

GENERAL ELECTIONS: Switzerland on the way to historic changes?

After the Banks and Parliament had approved and then adopted legislation that de facto cease to exist "secret" bank accounts, we are now in front of the general elections at all levels - from local (cantonal) to Federal. In elections that held every four years, the key is "in Cantons" and not on a federal parliament. On the mood of the voters and the redistribution of political power at the "local level" (Canton) depends the balance of power in National and the Cantonal Council. A cantonal and national council constitute a unified parliament and have the same political decision-making power.

How it was heard at a Workshop about coming election 2015, held yesterday in Bern and organized by the "Swiss Presence" - the elections on 18 October could be a "historic" changes and shifts of political focus from the moderate center 'to the right'. If, after these elections the strongest individual Party, the Swiss People's Party, or SVP, managed to win the 'plus' one or two places in the government this shift to the right political options will be open.

"For someone who looks at the structure of our political system, everything seems so complicated." - Says parliamentarian from Christian Democrats Jacques Neiryneck and adds: "It is the first impression. In fact everything is precise, easy, clearly defined and most importantly **it works!** The nature of the political system is so placed to maintain the overall stability of the country and the parties are always trying "not to act but to re-act". This mean, general manner is ' to wait a bit, analyze the situation, no matter what it is , and then start with the consultations" with others party - the aim is always to find the optimum compromise in the interest of all. We have a small public administration of all 38,000 officers and government of the eight ministers. Parliament elects the members of the government and the government in a rotational basis every two years elects the head of state " .

Professor of Political Science at the University of Geneva, Mr. Pascal Sciarini emphasizes "that is in a basic of our political system to implement different kinds of lobbying. There are from lobbying between parties to lobbying from interest groups. A special phenomenon that exists only in Switzerland is the way of functioning of the Parliament".



Dr Zoran Vitorovic, Executive Director EWB Swiss in discussion with Mr Jacques Neiryneck, Christian Democrats



Mr Jacques Neiryneck in discussion with Mr Parvis Hanson, President, EWB Swiss

"But there is a more dynamic when parliamentarians are fighting for any decision. In fact, if you imagine that people are sitting or are "lined up" vertically in the Parliament, according to party affiliation, there is a so-called "horizontal" grouping. These are the parliamentarians who represent certain interest groups or associations - for example transport associations. Then is always a question – how one parliamentarian will vote – as his political parties program is or in accordance with interest group .This makes more dynamic political life in a Swiss Parliament"

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Tiana Angelina Moser, a member of the Green Liberal Party added, "That our system is very slow when it comes to implementations of anything new. I was particularly irritated that the major parties even in this election campaign did not want to thematic the question of 'strong franc' and refugees. Ok, Swiss has accepted to have 3,000 refugees from Syria by agreement with the EU. But, this is still nothing if you know how many of them came to Germany. On the other hand, the question is why the major parties not discuss publicly about these two issues? First, they would only lose his voters. A second, basically nothing would have changed by the parties because we have a Concordat agreement between five major parties. And these 5 will share the majority of the seats in parliament and government. My question is in which direction could move Switzerland policies if the People's Party SVP receives one or two more seats in the Cabinet. This could means that they will strive for a more restrictive immigration policy, it will be against the new asylum seekers, and all of this in a package can create additional headings to all of us in relations with the EU and other countries. "



Mr Parvis Hanson in discussion with Ms Tiana Moser, Green Liberal Party

Ms. Moser also suggests that "we now have nearly 80,000 newly immigrated people each year and the economic capacity to absorb all a new labor force is limited. I think this pressure will not easily be solved if these trends continue in next 5 or 10 years. Then there is a very worrying trend and it relates to young people. According to the Report, which gives us precisely facts, we know that most young people under 25 years are politically oriented, mainly, conservative and traditional. More specifically – these are voters of SVP. This is shocking phenomena because we are talking about young people, it would be logical that they are more liberal or progressive. And we should not forget that every third from this young are coming from second-generation foreigner's immigrants. "

Ms Karin Peter from the Conservative Democratic Party clearly stated that the Swiss Government needs to do more for the Small and Medium size businesses in Switzerland since nearly 90% of the GDP comes from the SMEs. Ms Peter stated that the main focus in Swiss politics is focused around the Agriculture sector since they have a very strong lobby who want to keep the status quo in fear of international markets and do not see the international markets as an opportunity. This causes that overall many people within the Agriculture sector will vote convertibly and therefor over the past 50 years not many political changes has been passed.



Ms Karin Peter, Conservative Democratic Party in discussion with EWB Swiss President

Professor Sciarini finally concludes that the percentage of votes obtained in the elections does not mean that it will therefore decide on the number of "seats" in parliament. There have been cases, due to the political parties' agreement that a party wins minus 0.3% of the vote and at the cantonal level got three parliamentary seats. So everything is a matter of agreement between the Parties and in accordance with the existing laws and constitution.

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Experts and political representative had stressed, once more, that according to the law and the Swiss Constitution the People's Bank of a Swiss is independent institution and nobody has a right, from a politicians or political body's, to interfere in to the Swiss National Bank work policy. A National Bank is determined, still as an independent institution for a fiscal and monetary policy and neither politicians nor the Parliament should interfere in the work of monetary institutions.



Mr Parvis Hanson asking a question on the Swiss Economy and the different Swiss parties' positions

Mr Parvis Hanson, President, EWB Swiss asked the political experts attending the different parties position on the Swiss economy in general. Professor Sciarini stated on the broader economic aspects, all the parties of today lack a clear vision on the Swiss economy and more specific the SMEs. The major national parties specifically stated that they are only responsible to create an open economic and competitive platform however it was not their responsibility through laws or investment to stimulate a specific direction. The smaller new parties such as the Conservative Democratic or Green Liberal party take a more modern view on this issue and do understand that market economics have changed drastically over the past 30 years and Switzerland has to reinvent itself in a globalized market economy by a clear Swiss Government market vision, investment and stimulating the SMEs to international growth.

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