	German	French	Italian	Romansh
Switzerland	Schweiz	Suisse	Svizzera	Svizra
year	das Jahr	l'année	l'anno	igl onn
noon	der Mittag	midi	il mezzogiorno	il miezdi
Monday	Montag	Lundi	lunedì	gliendischdis
breakfast	das Frühstück	le petit déjeuner	la colazione	l'ensolver





# Switzerland

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- Tradition of **political and military neutrality**
- United Nations' **second largest center** in **Geneva**
- 1863 => **Red Cross founded** in Switzerland, still has its institutional center in the country

## Foreign Trade

- High contribution of **foreign trade** to the gross inland product
- 46.6% of Swiss exports are delivered to other **European countries**
- 35.6% are sold to **Asian importers**
- 14% to **North America**, 1.8% going to Latin America
- 1.1% bought by African importers



# Switzerland

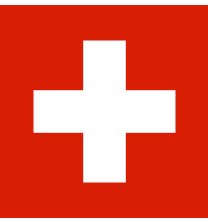
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## Foreign Trade

- 2017 => Switzerland shipped US\$299.6 billion worth of products around the globe
  - 1.9% of overall global exports for 2016, estimated at \$15.952 trillion

## Top Trade Partners

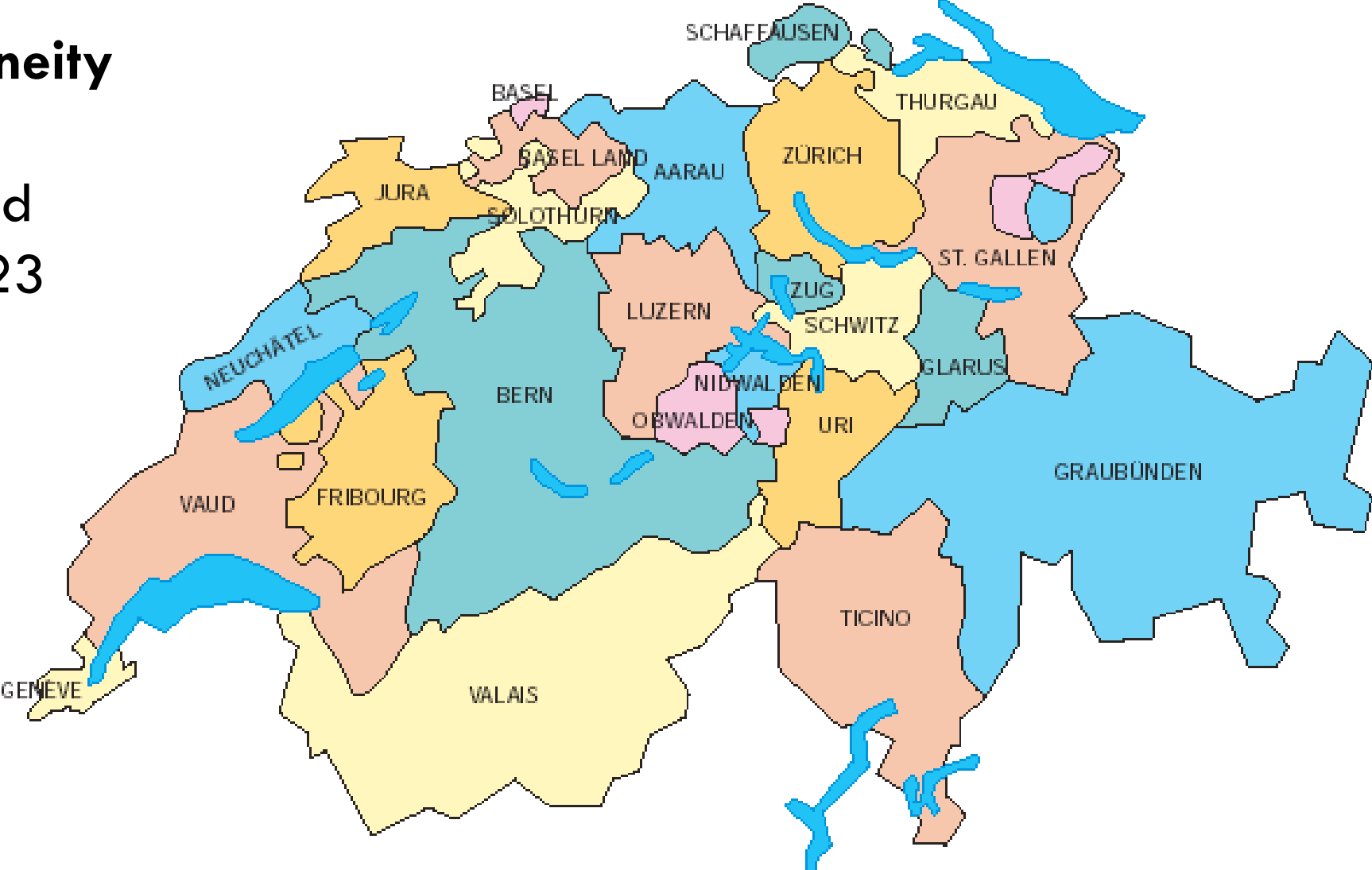
- **Germany:** US\$45.4 billion (15.1% of total Swiss exports)
- **United States:** \$36.8 billion (12.3%)
- **China:** \$24.5 billion (8.2%)
- **India:** \$19.8 billion (6.6%)
- **France:** \$17.1 billion (5.7%)

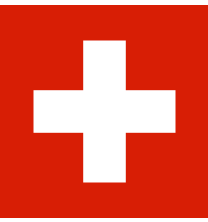


# Multicultural Switzerland

## Territorial Heterogeneity

The country is divided into five zones and 23 cantons

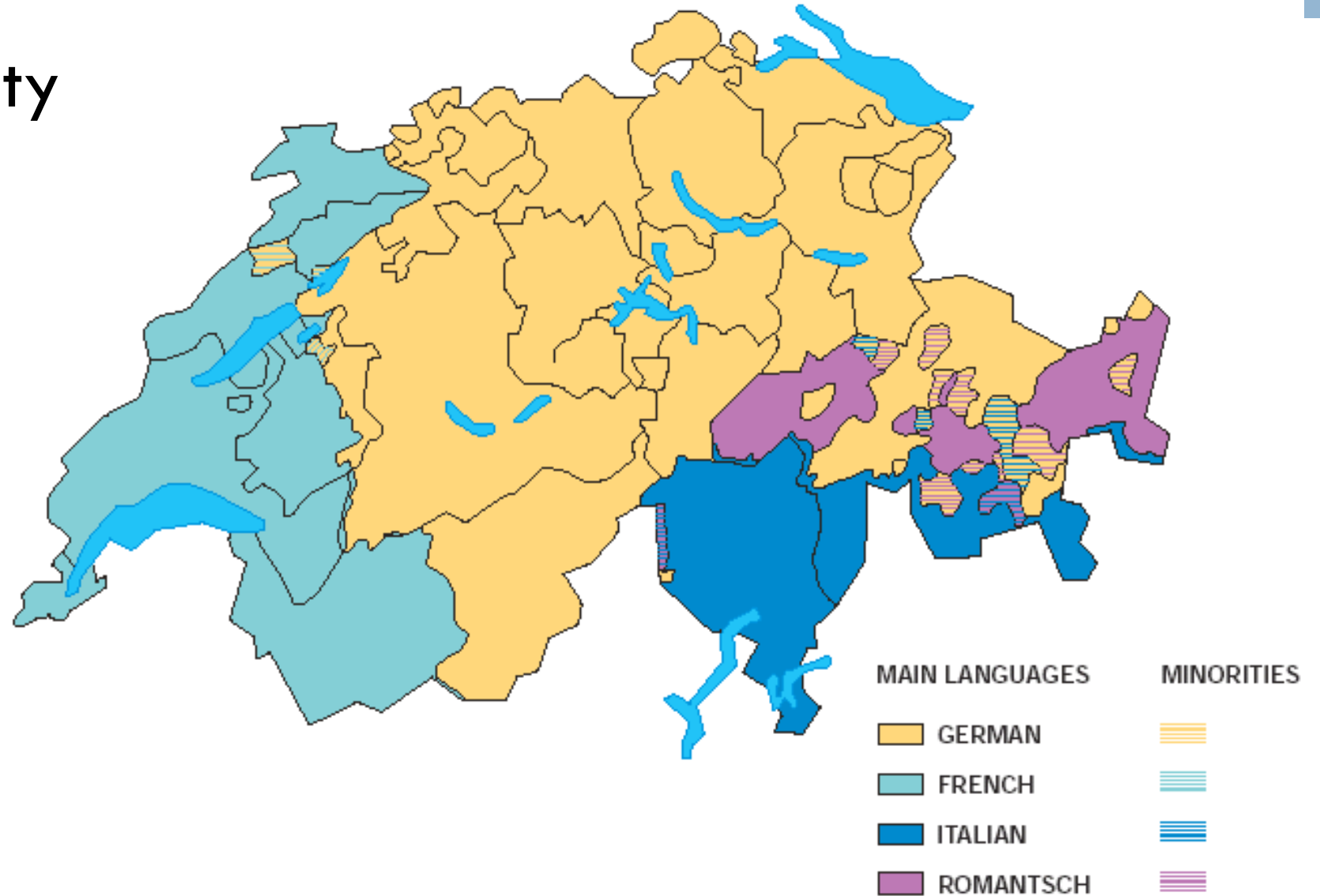


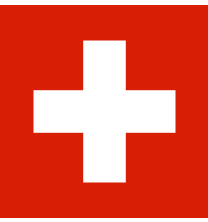


# Multicultural Switzerland

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## Linguistic Diversity

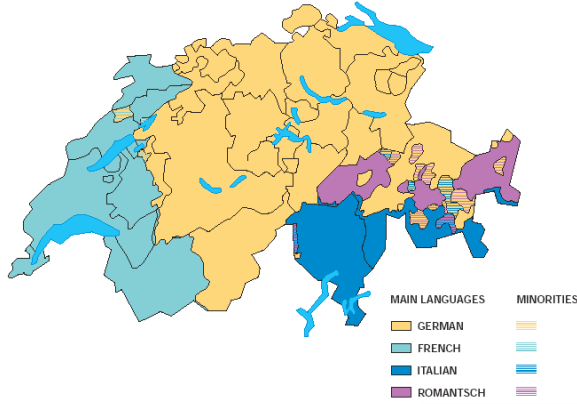
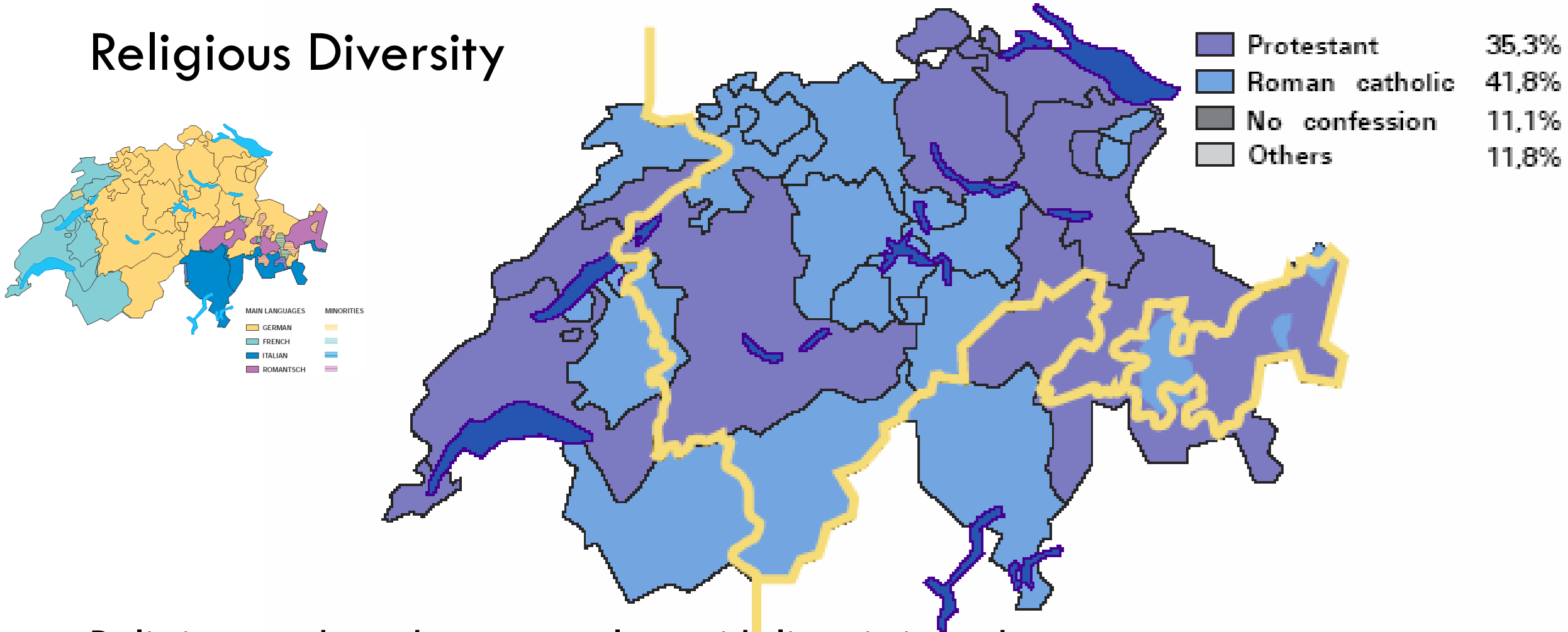




# Multicultural Switzerland

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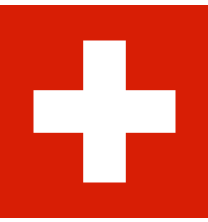
## Religious Diversity



Religious orders do not overlap with linguistic orders

# Switzerland

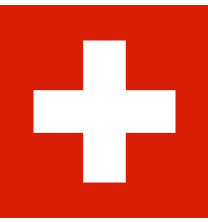
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## The Alps

- Greatest **mountain range system** of Europe
- Stretching from Austria in the East to France in the West
  - Swiss Alps are the central portion of the mountain range
- Most commonly known for
  - Swiss cheese
  - Swiss chocolate





# Natural Disasters/Hazards

25.01.1946, Wallis  
earthquake  $l_0=8$   $M_w=6.1$



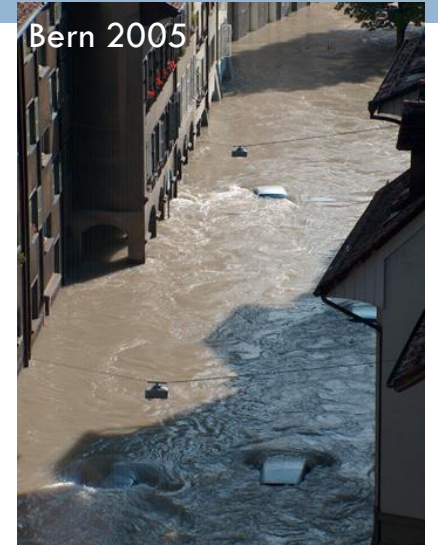
2003, Forestfire Loèche, Wallis



23.10.2002 - Randa rockfall, Wallis



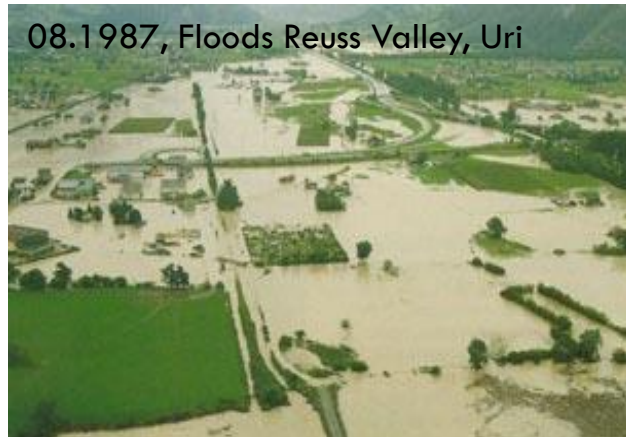
Bern 2005



7.02.2003, Snow avalanche,  
Walenstadt, St. Gallen



08.1987, Floods Reuss Valley, Uri



01.06.1994, Landslide Falli Hölli,  
Freiburg



Brienz 2005





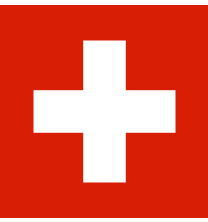


# Swiss Chocolate – Fun Facts

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- 1697 => Heinrich Escher, mayor of Zurich, was introduced to chocolate in Brussels and brought it home, where it was **discreetly consumed**
- 1722 => The Zurich Council **banned** it (was considered an aphrodisiac thus unfit for virtuous citizens)
- 1792 => The **first chocolate shop** in Switzerland opened in Bern
- **Swiss eat more chocolate than anyone in world**
  - 2018 => av. 19.4 pounds per capita (12.3 kg in 2001)
  - Biggest markets for Swiss chocolate producers: Germany, UK, France, and Italy.





# Federalism

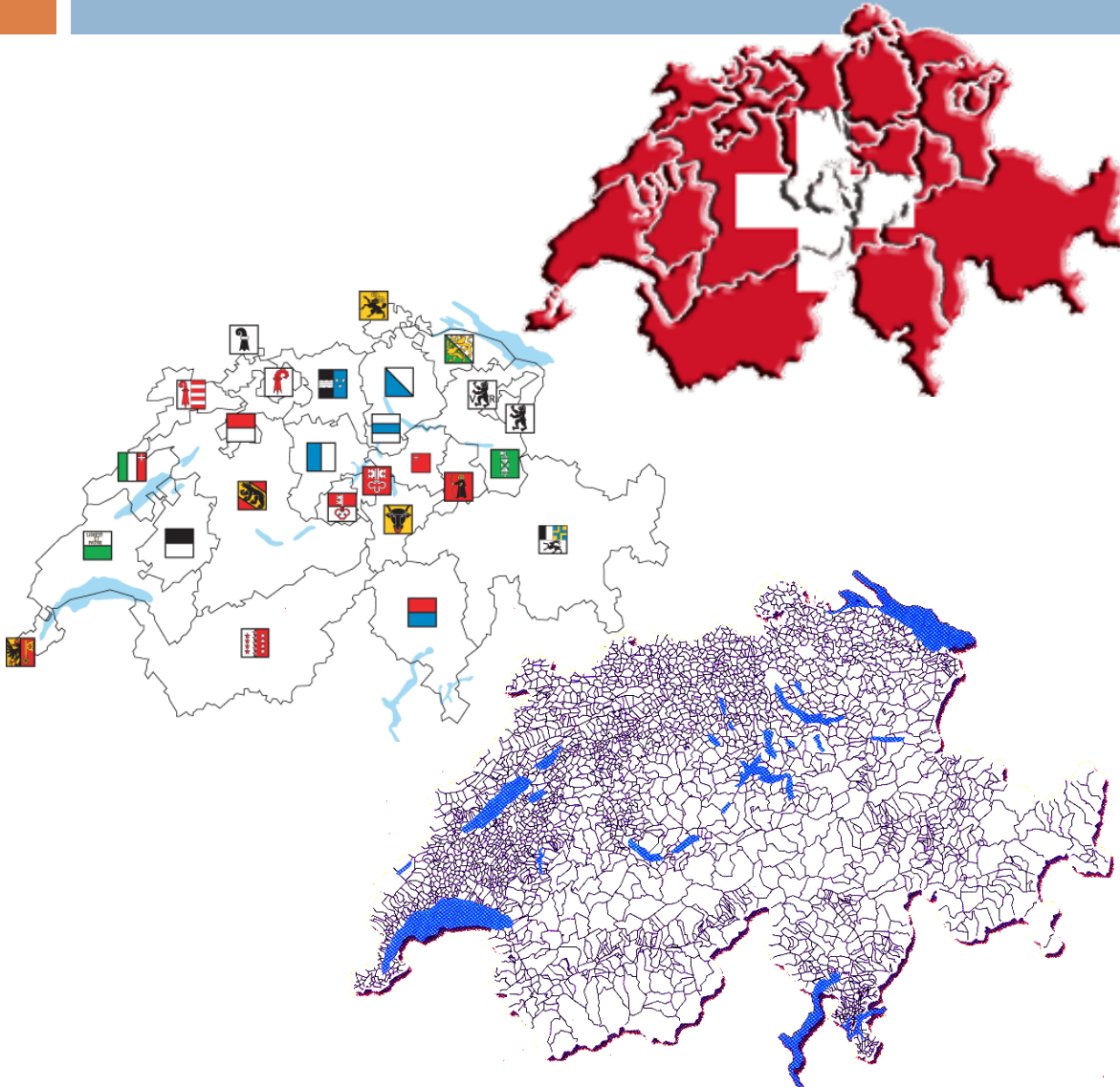
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- **Federalism** gives the Cantons **political autonomy**
- Allowed rural areas, different religious and language groups to **govern themselves** and to **influence federal decision-making**
- Requirement of **majority of Cantons** for constitutional amendments protects small rural (mostly Catholic) Cantons
- However, federalism only protects minorities **representing a political majority** in a sub-national unit



# Political System

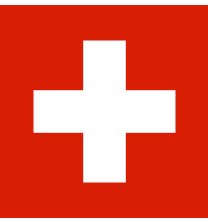
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**Federal Government**  
Conceptual work and legislation  
Supervision of implementation

**Cantons (26)**  
Implementation of federal regulations

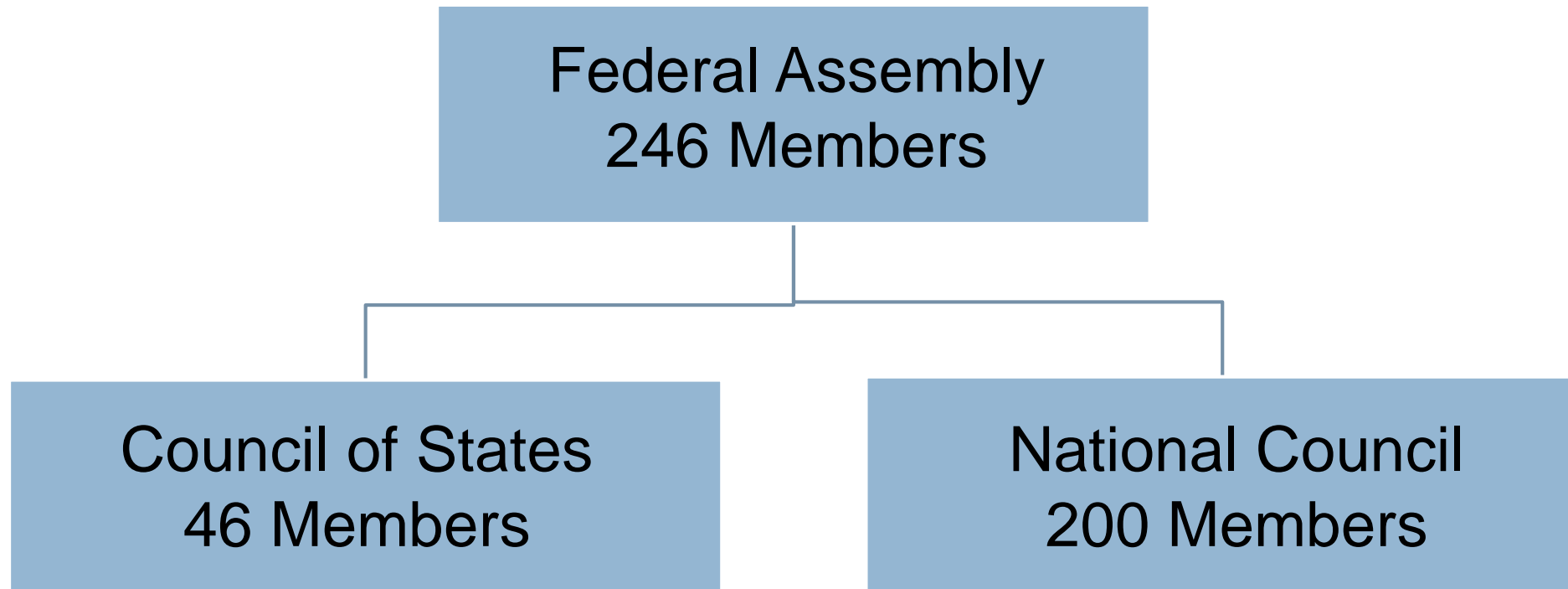
**Municipalities (< 3000)**  
Implementation of federal  
and cantonal regulations

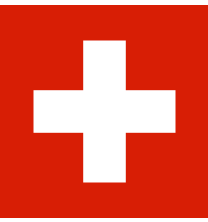


# Political System

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- The Legislative (a bicameral parliament)
- The Executive (Federal Council, a collegial government)

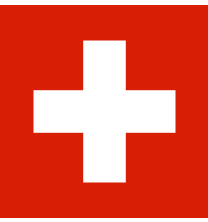




# Political System

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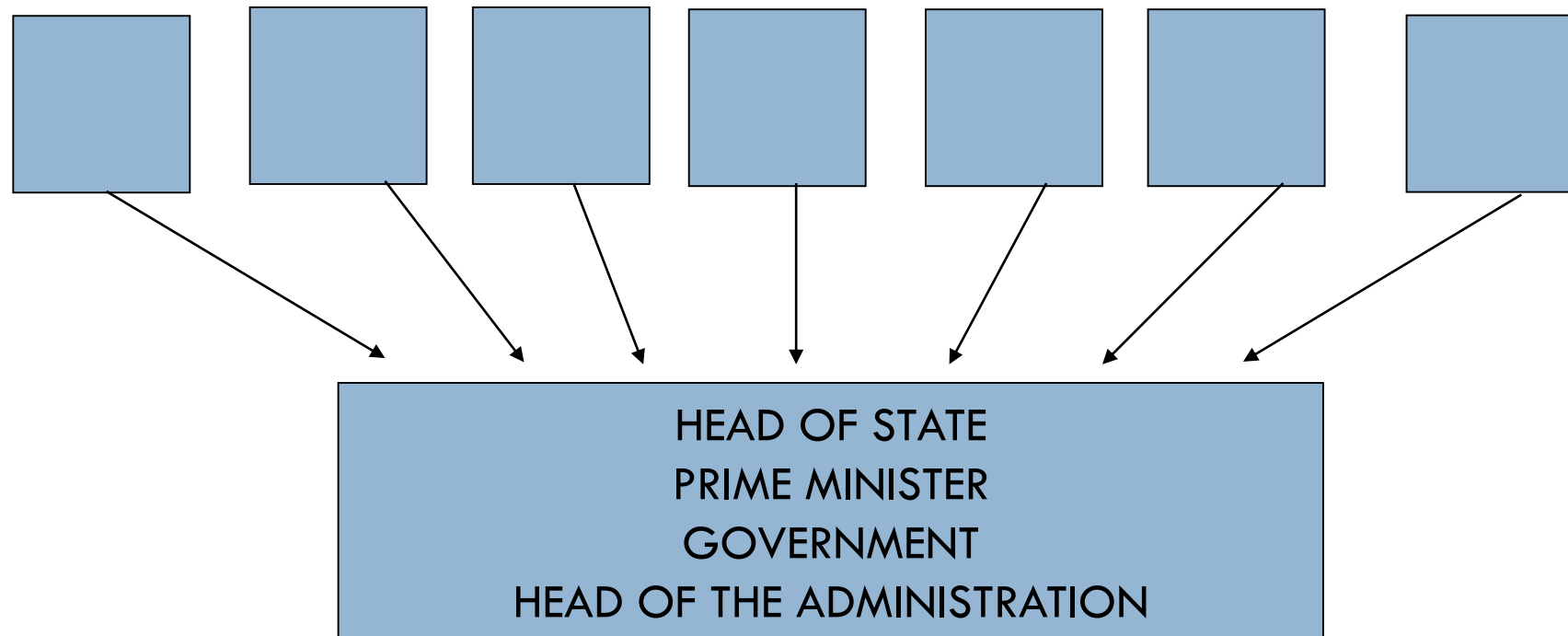
- **National Council** => 200 deputies are elected according to a standardized procedure, each canton representing an electoral district. The largest cantons have many deputies (ZH with 34 and BE with 26), whereas the smallest cantons have only one
- **Council of States** => Over time, there have been changes to how the 46 deputies are elected. Gradually been taken from the cantonal legislatures and given to the people
  - **Popular election:** they are not “real” cantonal representatives
  - Need for greater cantonal representation => 1993: **Conference of Cantonal Governments**

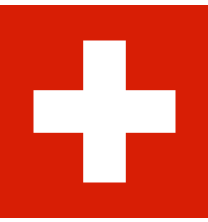


# Political System

22

- The Federal Council, the executive => a collegial government of 7 members
  - Derives from the French First Republic, more precisely the “Constitution de l’An III”



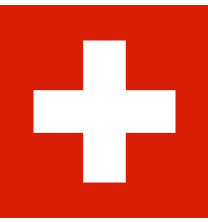


# Political System

23

- Cantons are not directly represented in the Federal Council
  - ‘The Council represents the geographical and linguistic diversity of the country’
- 1959 => the Federal Assembly opted for a political composition, known as the “**magic formula**”
  - Zaubersformel, formule magique
  - Arithmetic formula for dividing the seven executive seats of the council between the four ruling parties
- Its collegial nature allows minorities to be represented in the highest bodies of the Swiss polity





# Economy

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- About two third of the area of Switzerland is covered with **forests, lakes and mountains**
- Switzerland has **no mineral resources** => must import, process and resell them as products
- **Strong** economy (banking + finance)
  - Ranked as most competitive in the world by the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report



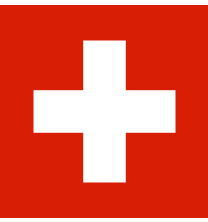


# Economy Sectors

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The economy in Switzerland is divided into three sectors:

- 1. Agriculture** => Less than 10% of the population is employed in the sector, strongly supported by the government.
  - Production of Swiss farmers does not fulfill the needs of the people, Switzerland must rely on imported goods
- 2. Industry** => About 40% of the population is employed in the industry, trade and handicraft. Significant export market.
  - Machine and metal industry, watch industry, textile industry
- 3. Services** => More than 50% of the population is employed in this sector
  - Includes banking, assurances, tourism etc.
  - Banking is one of the most important businesses in Switzerland.



# Cost of Living

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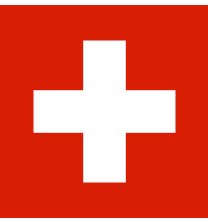
	Germany	Switzerland	Difference
Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant	10.00 € (11.31 Fr.)	21.23 € (24.00 Fr.)	+112.25 %
McMeal at McDonalds (or Equivalent Combo Meal)	7.00 € (7.92 Fr.)	12.38 € (14.00 Fr.)	+76.88 %
Domestic Beer (0.5 liter draught)	3.50 € (3.96 Fr.)	6.19 € (7.00 Fr.)	+76.88 %
Milk (regular), (1 liter)	0.71 € (0.81 Fr.)	1.38 € (1.56 Fr.)	+93.43 %
Loaf of Fresh White Bread (500g)	1.24 € (1.40 Fr.)	2.34 € (2.65 Fr.)	+88.96 %
Apartment (1 bedroom) in City Centre	694.72 € (785.54 Fr.)	1,256.23 € (1,420.46 Fr.)	+80.83 %
Average Monthly Net Salary (After Tax)	2,203.19 € (2,491.22 Fr.)	4,344.03 € (4,911.94 Fr.)	+97.17 %



# The Swiss Army

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- Conscription => compulsory enlistment of Swiss men to national service in the army
- Ages 20 to 42
  - Soldiers keep their arms at home
    - Automatic rifle for simple soldiers
    - Pistol for officers
- Many cave-like buildings have been built in mountains to serve military purposes
  - They hold arms, supplies for crisis, and even fighter planes

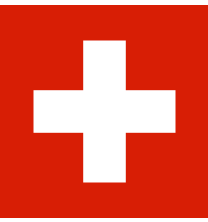


# Swiss Political System

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- Direct democracy
- The system of initiative and referendum is a modern form of popular assembly (has all its features), suitable for large number of people and decisions
- Laws are created in four steps:
  1. Draft by the administration
  2. Consultation of federal states, political parties, entrepreneurs, unions, other interested groups
  3. Parliamentary debate and final version passed
  4. Possibility of a referendum

Referendum is Latin for 'referral' or 'referring' of a certain matter to the public for their vote

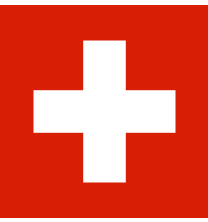


# Referendums and initiatives

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- Amendments to the **constitution** => mandatory referendum
- Amendments to **legislation** => optional referendum
- Requests to change the **constitution** => initiative



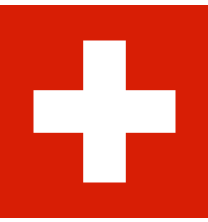


# Referendums

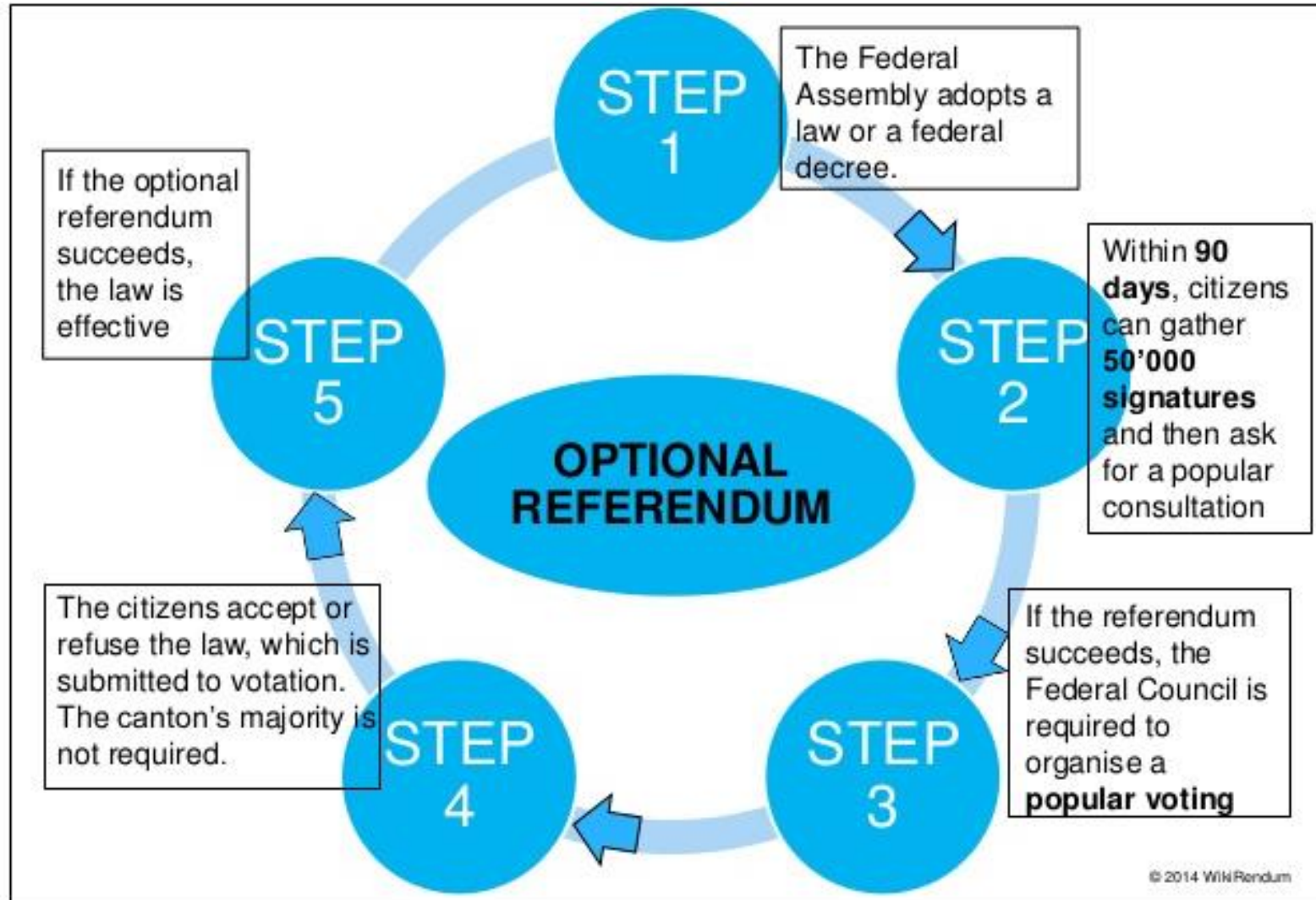
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- Similar to a **veto**, has the effect of **delaying & safeguarding** the political process by **blocking/delaying** amendments adopted by parliament or the government
- A referendum is only called if enough **signatures** are collected
- However, the authorities are obliged to hold a referendum if the legislation involves an **amendment to the constitution initiated by the government**, or any proposal for Switzerland to sign a **major international agreement**



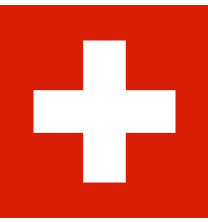


# Referendums



**Referendum:**  
Maximum amount of time for collecting signatures  
**> 100 days**  
Required number of signatures  
**> 50 000**





# Referendum's Statistics

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		1848 – 1950	1951 – 1980	1981 – 2011 (Feb.)	Total
<i>Mandatory referendums</i>		63	75	74	212
	Accepted	43	58	57	158
	Declined	20	17	17	54
	Declined %	31.7	22.7	23.0	25.5
<i>Optional referendums</i>		54	37	76	167
	Accepted	20	19	54	93
	Declined	34	18	22	74
	Accepted %	37.0	51.4	71.1	55.7





# Initiatives

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- Federal popular initiative (*Eidgenössische Volksinitiative, Initiative populaire fédérale*) is an instrument of **direct democracy** in Switzerland
- It allows citizens to propose changes to the **Swiss Federal Constitution**
- 1893 => first initiative under the current system was accepted
- Recently initiatives:
  - Cutting military spending (rejected)
  - Limiting the foreign population to 18% (rejected)
  - Banning the production and sale of absinthe (accepted).

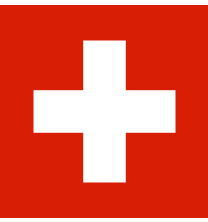
## Initiative:

Maximum time for collecting signatures

> **18 months**

Required number of signatures

> **100 000**



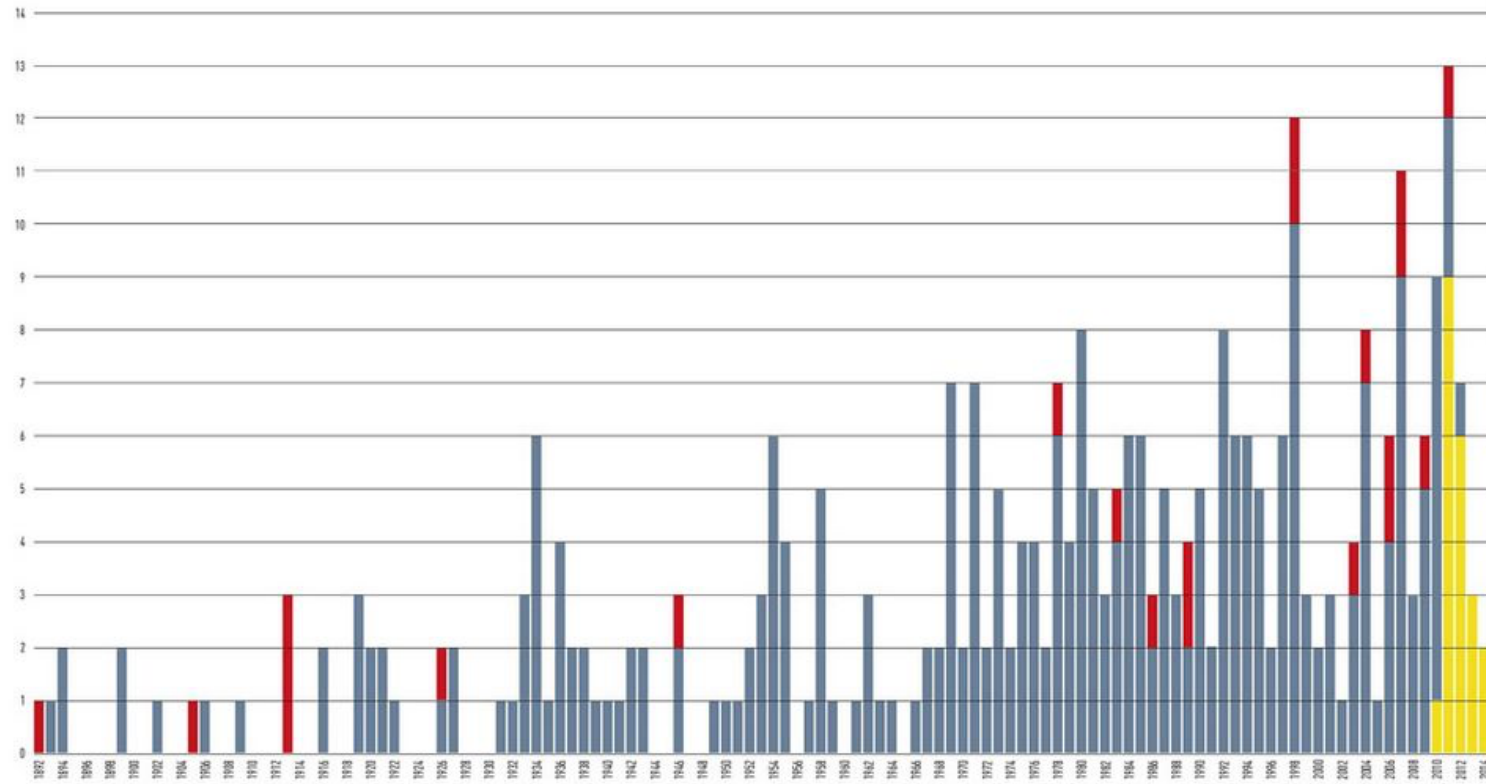
# Initiatives' Statistics

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- Makes the political system more open, any political group may influence the political agenda
- The vast majority are rejected, BUT
- The concerns they address give rise to broad debate
- Eventually translated (partially) into new laws

319 initiatives were submitted between 1892 and 2014

■ Successful submission   ■ Unsuccessful, invalid, withdrawn or rejected   ■ Accepted at referendum



# Initiatives' Statistics

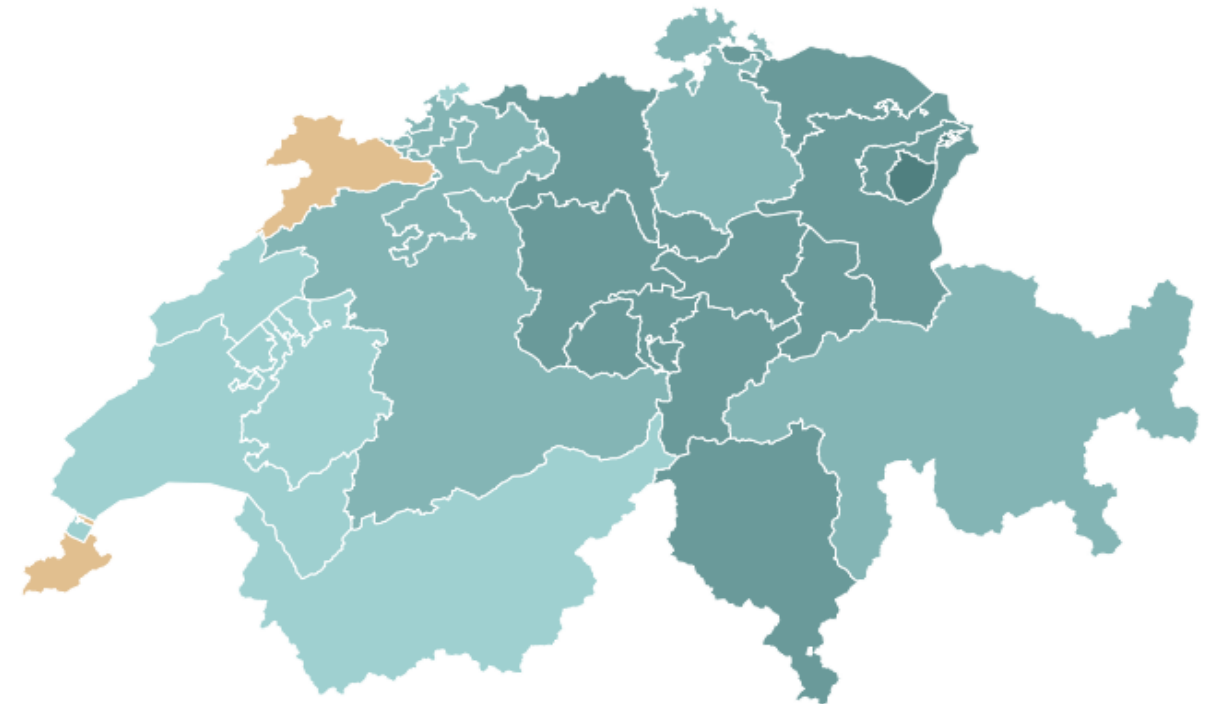
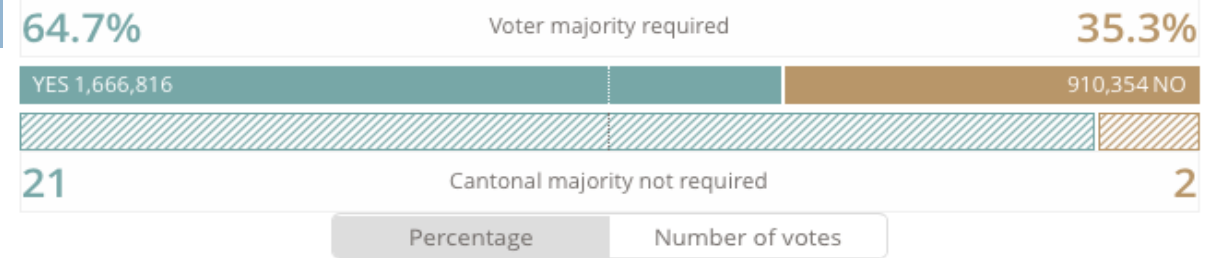
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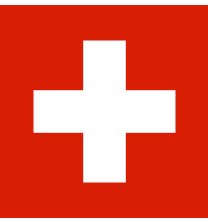
- Sunday (25.11), final set of votes in 2018:
  - Put the Swiss constitution above international law
  - Legal measures aimed at boosting the powers of social welfare detectives
  - Promote cows with horns

Cow horns	Swiss vs international law	Social welfare detectives
REJECTED	REJECTED	ACCEPTED

## Switzerland

Vote from 25/11/2018





# Important foreign affairs' decisions

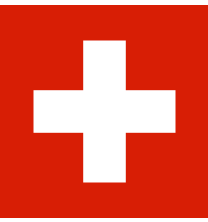
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- December 6, 1992: Switzerland refuses to join the European Economic Area

Citizens yes: 49.7%; Cantons yes: 6 2/2 yes; turnout: 78.7%

March 3, 2002: Switzerland joins the United Nations (first vote on March 16, 1986, “no”)

- Citizens yes: 54.6%; Cantons yes: 11 2/2 yes; turnout: 58.4%

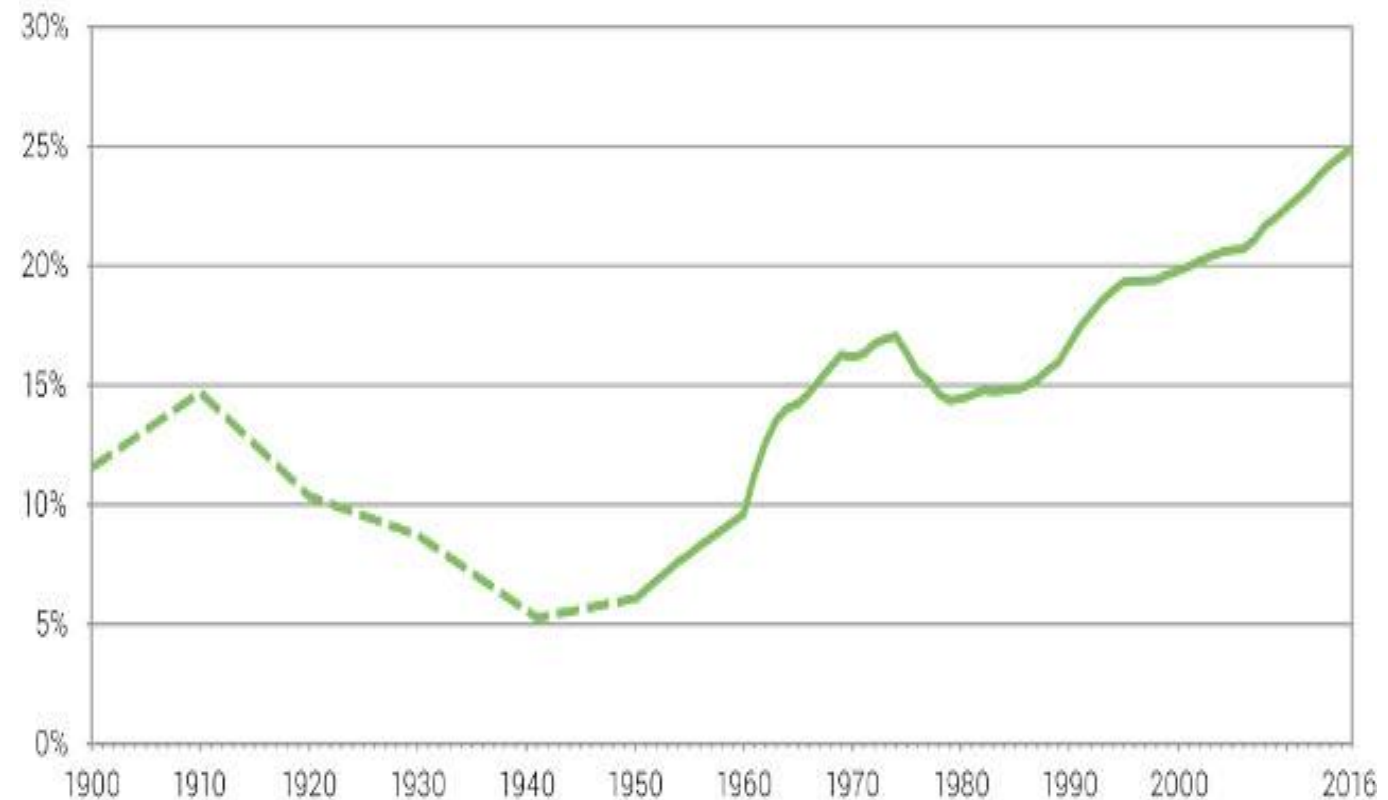


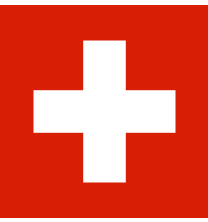
# Foreigners in Switzerland

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- In recent years, the number of foreigners in Switzerland increased at a faster rate than the number of Swiss
- More than 2.1 million foreigners in Switzerland, 24.9% of the total population

Part de la population résidante permanente étrangère

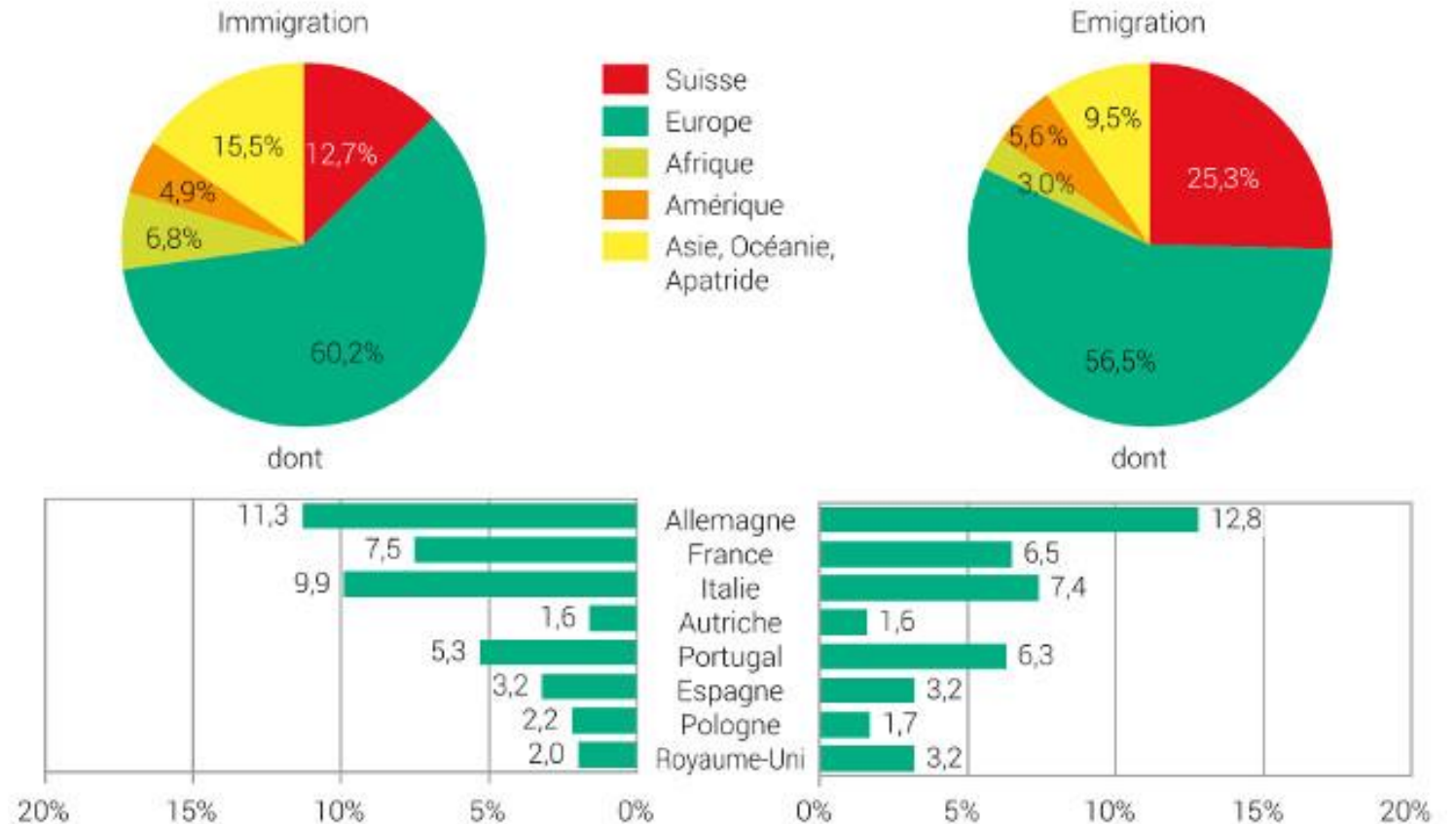


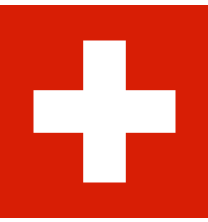


# Foreigners in Switzerland

- Babies born to foreign citizens in Switzerland do not automatically get Swiss citizenship
- Largest diaspora within Switzerland => Italians, Germans, Portuguese and French

Immigration et émigration selon la nationalité, en 2016





# Particular issues (national level):

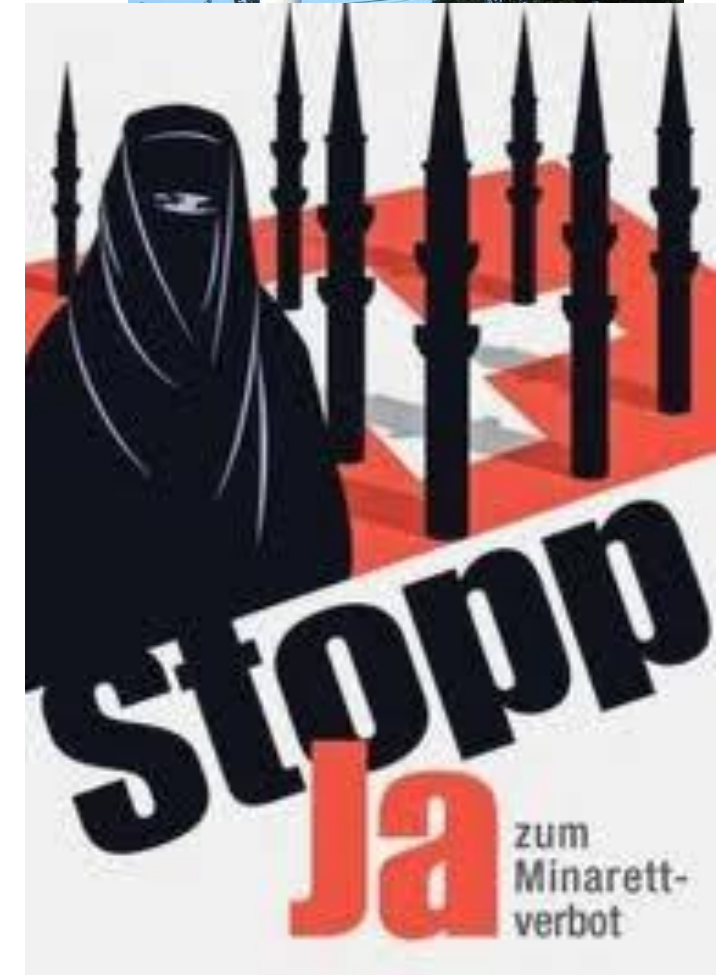
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Date	Year	Issue	Yes people	Yes cantons	Turnout
February 7	1971	Women's right to vote on national level (224)	65.7		57.7
December 12	1975	The 40 hours week (264), Initiative	22	0	45.2
May 28	1978	Summer time (283)	47.9		49
March 10	1885	More paid vacations (329), Initiative	34.8	2	35
Nov 26	2006	"Kohäsionsmilliarde" - additional support for the new Eastern European member countries of the EU (526)	53.4		45

# The Minaret Controversy

40

- **The minaret controversy** => construction of minarets in Switzerland has been subject to legal and political controversy during the 2000's
- **November 2009 referendum** => a constitutional amendment **banning** the construction of new minarets was approved by 57.5%.
  - Only 4 of 26 cantons, mostly in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, opposed the initiative





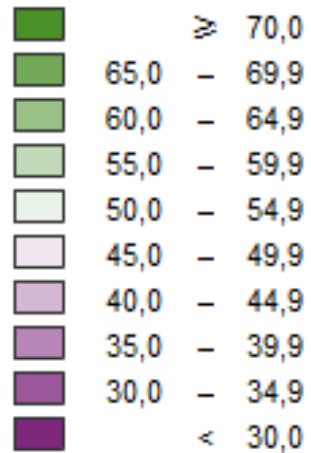


# The Minaret Controversy

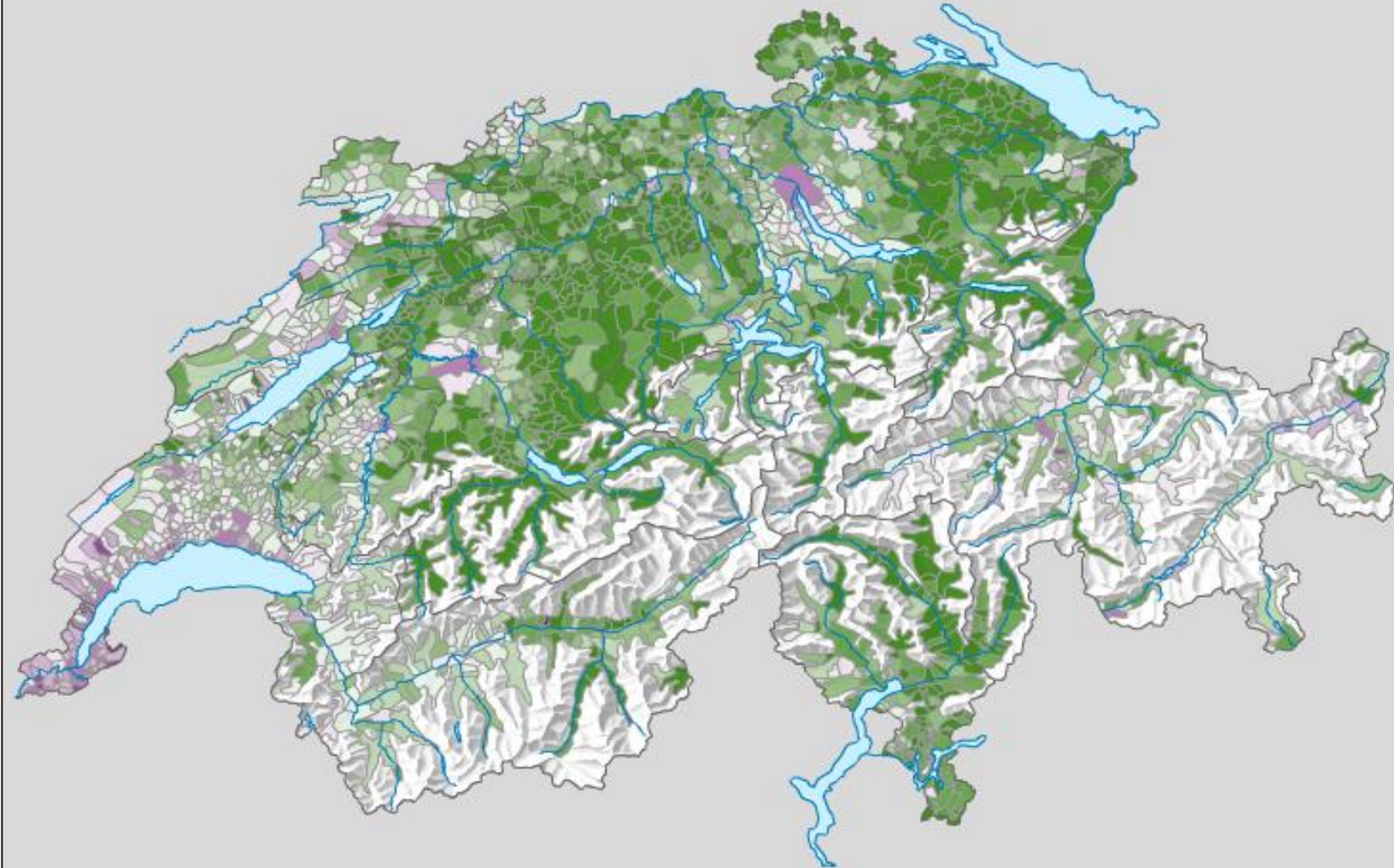
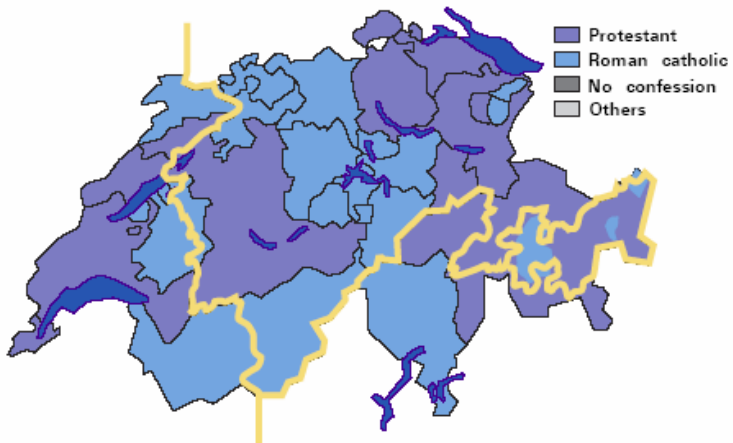
41

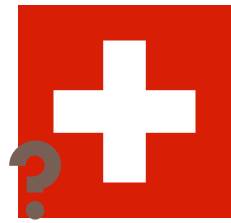
Volksinitiative «Gegen den Bau von Minaretten», Abstimmung vom 29.11.2009

Ja-Stimmenanteil, in %



Schweiz: 57,5

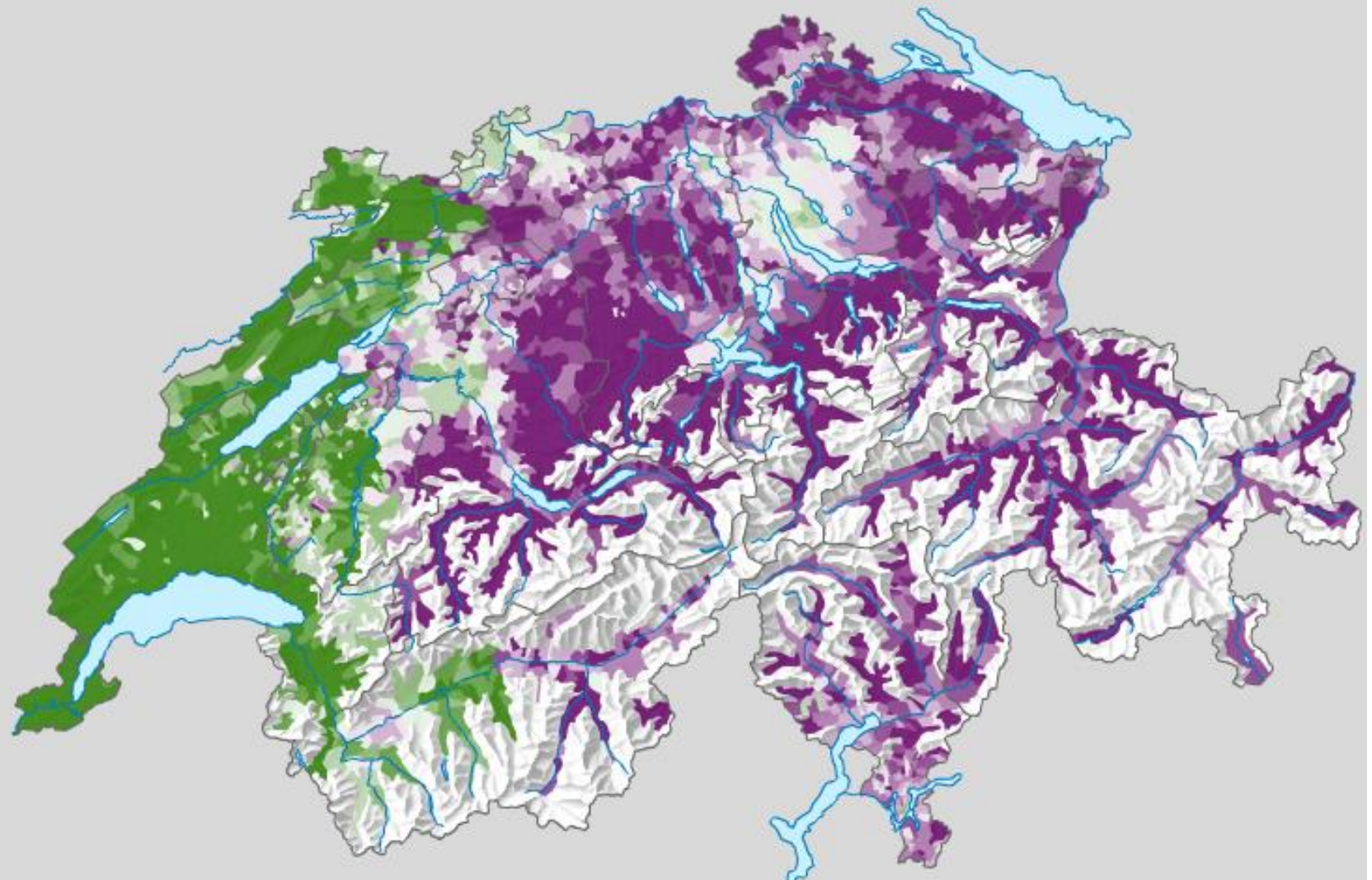
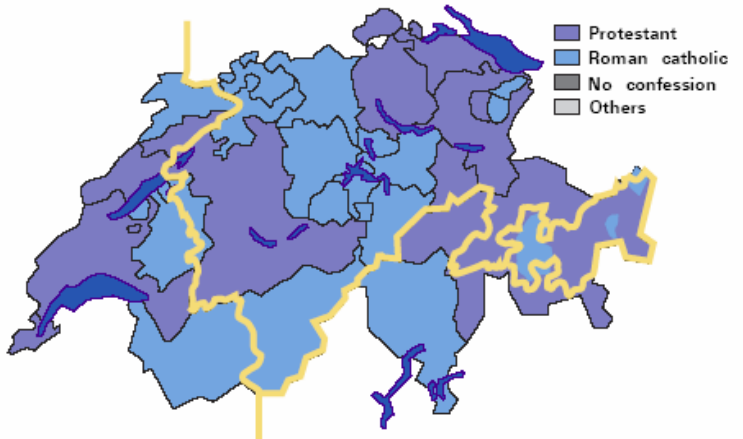
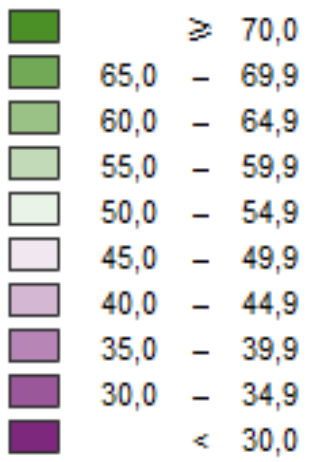




# 1992: Joining the European Economic Area?

Bundesbeschluss über den Europäischen Wirtschaftsraum (EWR), Abstimmung vom 06.12.1992

Ja-Stimmenanteil, in %

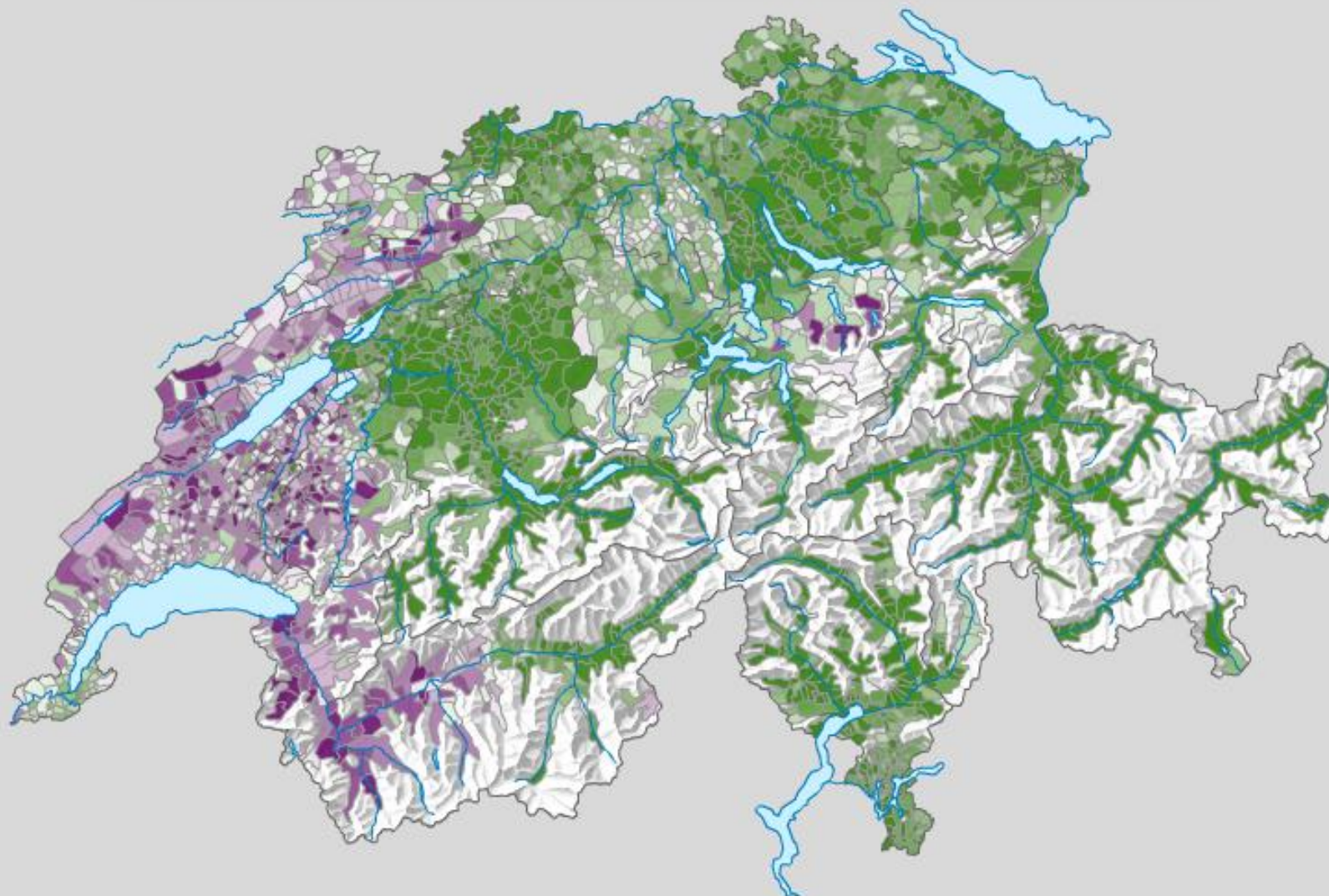
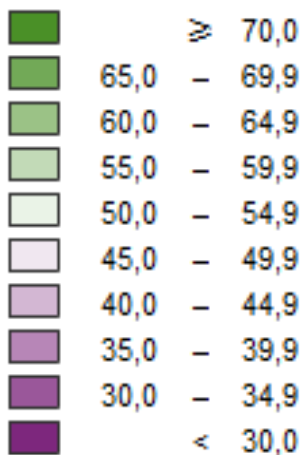




# 1994: Pay when you use the motorway

Bundesbeschluss über die Weiterführung der Nationalstrassenabgabe, Abstimmung vom 20.02.1994

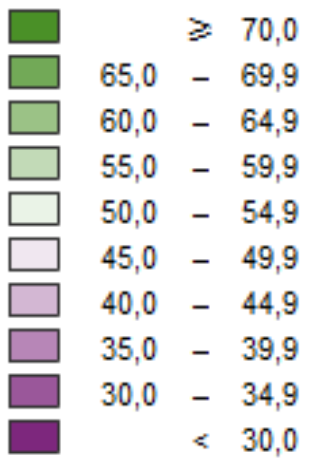
Ja-Stimmenanteil, in %



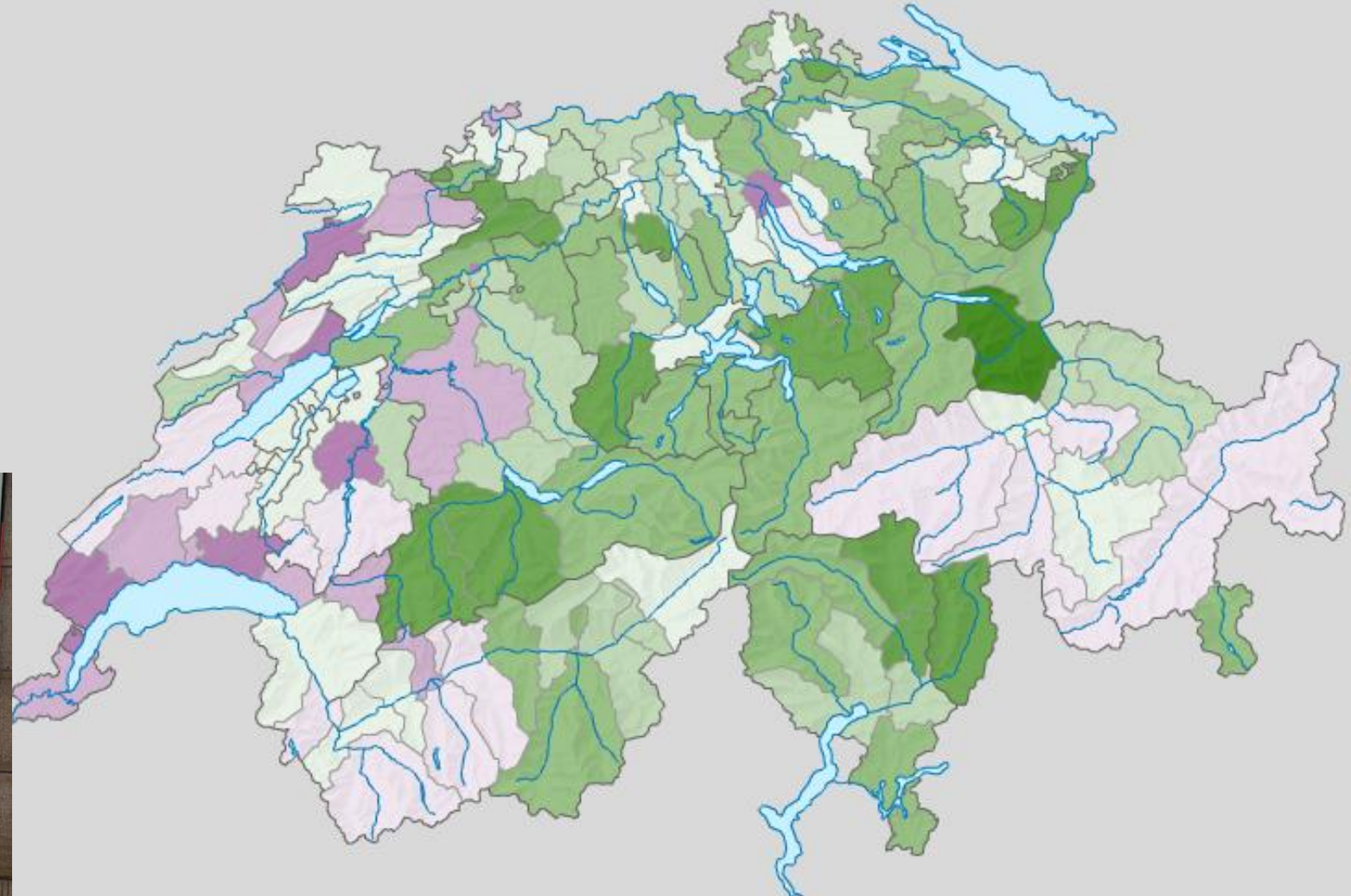


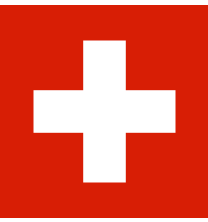
# 2013: Initiative to Send Back Criminal Foreigners

Ja-Stimmenanteil, in %



Volksinitiative «Für die Ausschaffung krimineller Ausländer», Abstimmung vom 28.11.2010



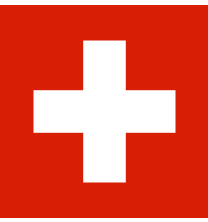


# Switzerland and the EU

45

- Swiss tradition of **neutrality** (WWI & WWII)
  - Self-imposed
  - Permanent
  - Armed
- **Nationalistic government** not interested in ceding sovereignty
- Economic policies are designed to **protect local industries** (esp. agriculture) from foreign competition
- Switzerland has embarked on a policy of building **bilateral agreements** with the EU **rather than joining** outright

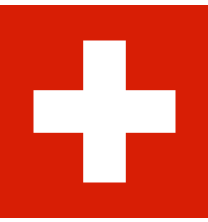




# Costs of Staying Out

46

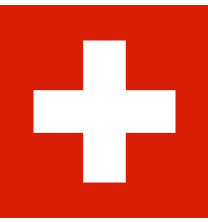
- Export problems
  - Access to EU markets is not guaranteed
- Inflation problems
  - Europeans nervous about the Euro due to expansion of the EU invest in Swiss Francs, inflating the value of the currency and restricting Swiss exports
- Capital flight
  - High construction costs, expensive labor, skill shortages already make investment in Switzerland unattractive
  - Several multinational corporations, such as Roche, Sulzer and Alusuisse, have frozen planned investment projects in Switzerland



# Costs of Staying Out

47

- Large Swiss companies, including Nestle, are shifting activities out of Switzerland in fear of discrimination by other nations
- Already four out of five employees of the top 15 Swiss companies work in other countries
- Scientific information lag
  - EU scientific exchange programs accept Swiss citizens only if they fail to fill such exchanges with persons from EU countries
- Accumulated bilateral agreements and cooperation may create de-facto incorporation in the EU for Switzerland

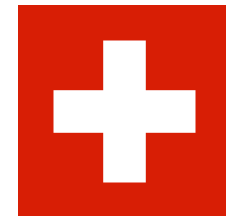


# Conflict Resolution in Switzerland

48

- Before 1848 => History not so peaceful
- Four classical **cleavages**:
  - Religion: Catholics- Protestants
  - Languages: German-French (Italian and Romansch)
  - Economy I: Urban regions- rural regions
  - Economy II: Class conflict: capitalist-worker interest
- *How was it possible to resolve deep societal conflicts in a peaceful way?* **Power sharing in political institutions!**





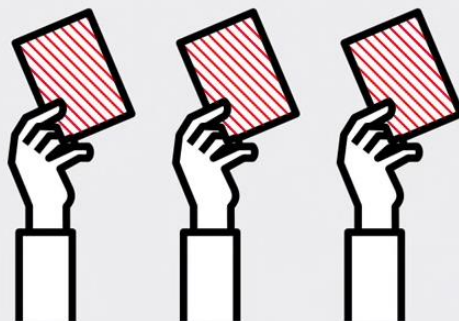
# Important to remember

In Switzerland sovereignty resides with the people, who exercise supreme political power.

**63%**

Swiss citizens are given the right to vote at the age of eighteen.

Swiss women did not gain the right to vote in federal elections until 1971.



In the Landsgemeinde of Appenzell Innerrhoden and Glarus citizens cast their votes in open-air assemblies.

On up to 4 occasions in any given year, the Swiss electorate votes on some 15 different issues.

The Swiss have many rights allowing them to participate in the political decision-taking process and can directly intervene in politics, for example by launching an initiative or a referendum.

There are three ways to cast your vote



at the ballot box



by postal vote (most popular)



e-voting (only in certain cantons)

# Next Session...

50

- Switzerland II
- Direct Democracy



**Thank You For Your Attention!**

**Questions???**