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How do the Swiss abroad vote?

The question as to whether the Swiss abroad vote differently to the electorate living in Switzerland is frequently asked after elections and referenda. And if so, how? We have analysed this issue as far as it is possible to do so.

The question about the voting behaviour of the Swiss abroad in elections and referenda can only be answered selectively. This is because not all the cantons provide separate information on their voting patterns. However, based on the little data available from the cantons of Geneva, Vaud, Lucerne, Aargau, Thurgau, St. Gallen and Valais, it is clear that the party political preferences of voters abroad vary significantly from one canton to the next. Whether Swiss voters abroad in a particular part of the world, such as the USA or South-East Asia, have similar preferences cannot be determined as the statistics on votes from abroad are not broken down by origin.

Surprising details

The data available from the parliamentary elections on 23 October 2011 reveals some interesting facts:

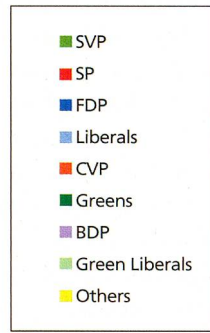
- The Greens were clearly more successful among the Swiss abroad than they were on average in all the cantons, in some cases significantly more so.
- The Social Democratic Party (SP) performed exceptionally well among the Swiss abroad everywhere except in the canton of Vaud.
- The Free Democratic Party (FDP) was more successful among the Swiss abroad than on average in the cantons of Aargau and Thurgau, but less successful by contrast in Geneva, Vaud, Lucerne and Valais.

- The Christian Democratic People's Party (CVP) achieved above-average results among the Swiss abroad in Geneva and Vaud but, by contrast, below-average results in Lucerne, Aargau, Thurgau, St. Gallen and Valais.

Comparisons with previous elections

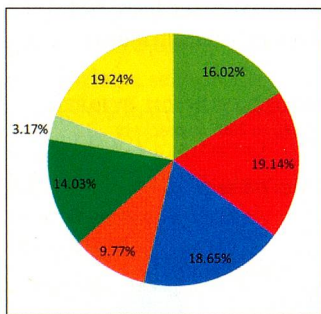
In comparison to 2007, the Greens, FDP and CVP increased their vote among the Swiss abroad in Geneva, whereas the SP and Swiss People's Party (SVP) share of the vote fell. The Greens, CVP, SVP and SP increased their support in the canton of Vaud, while the FDP combined with the Liberals lost votes. The SVP made slight gains in Lucerne, whereas the CVP and FDP lost ground.

It is also noticeable that the SVP is the strongest party among the Swiss abroad in four of the six cantons surveyed (Lucerne, Aargau, Thurgau and St. Gallen). Four years ago, it did not occupy the top spot in any of the three cantons that revealed the results for the Swiss abroad at the time (Geneva, Vaud and Lucerne). However, the SVP is between 4.4 and 14.2 percentage points weaker among the Swiss abroad than the cantonal average in all the cantons where it now holds top position. Only in Valais did the SVP win a higher percentage of votes abroad than the cantonal average.

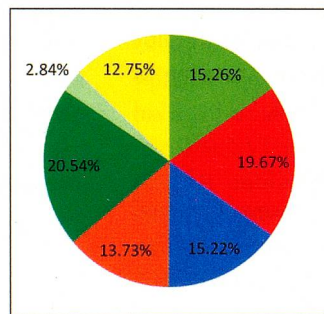


Legend for the charts below

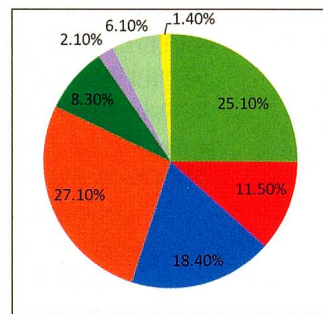
Geneva: canton as a whole



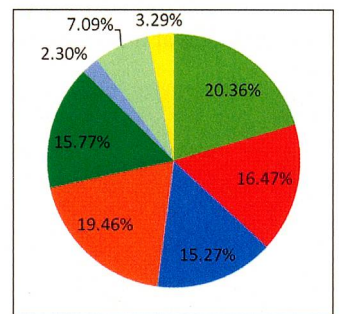
Swiss abroad



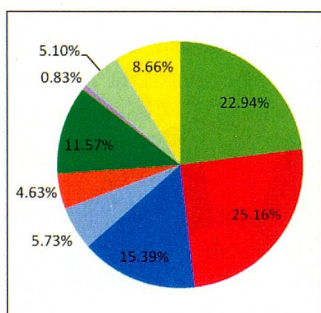
Lucerne: canton as a whole



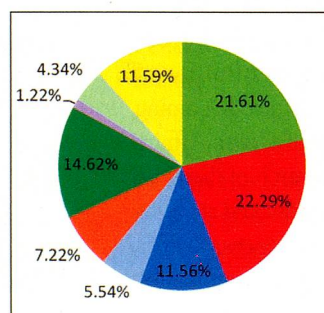
Swiss abroad



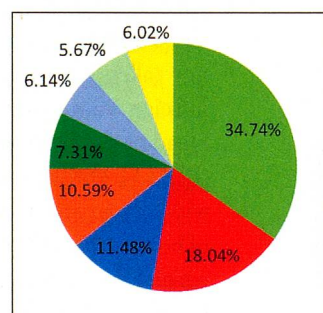
Vaud: canton as a whole



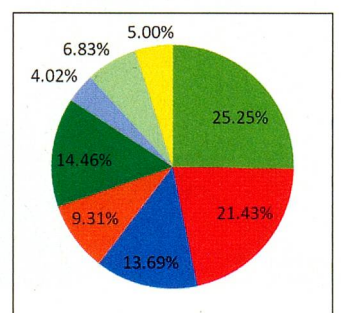
Swiss abroad



Aargau: canton as a whole



Swiss abroad



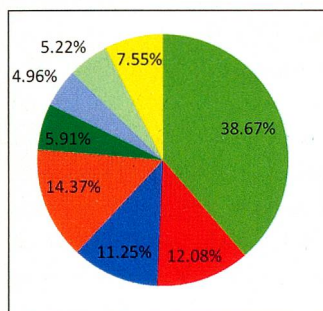
Calls for e-voting

The charts provide a detailed representation of each individual party's share of the vote among all the eligible voters in the respective cantons as well as the strength of each party if only the votes cast by Swiss abroad are taken into account.

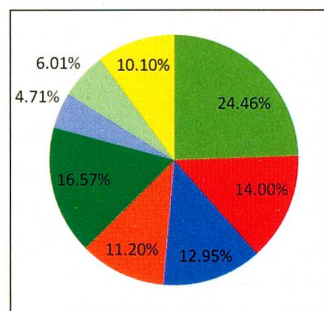
As can be seen from the appeal opposite, the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) has set itself the goal of enabling all those entitled to vote to take part in elections and referenda via the Internet. OSA believes this would facilitate the political participation of the Swiss abroad enormously and would therefore also result in a higher turnout. E-voting is also an issue for the electorate living in Switzerland, particularly younger generations. (BE)

Further details of the e-election trials can be found in the Federal Chancellery's text on page 28

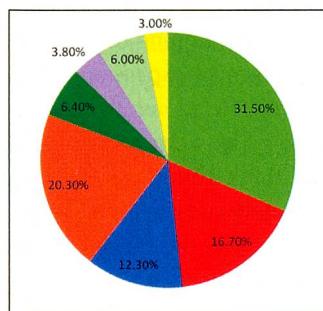
Thurgau: canton as a whole



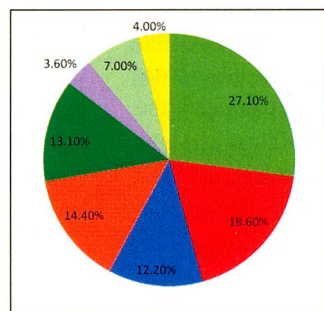
Swiss abroad



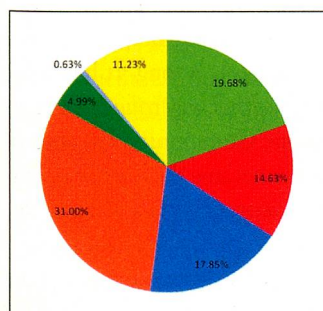
St. Gallen: canton as a whole



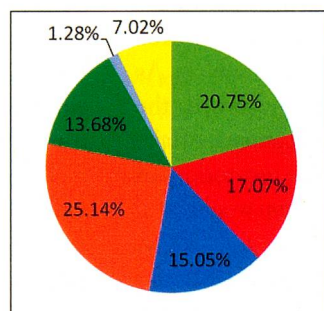
Swiss abroad



Valais: canton as a whole



Swiss abroad



"E-voting for all" OSA Petition to the Federal Council



With a petition, the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) is calling on the Federal Council and the relevant cantonal authorities to take quick action to make e-voting and e-election available to all Swiss citizens, living at home or abroad.

This petition can be signed by any citizen who supports this measure.

**Sign today. Every signature
will increase the chances of success!**

www.petition.aso.ch